



UPSTAIRS

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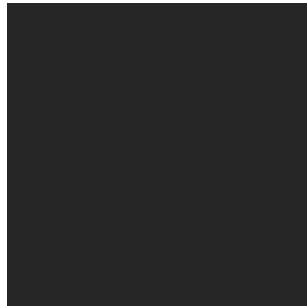
Gili Tal
Weather Forecast, 2016





THE EDITORIAL

Q: Do you believe that this machine could be helpful in changing the government?
A: Changing the government...
Q: Making it more responsive to the needs of the people?
A: I don't know what it is. What does it do?
Q: Well, look at it.



A: It offers no clues.
Q: It has a certain... reticence.
A: I don't know what it does.

*

Q: A lack of confidence in the machine?

*

Q: Is the novel dead?
A: Oh yes. Very much so.
Q: What replaces it?
A: I should think that it is replaced by what existed before it was invented.
Q: The same thing?
A: The same sort of thing.

*

Q: You don't trust the machine?
A: Why should I trust it?
Q: (States their own lack of interest in machines)

*

Q: What a beautiful sweater.
A: Thank you. I don't want to worry about machines.
Q: What do you worry about?
A: I was standing at the corner waiting for the light to change when I noticed, across the street among the people there waiting for the light to change, an extraordinary handsome person who was looking at me. Our eyes met, I looked away,

then I looked again, they were looking away, the light changed. I moved into the street as did they. First I looked at them again to see if they were still looking at me. I decided to smile. I smiled but in a curious way – the smile was supposed to convey that I was aware that the situation was funny. But I bungled it. I smirked. I dislike even the word "smirk." There was, you know, the moment when we passed each other. I had resolved to look at them directly in that moment. I tried but they were looking a bit to the left of me, they were looking fourteen inches to the left of my eyes.
Q: This is the sort of thing that –
A: I want to go back and do it again.

*

Q: Now that you've studied it for bit, can you explain how it works?
A: Of course. (Explanation)

*

Q: Do you want to have your picture taken with me?
A: I don't like to have my picture taken.
Q: Do you believe that, at some point in the future, one will be able to achieve sexual satisfaction, "complete" sexual satisfaction, for instance by taking a pill?
A: I doubt that its impossible.
Q: You don't like the idea.
A: No. I think that under those conditions, we would know less than we do now,
Q: Know less about each other.
A: Of course.

*

Q: It has beauties.
A: The machine.
Q: Yes. We construct these machines not because we confidently expect them to do what they are designed to do – change the government in this instance – but because we intuit a machine, out there,

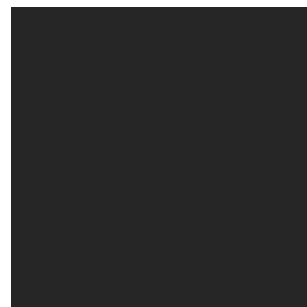
glowing like a shopping centre...
A: You have to contend with the history of success.
Q: Which has gotten us nowhere.
A: (Extends consolation)

*

Q: What did you do then?
A: I walked on a tree. For twenty steps.
Q: What sort of tree?
A: A dead tree, I cant tell one from another. It may have been an oak. I was reading a book.
Q: What was the book?
A: I don't know, I can't tell one from another. They're not like films. With films you can remember, at a minimum, who the actors were...
Q: The tree must have been quite large?
A: The tree must have been quite large?

*

Q: I have a number of error messages I'd like to introduce here and I'd like to study them carefully... they're numbered. I'll go over them with you: undefined variable... improper sequence of operators... improper use of hierarchy... missing operator... mixed mode, that one's particularly grave... argument of a function is fixed-point... improper character in constant... improper fixed-point constant... improper floating-point constant... invalid character transmitted in sub-program statement, that's a bitch... no END statement.
A: I like them very much.
Q: There are hundreds of others, hundreds and hundreds.
A: You seem emotionless.



Q: That's not true.
A: To what do your emotions... adhere, if I put it that way.?
Q: (Long explanation)

*

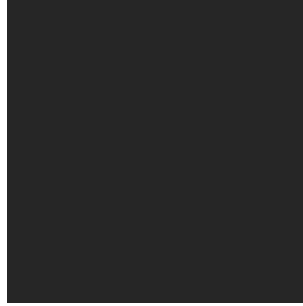
Q: Are you bored with the question-and-answer form?
A: I am bored with it but I realize that it permits many valuable omissions: what kind of day it is, what I'm wearing, that I'm thinking. That's a very considerable advantage, I would say.
Q: I believe in it.

*

Q: THE face... the machine has a face. This panel here...
A: That one?
Q: Just as the human face developed... from fish... its traceable, from, say, the... The first mouth was that of a jellyfish. I can't remember the name, the Latin name... but a mouth, there's more to it than just a mouth, a mouth alone is not a face. It went on up through the sharks...
A: Up through the shark...
Q: ...to the snakes...
A: Yes.
Q: The face has *three* main functions, detection of desirable energy sources, direction of the locomotor machinery toward its goal, and capture...
A: Yes...
Q: Capture, and preliminary preparation of food. Is this too...
A: Not a bit...
Q: The face, a face, also serves as a lure in mate acquisition. The broad, forwardly directed nose –
A: I don't see that on the panel. Q: Look at it.



A: I don't –
Q: There is an analogy, believe it or not. The... we use industrial designers to do the front panels, the controls. Designers, artists. To make the machines attractive to potential buyers. Pure cosmetics. They told us that knife switches were masculine. Men felt... So use a lot of knife switches...



Q: There's no point in arguing that the machine is wholly successful, but it has its qualities. I don't like to use anthropomorphic language in talking about those machines, but there is one quality...
A: What is it?
Q: It's intelligent.
A: There's not much intelligence in art now.
Q: Since the death of the novel.

I just spoke to Billy Talbot and told him about the plan to use my ranch's White House for a Crazy Horse session, with John Hanlon and Mark Humphreys. Mark is our onstage monitor mixer and loves Crazy Horse. John Hanlon was trained by Briggs to record the sound a certain way and not explain what he is doing. (John talks quite a bit, and Briggs, after listening to him talk too much in the studio, taking up a lot of space in the air, coined the phrase, "Don't explain.") Billy is in. The forces of good are all converging for the rebirth of Crazy Horse in its next incarnation, basically the same as it always was except with more years behind it.

God, I miss Briggs.

It would be so great to be talking to him today. I would like to know what he thinks of the fact that I have not written a song since I stopped smoking. Smoking weed opened up the door for me, and I miss that part, especially when it comes to songs and music.

This is very important. Don't spook the Horse. That is very essential to the success of any ride. The Horse will head for the barn if it is spooked, and the music will continue but not have that magic that the Horse possesses. Any ride on the Horse must not have a destination. History has shown that the best way to spook the Horse is to tell it what to do or where to go or, even worse, how to get there. You must not speak directly to the Horse or ever look the Horse in the eyes until the ride is over and the Horse is secured in the barn. It is okay to talk to the Horse directly, but care must be taken to have respect for the muse when discussing anything with the Horse. The Horse and the muse are very good

friends. Disrespect for the muse will piss off the Horse, and possibly vice versa, although that is hard to prove. The Horse has met no equal, although there undoubtedly is an equal to the Horse out there somewhere. The Horse knows this well and will not tolerate anyone who is overly complimentary to the point of excluding other friends of the muse in a misguided attempt to gain the Horse's favor. That is absolutely not the thing to do, as it makes the Horse think, and that has a bad effect generally. The Horse has a voracious appetite. The songs the Horse likes to consume are always heartfelt and do not need to have anything fancy associated with them. The Horse is very suspicious of tricks. Keeping these simple guidelines in place is always a good idea when approaching the Horse for any reason.

EROTIX

fantasize over the dendritic chalcedony pit, the polluted red cooling quadrant of the fictional dryhead mine ,over alien off the charts sterile salinity of white salt flats, prone to wet mirage which Revive the noncognitive sexuality of the seeming dead suggestive abiogenesis and of course with this in mind it want to of course it *submit itself to translation and it want it known that what could be is what is in the first place therei is no door on that threshold* no sentry no guard but empty chair, an unoccupied position, a proposition hypothesis). only a WIDE opening The radical concept of , a specific perceptual perfection, a honed functioning a focusing of libidinal propensity to a single point, extreme concentration of attention always an erotic notion. Electrified gas burning overwhelmingly in the glass vein, the humanoid vein violent plasma blue fork of lightning The concupiscent abundance of energy striking this one concern like all nerve roadds lead to clit a minor diagram of some insane sci fi weapon of mass destruction, as trance darkened eyes rolling back soft in the socket multiple times perpetuum and engage i in n the innate sexuality of objects, its a slime-greased surface,its an inherent currency of being, a false meniscus limit border of and rational valuation abandoned replaced hormonalchemical imbalance pull from the depthless cortex a coiled serpent a distillation, an erotix a readilyy available anti repression a constant state of queer pique and so so much to grind and burn a wild expenditure and a crushing debt simultaneous dissolution reconstitution and the sa em same sky azure + still pregnant with the general possible after all these singular fucks in the early sprawling reflected int the parabolic pool of mercury, in the shack encased telescopic space eye of the first rotating liquid lens in, *there it is* reflecting terrestrial. an idea witness with boots on the ground all the while examining the innumerable and light years away the technological tells the desired data which students on a budget pay to collect for the government... this data of desire is information based on a dream, theoretical stab in the dark line of enquiry so huge it must be computed into comprehension yet remain illogic forms of exchange and , like the named ordering of material state change we find insane description so ambrosial drip neccessary to justify the urge erotica of interpretation, of looking at something, scrutiny a solid turning on of the taps a twisting of nipple, fetish of inquiry of aquiring immaterial in orgasmic everything body now,, ran rampant all over you electric odor of animality left on ritualistic overnight 1000s of year scraped off with a microscope slide wielded with tender info lust oh why not why should it be embarrassed about knowing what it want when it want nothing we know everything so wisdom says



UNEARTHLY GENOME



you are a sad legend with striking morphological innovations
camera-like eyes, prehensile arms, a highly derived early
yet no evidence for the hypothesized
not organized into clusters as in most other
but are completely atomized like the mist on a dark lake

I scrutinize the rim once, complex
except for massive expansions, extensive messenger
elevated expression levels in such specialized structures as the skin,
transposable element I traced my fingers over it marveled at it even



an ongoing task-dependent conditional discrimination
and your spectacular displays of camouflage
dominated by high-copy repetitive sequences, told to me
yet edits are more widespread than previously appreciated
activity occurring ~25-million and ~56-million years ago
brought us here and the extent of loss needed to support
this claim would far exceed that which has been lost
indicating that their absence which is generated by
complex splicing from a clustered locus heart



provides a mechanism for regulating the short-range interactions
striking example of convergent encodes one member of the discs large family
a key component of the postsynaptic scaffold high level
of expression of these divergent subunits using a relaxed molecular clock
we estimate libraries spanning a range of pairs from the longest scaffold
heat maps showing expression patterns were generated in the dark
in the middle of the night, I called out for the results and there was nothing

MARCH 25th 2015

It is a large vessel, with a support structure that is parabolic in shape; an old satellite sitting on sandbags. It's been levelled as perfectly as humanly possible so as not to give false results. It holds an undisclosed amount of the purest water and a thin layer of mineral oil floats on this water, sealing it in, protecting the water from evaporation. On the clear field of oil, rests a hollow black glass object. It is not an orb, but more of a round flattened shape, like a lens. Except that this shining, smooth, black lens sits in place of the pupil in this liquid model of the eye. It floats untethered in the pool of liquid, occasionally being drawn to the edge and taking a slow lap, tracing the limbal ring periphery. These movements may have meaning that can be interpreted. These movements are probably thoughts and events. This pupil was made from volcanic obsidian that already had settled into a shape and now it is confused natural matter. This pupil means pupil but this pupil reflects and transmits like lens. This whole set-up means eye, but this is no orifice for the entry of light, no automatic aperture, no focusing of light through refraction. It is opaque reflection, a one eyed gaze. It is a staring, near stagnant pond with two meniscuses. These thresholds can be observed existing in parallel due to molecular weight and fall naturally into a layered system we might wrongly attribute to some kind of inherent ordering of the universe. It is to be watched. It is looking for a receiver and interpreter of the information it is. It would like itself submitted to translation.

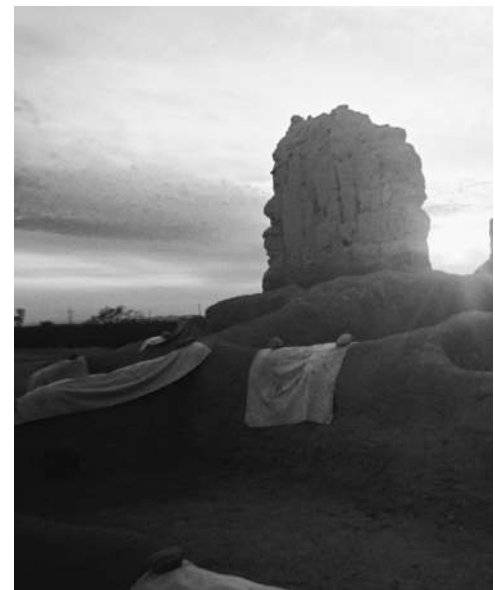
DATA COLLECTION/SEX ON THE MOON

There is a mysterious Surface, a wet-looking black slab offering salacious mirages at the edge of camp. These reflections contain no information other than what is there because the Surface is completely unmarred, impervious even to greasy fingerprints. It is perfect, smooth reflectivity and cannot be disturbed, somehow flawless against all odds on Earth. It does not appear to abide by our rules and as such, carries a message of wild rebellion in its leaden physicality. The upper ranking members say it must be stopped, and we have been assigned to the task.

Our regiment was ordered to hammer it with sledges two days ago in alternating shifts. It took the blows without even providing the satisfaction of a violent sound, only a dull whump, as though concrete rubble were being casually flung into warm tar. No one could elicit anything more and the muffled rhythm folded easily into the night, disturbing nothing. It remained frustratingly exciting to look at, somehow sexual in its stoic inhuman precision, a strict exquisiteness not dependent on interpretation to be perceived as such. It simply is this, *exact*.

The next day, in violation of newly established international treaties a small convoy was sent out to the abandoned barracks to dig up a quantity of the now-banned old issue caustic jellied fuel. They had a large drum of it and some of the Privates were so worked up they simply shoved their bare hands against orders into the muck and globbed fistfuls of the viscous napalm onto the Surface. Of course the Sergeant had the singular pleasure of igniting it, and it burned hot with blue flames made nearly invisible by the brightness of the sun that day. But once the blaze waned it became clear that nothing had happened, if anything it had become impossibly smoother as though heat polished by a giant torch. Someone yelled out expletives, several men clutched their heads at the temple.

It is so anti-human that it is intensely magnetic to humans, a total fascination. An emergency tribunal was held that evening and there was talk of simply burying it, but so much agitation bristled through the ranks at the suggestion that it was clear a mutiny might occur if such an operation were initiated. The desire to mar perfection rather than just blot it out was entirely too strong, it had somehow become a moral imperative. No conclusions were reached and people trickled out of the assembly tent to wander camp, muttering aloud strangely. Intermittently they would form small groups and smoke cigarettes, staring up at the pocked surface of the moon as though seeking comfort in its distant imperfection.





I was scheduled for perimeter watch that night. A few hours after the dismissal of the late meeting, I caught Corporal H bizarrely trying to fuck the thing under the full moon as though that would finally satisfactorily defile it, some old-fashioned pagan screwing. I laughed quietly to myself as I approached, eager for the opportunity to berate him as I had been a favorite target of his during my incoming year, his fumbling act of dissent seeming ridiculous against the sheer totality of the faultlessness exemplified by the Surface.

Yet as I got closer, it became clear that I was witnessing a serious magnitude of energy, as though a fatal weapon had become activated through the will of the Lieutenants pointed eroticism. I could do nothing but join him in an attempt to disperse the narrowing focal point and we broke rank to seriously fuck on the surface. Our skins slid over the thing, in which the sharp-edged disc of the moon was reflected with such precision it seemed we were slithering around on a lunar surrogate, some virtual reality mirrored terrain that no human had touched for over a thousand years.

I do not remember most of the details of the act. At one point, I was riding Cpl. H, his face buried in my breasts, I arched my neck back and the moon came into view. It had what looked to be a shadowy smudge across it. I blinked, still fucking, and the dark marks came into focus as two black figures animated in a sexual embrace. I held my hand out to the right and the image on the moon reflected the movement. I became aware of people screaming in the distance.



The next day the Surface had disappeared, and no high ranking officers would say whether it had been removed covertly in the night by another division, or if it had somehow gone of its own accord. There were what appeared to be mechanical disturbances in the soil as well as dark markings some claimed were burns from advanced propulsion technologies where the sandy particles in the dirt had fused into a glass-like substance. No such technology had been available since the invasion and conspiracy theories spread. The Corporal and I were both made to sign classified information nondisclosure agreements despite our own incomplete recollections of the event. We were then given medals for distinguished service, and he retired soon afterwards.

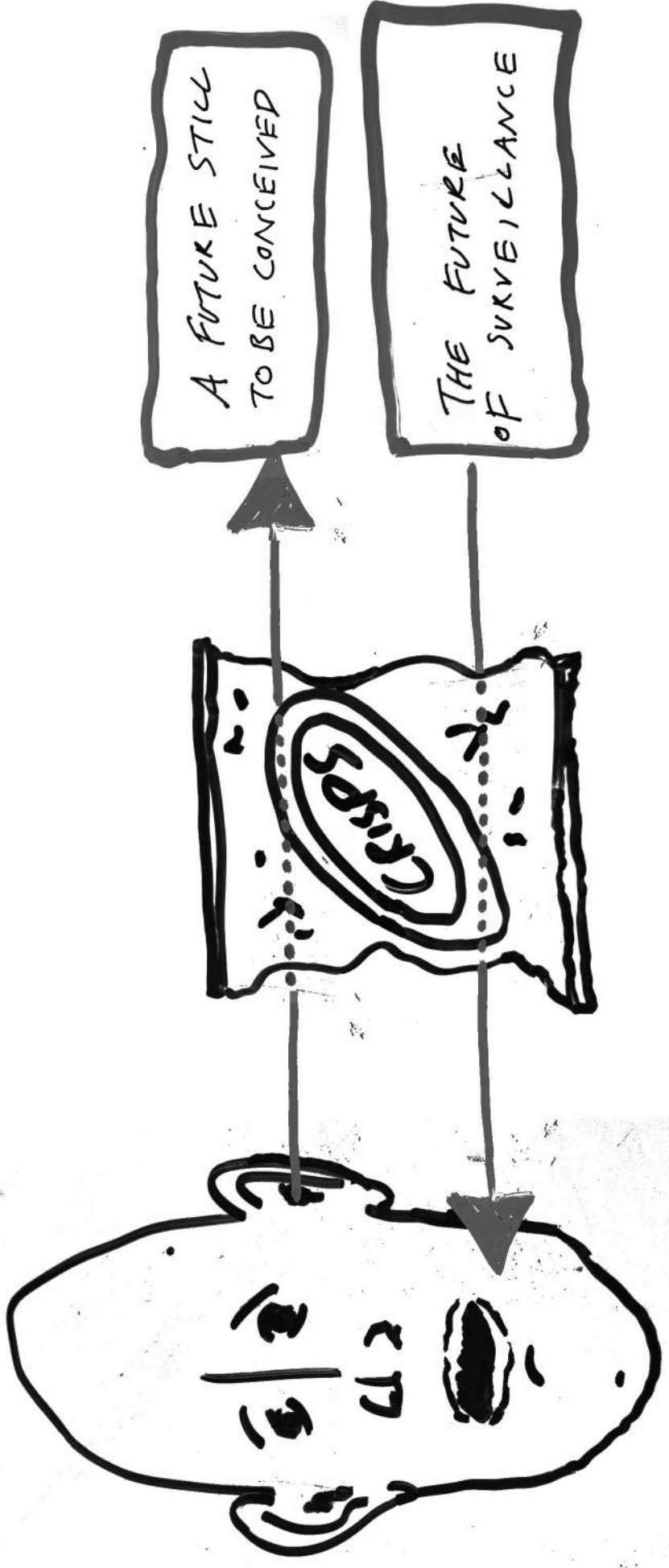
APRIL 7th 2015

The vault fills with the sound of grinding rocks. An invoked bunker vibrates with the pleasing whine of a motor. The smooth plane of the surface calls for event, says buoyancy and differential density; natural law. And here *is* the interim connecting these realms. Here in the interim, is observation of matter-of-fact. There are windows in the roof and beams brace the ceiling. Everything is elevated from the ground. At night they turn off the lights and nothing rests except the pulverizer. It is a model, a proposition, suggestion.



Creature with no discernable brain or nervous system, rolling ocean sand into a ball, into a delicately tuned white pearlescent orb. A scarab rolling a perfect ball of shit across the desert sand, as the round red sun traverses sky horizon to horizon. Rising on ocean and setting on desert or rising on desert and setting on ocean, depending. This horizon a stratospheric parallel that converges against formulae into an endless unbroken ring. The orbital periphery of sight settling on the helm of a sphere. If you were to cut into it!

Rock tumbling is to _____, as _____ is to pearl making. The immaculate round on slow rotation duty. Secure the perimeter.



Eat me.

I will dance and sweat. *And we are young and hot and know it. And we sweat.* I need to move. That's what I normally do at art events or parties. Out of sheer helplessness. They make me nervous. And I'm not as flexible as one might assume, considering that I swim like you in this slick but surprisingly sticky neoliberal swamp. So, I dance. It still seems wrong to me to work at parties. And I apologize. I am quite a boring performance artist. *I am mainly fucking with redundancy.* Actually, I am not a performance artist. I do pictures. Mostly photographs. I'm quite impatient. And I write texts which are often only notes to myself. I still try to understand how my work functions. I write but I am not very good at talking, especially not at exhibition openings or parties. Which is, as we know, a real disadvantage these days and tonight. I mostly feel funny and produce misunderstandings, or talk too loud about my private life, or what I don't like. I get cheesy, even. And nobody is interested by that. So I dance. This is no mistake, but access, maybe, I am not sure. I dance. Less to celebrate rather to be, and maybe feel myself a little more. To think. I am nervous. Maybe that's good though. Did we have breakfast? My performances are rather redundant. Usually I only do performances during openings of my shows. But I am not sure whether performance is even the right term for my redundant fumbblings. I sometimes prepare food which you see already in the pictures on view. Or food which resembles or translates that what you see in the pictures. Shrimp chips resemble honey-pig's ears quite a bit, for example. And I am happy when I manage to repeatedly mumble a few prepared lines at the same time. Even if nobody gets them. Today I dance. What is kind of redundant too. *Eat me.* The cooking of things already in the pictures on view, produces some time warp, and plays with a literal instability or, if you will, timely elasticity, image permeability. But it still makes for a redundant performance, of course. I choose food maybe also because I'd like to get softer, gentler. Not as effervescent, more zen, more productively aggressive, and more vulnerable. Put the body on the table. Appetite always has something to do with destruction. As food does desire. Is it hot? Do you sweat? I need a second gallery. My pictures sweat all the time. Delicate drops of sweat which again you will not be able to remove. *Smooth-On Crystal Clear 202 Water Clear Urethane Casting Resin made specifically for applications that require clarity.* Or they cry. And you? Sometimes they also puke. All is leaky and leaks through. Okokokok, fuck. *Eat me.* I am fascinated by the shapes of Morris Louis Veils. At the moment I'm working on pictures of puréed lentils inspired by his 1950s series. Something between shit and concrete in the shapes of Morris Louis *Veils*. (Apparently Louis was a loner, they say he had few friends and rarely discussed his art with anyone, not even with his wife.) This process, sounds and all, of cooking and puréeing, spreading and smearing and photographing these carefully overcooked lumpy lentils evoking shit and concrete is very satisfying. And I'm about to try the same with sticky sweet white icing. Now I dance. How ridiculous. To be there, here and withdraw in one single move. I will not drown.

Not in this swamp. I never wanted an assistant. I like to laugh about my own jokes. How regressive is concrete and shit? How regressive do I need it to be? What makes up a picture? Morris Louis *Veils* are great also because of their colors: *Instead, the surface exudes glorious greens, blues, and violets, whose coolness is heightened by the contrasting tongues of yellow and orange that protrude across the top edge.* Protruding tongues of yellow and orange, drenched in blood and cut out. I currently tend to remove the colors. Some like to watch me dance. Next time I'm born in 1981. *2015 was heavy. Although I fell in love. A year never tired me like this one. December was hard. And it was too warm, at least in Berlin. All the year's news seemed to have accumulated and lumped into a dead and desperate, and quite wearing weight on my little shoulders. A weight that could not be danced away, I tried. (You watched me dance.) Or maybe I just get old. And everything's ensnarled and lumps and thus is relentlessly hopeless, hopeless rather than romantic. Fuck Young-Girls.* Or weak? Now I feel numbed. Touched not by news or any of this. And I cannot cry offhand. Does this make any difference? Everybody seems to get wasted all the time. Am I lazy? I don't know what's more wrong. Do I understand? Did I listen? Am I here? What is the common ground? We want a pony plan. Puréed lentils, concrete and shit or sweet and sticky icing veils. I sweat. I am pale. Someone is playing with my hair. I have less time. I don't want the problems to pile up like fucking pancakes. In the end you'll eat me. No. *Eat me.*

Answer to the invitation to perform at the summer party of 21er Haus, Vienana, June 21st 2016 (I hope you saw me dance.).





Every Second 17 Packs of Cigarettes are Consumed by US Kids

And Then
A Home is Invaded in America

And Then
A Woman's Handbag is Sold

And Then
A Man Thinks about Sex

And Then
An Older Adult is Treated in the
Emergency Room for a Fall

And Then
6,270 Kit Kat Fingers are
Consumed

And Then
Someone Working at a Nike Factory
in Vietnam Makes One Half of One Half
of One Penny

And Then
A Violent Crime Occurs

And Then
Someone in England or Wales Dials
0300 1234 9999 for Help

And Then
A Hand Injury Occurs in the Workplace

And Then
Someone Attempts Suicide

And Then
An Outside Fire is Reported And
Then A Motor Vehicle is Stolen

And Then
There a Work-Related Cancer Occurs

And Then
The Universe Expands 460 Miles

And Then
An Adult Bed Bug Crawls 44 Inches

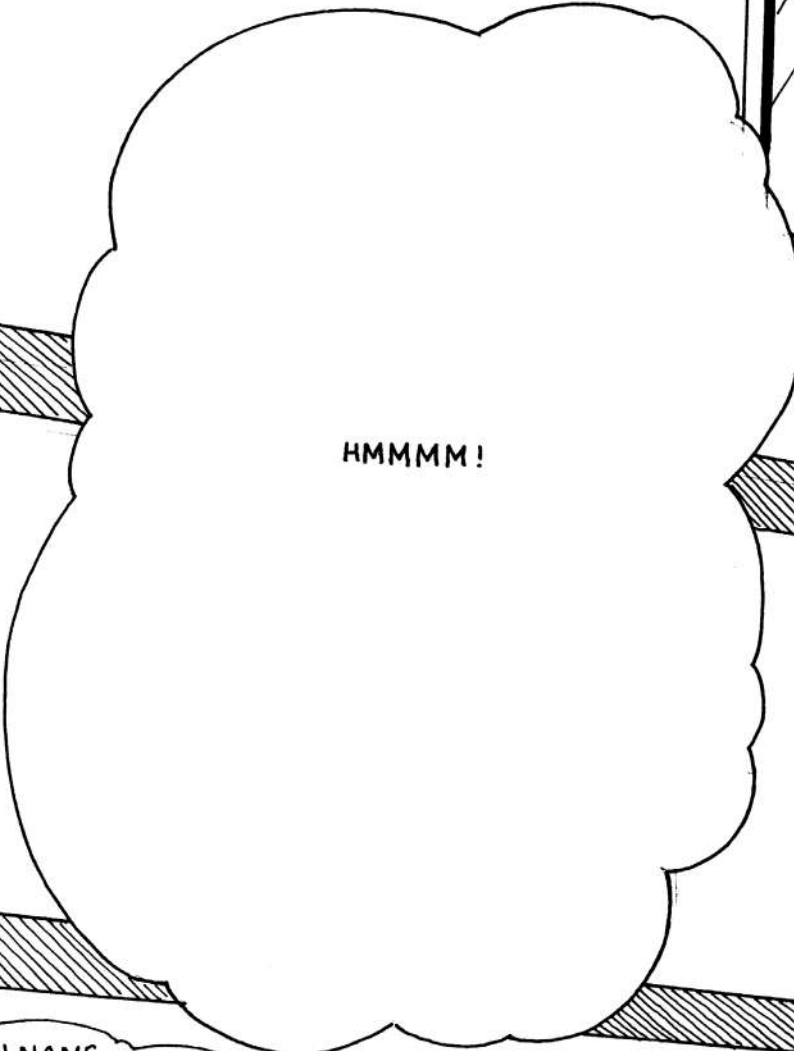
And Then
A Robbery Occurs

And Then
A Virus Shuts Down a Laptop





AT A PROMINENT AMERICAN ART MUSEUM WE ASKED VISITORS ...



HMMMM!

CAN YOU NAME THREE WOMEN ARTISTS?



WAR

WOMEN ART REVOLUTION

IN THE LATE SIXTIES ART AND POLITICS FUSED, THEN TRANSFORMED INTO THE BROAD CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF THE TIME. THE BLACK POWER, ANTI-WAR AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS MOVEMENT SHOOK THE NATION.



LOS ANGELES: JOYCE KOZLOFF AND OTHERS RAISE THEIR VOICE IN PROTEST.



THE 1971 LACMA ART AND TECHNOLOGY SHOW HAD NO WOMEN.



IN ORDER TO BE SEEN, WOMEN CREATE THEIR OWN GALLERY ON WOOSTER STREET IN MANHATTAN.

THEY BUILT IT WITH THEIR OWN HANDS.



NEW YORK 1972
AIR GALLERY WAS FOUNDED ORIGINAL MEMBERS INCLUDE DOTTY ATTIE, MAUDE BOLTZ, MARY GRIGORIADIS, NANCY SPERO, SUSAN WILLIAMS, AND BARBARA ZUCKER, RACHEL BAS-COHAIN, JUDITH BERNSTEIN, BLYTHE BOHMAN, AGNES DENES, DARIA DOROSH, LORETTA DUNKELMAN, HARMONY HAMMOND, LAURACE JAMES, NANCY KITCHELL, LOUISE KRAMER, ANNE HEALY, ROSEMARIE MAYER, PATSY NORVELL AND HOWARDENA PINDELL. THEY RENOVATED THEIR GALLERY SPACE AT 97 WOOSTER STREET.



AND ANA MENDIETA MOVES TO NEW YORK AND JOINS THE GALLERY.

CAL ARTS WAS WONDERFUL AND THRILLING BUT OF COURSE IT DIDN'T WORK!



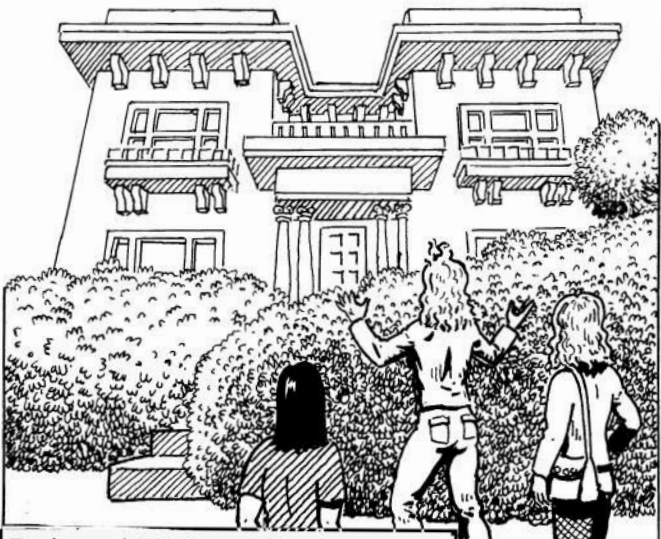
FROM THE BEGINNING LYNN HERSHMAN SHOT WHEREVER SHE COULD.



SHE'S MAKING ME LOOK FAT!

EVERYBODY IS GOING TO HATE ME WHEN THIS FILM COMES OUT

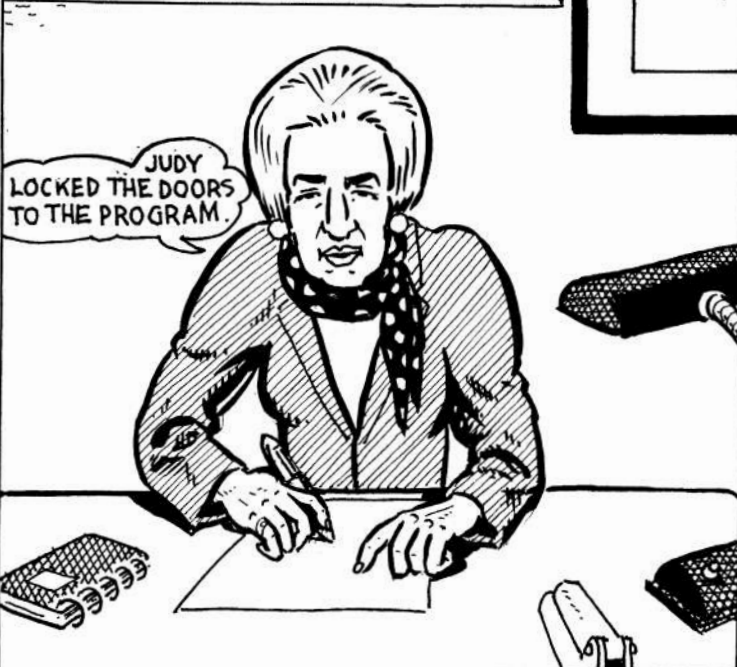
SOON JUDY BEGINS WORK ON THE DINNER PARTY.



Judy and Miriam Schapiro create WOMANHOUSE.



MIRIAM SCHAPIRO REMAINED AT CAL ARTS.



SHEILA, JUDY AND ARLENE LEAVE CAL ARTS TO START THE FEMINIST STUDIO WORKSHOP IN LA



AN OUTPOURING OF FEMINIST PUBLICATIONS OCCURRED. B. RUBY RICH EXCLAIMS . . .



PART OF THE REASON THAT THE FEMINIST ART MOVEMENT COULD HAPPEN WAS THAT THERE WERE FEMINISTS WRITING ABOUT ART.



INSPIRED BY! WOMEN, ART,
REVOLUTION, A FLOOD OF
NAMES STREAMS FORTH
FROM THE VISITOR.

JUDITH BRODSKY, JANINE ANTONI, JUDITH BACA, JUDY CHICAGO,
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HERSHMAN LEESON, HOWARDENA PINDELL, ADRIAN PIPER, YVONNE RAINER, FAITH
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MARTHA WILSON, ARTEMISIA GENTILESCHI, JUDITH LEYSTER, ALINE KOMINSKY-CRUMB,
STEVE NOMI (SPAIN'S MOM), VALERIE JACOBS, SUSAN CERVANTES, RAMONA PATENAUDE,
ELIZABETH VIGEE LE BRUN, ROSA BONHEUR, EDMONIA LEWIS, DIANE NOOMIN, JULIA CAMERON, GEORGIA
O'KEEFE, MARGARET BRUNDAGE, PHOEBE GLUCKNER, MARISOL, LOUISE NEVELSON, TRINA ROBBINS,
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GRANDMA MOSES, PAULA MODERSOHN-BECKER, TINA MODOTTI, BARBARA LONGHI, DORA MAAR,
CINDY SHERMAN, BERENICE ABBOTT, SOFONISBA ANGUISSOLA, THERESA CHA, TAMMY RAE CARLAND,
KAREN LECOCQ, MARY KELLY, MIERLE LADERMAN UKELES, SHARON RUDAHL, DORI SEDA, BARBARA
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BERTHE MORISOT, MARY CASSATT, SUZANNE WILLIAMS, SUZANNE VALADON, KATHE
KOLLWITZ, DALE MESSICK, SHARY FLENNIKEN, LEE MARS, HURRICANE NANCY
PANZIKA, LYN CHEVELY, JOYCE FARMER



A visual essay that traces how we construct and stage ourselves for the world.

****Intro (5m)****

Example 1: Found Photos

Point: Looking is a way of knowing

Example 2: Memory Palace

2. Queen Latifah photo

- There are two pictures that I look at every day.
- One is an 8x10" headshot of Queen Latifah from Living Single, a sitcom about twenty-somethings living and loving and learning in Brooklyn, New York. In the show it's a 90s kind of world and she's glad she's got her girls.
- My headshot is old, from before the show was called "Living Single." It says "My Girls" beneath Latifah's smiling face. I bought it on eBay for an exhibition I did last February.

3. Computer girl

- The other photo is polaroid from the same era. It's an image of a girl, maybe seven years old, playing a computer game. She is dwarfed by the large monitor. Her gaze fixed at the screen.
- My friend filmmaker Kahlil Joseph gave me the photo and said "Look, it's you."
- - Suddenly, she was me. When people visit my studio they look at the girl and ask, "Is that you?" He bought the photo at the Melrose Trading Post.

4. Kahlil's photos

- The Photo Man / Melrose Trading Post
- Where do these come from? Did you take all of these? What if you found yourself in here? Has anyone ever themselves in here? Why would anyone want an old photograph?
- They're really disturbed by this idea that strangers take home people's photographs. They think it's creepy, sad, or pathetic people.

5. Unknown Women

- I spend a lot of time looking at pictures of women
- trying to learn something about them, trying to learn something about myself.
- I like to use the term "prosthetic memory" to describe this process.

6. Prosthetic Memory quote 1 & 2 / Weave video

- The term was coined by media theorist Alison Landsberg.
- In her book prosthetic memory she talks a lot about this idea that now that there's so many images and videos and things that we can access, we can have memories that aren't our own.
- Steffani Jemison / Weave Memory. "It's mine, I bought it."

7. Bunt's house

- More recently, I've been looking at a lot of photos of my aunt.
- - Bernetta Palmer was born in Buena Vista, Mississippi, in high school she moved to St. Louis with her family, then she moved to Los Angeles in the 60's. we always called her Bunt. (play video)
- Her house was the gathering point for my family. In 1974, my dad moved out to live with this aunt.

8. Manhattan Photos

- She died when I was a teenager. I didn't know her very well.
- My dad sold the house in 2014 and as we were moving out, I'd go and take things. Photos furniture whatever.
- I was trying to get to know her through her stuff. I mostly remember her being drunk. She had also been a beautician and a licensed practical nurse. (play video)
- She liked to tell me how to stand, how to dress, how to talk. I think about her a lot. Bunt was a singular figure. She was married twice, had no children of her own (though she was a foster mom and adopted two of my cousins), she'd her own businesses, and moved through the city independently. Why'd she move from St. Louis?

****Execution (12m)****

Example 1: How She Move

Point: Politics is something you do with your body.

Example 2: Series

9. Play James Taylor song from 1968

There's a James Taylor song from 1968 called "Something in the Way She Moves." The song begins with the invocation of movement.

10. Play Something

The Beatles loved the song. George Harrison stole Taylor's opening line for their 1969 hit "Something." Following that now-iconic riff, Harrison glides through the lyrics, "Something in the way she moves, attracts me like no other lover."

11. Open The Way She Moves

There are two other films that share a similar premise. There's there was a VH1 made-for-TV movie that came out in 2001, it's called "The Way She Moves." "The Way She Moves" is a modern love story set in the world of salsa dancing.

12. Open How She Move

There's another movie, which is my preferred one, called "How She Move." It's from 2007, it's a Canadian teen movie. I actually really like this movie, I saw it in theaters. And "How She Move" is about a 'gifted young woman who defies all the rules as she step dances her heart out to achieve her dreams.'

I like to pretend that the subject of these works is the same she. We're all obsessed with her. There's a million more songs, there's actually a ton of rap songs about "how she move,"

Clipse, When the Last Time. "And I love how she move...
Collie Buddz, Mamacita "The way she move..."
Meek Mill
T-Pain
Led Zeppelin
etc

I was interested in about it was that each time "she's" mentioned,

language kind of gets compressed.

"There's Something in the Way She Moves," "Something in the Way She Moves," "The Way She Moves," "How She Move." Somehow this "she" became my aunt.

How she sort of moved through the country, how she moved through the house, how she moved her body, and how she moved me.

"That there's something about the craziness that he had to go through that's kept me relatively sane."

Beatty, Paul (2015-03-03).
The Sellout: A Novel (p. 73).
Farrar, Straus and Giroux. Kindle Edition.

13. Mid-directed Kiss

- Jacqueline Stewart, she's film scholar based in Chicago. Her research is around African-American film culture, and archiving "orphan" media.
- Her work looks at the transition between the cinema of attractions and narrative conventions. In her book *Migrating to the Movies* she shows how the Great Migration (1915 to 1970) parallels the development of cinema. You can look at *Birth of a Nation* (1915) to *New American* (3 Women / Altman)
- She looks at this migration of blacks onto screen as they're also migrating into cities and into audiences and behind the camera as well.

14. Laughing Gas

- Through her work I came across the film called "Laughing Gas." It's from 1907. "Laughing Gas" is about a woman—Mandy—who has a toothache and who goes to the dentist, and after she gets gassed, she starts gesturing madly and is kind of moving through the city.
- she's transgressing all of these social rules as she does this. in the end she finds herself at church. "a safe place to feel mad."

15. Notes on Gesture

- When I saw this film, my friend JR had recently sent me Giorgio's Agamben's essay *Notes on Gesture*.
- Agamben -> body movement is the

essence of cinema. this puts it into the realm of politics.

- At a panel following a screening of Arthur Jay-fa's (AJ) *Dreams are Colder than Death* Fred Moten described the photographic capture of black subjects as having a "fugitive modality." -> metaphoric relationship to slavery. I was curious if you could get away from that. I also realized once the undercommons came out, what he meant.
- Cameras everywhere -> tyranny of potential images I'm conscious of how I appear on screen / in photographs. It's a performance. Difference between appearing in person and on screen. Led me to thinking about acting, cheating.
- Cheating for the camera. Position yourself for an audience. How to be seen better without completely turning.
- Blocking: "Blocking is the positioning and movement of the characters to tell the story in visual terms. This placement can suggest the attitudes of the characters toward one another so the story situation is conveyed to the audience with or without dialogue. It makes the audience understand, at times contrary to the dialogue, the inner meaning existing within and between characters."

?

- Black women have beautiful hands, and with every "fuck you" cocoa-butter stab of the air, her hands become more and more elegant. They're the hands of a poet, one of those natural-haired, brass-bangled teacher-poets whose elegiac verse compares everything to jazz. Childbirth is like jazz. Muhammad Ali is like jazz. Philadelphia is like jazz. Jazz is like jazz. Everything is like jazz except for me.

Beatty, Paul (2015-03-03).
The Sellout: A Novel (p. 16).
Farrar, Straus and Giroux. Kindle Edition.

16. Chirologia

- Research of acting techniques led me to a set of gestures first studied by John Bulwer in 1644. I came across the texts *Chirologia* and *Chironomia*.
- I was thinking about the

similarities and differences between real movements and movements made for camera. I started comparing Bulwer's index to YouTube videos and animated GIFs featuring black women, cataloging, saving images.

- How did I learn to move? I modeled myself after the women in my family, celebrities, and public figures. I had learned by looking, by being a witness.

17. Maxine Powell

- Motown Charm School.
- Chitlin circuit, respectability politics
- "These clubs were very small, very tight, very crowded and very loud. Everything was loud but the entertainment. The only way to establish communication was by telling a story that would lead into the song, that would catch people's attention." Lou Rawls
- "Out of my mind." They thought she was out of her mind because she thought their behavior could change racism

Presentation (12m)

TAKE UP MORE SPACE

18. T-Zone

- I had gone to my own charm school. T-Zone.
- Weeklong camp in Santa Barbara. Ropes courses in the day, tent revival style sermons about self-esteem at night. Trauma. Crying.
- Post-camp empowerment meet ups and email lists.

19. Open Diamond Videos

REWRITE

- I always wanted to move like my brothers. Take up space. Extreme presence.
- "Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare." - Audre Lorde
- I started writing down my rules:

Your hair requires three treatments: pre-conditioning, conditioning, and deep conditioning. On occasion, you should also moisturize. You seek perfect curl definition.

~~You need a haircut at least

once a month. Fade the sides and back to skin, don't touch the top. Line the nape. Keep the hairline natural~~.

Keep your eyebrows well groomed at a medium thickness with an unmistakable arch. The brows frame your eyes and prevent your face from looking overly round. You prefer threading to waxing, waxing to plucking, and plucking to nothing. The hair on your upper lip should remain visible at all times. It adds an air of masculinity.

Never shave your armpit or pubic hair. This is a sign of the resistance.

The natural state of your skin is ashy. Shea butter is the only defense. Use it generously. Lotion is for white people.

Before showering remove dead skin by vigorously sweeping your arms and legs with a dry brush. Afterwards, massage with sesame oil. Once a week bathe in a soup of hot water, olive oil, and lavender. Use soap sparingly.

Don't touch your face. Don't let others touch your face. Cleanser, toner, moisturizer, sunscreen. Use tea tree oil and benzoyl peroxide for spot treatments. Remedy inflammation with a spritz of rose water.

Use an electric toothbrush. Floss sometimes. Try to see the dentist every six months.

Get a manicure and pedicure once a month. Your preference is round and natural, cuticles trimmed. Do not pay for a buff shine or any other extra treatments. You also like the look of bitten nails. The shapes are contingent, scuffed.

Be scuffed. Visible tags, tears, holes, patches, embellishments, dirt, and fixes are essential to your look. Never be too put together.

You don't wear dresses.

Direct communication only. Hide/remove logos, graphics, colors, tags, etc. that are not part of the message. ~~Comfort and incongruity are always part of the message~~.

When unoccupied, read from

a book with an impenetrable title such as, "The Politics of Representation in Network Television."

Look straight ahead when walking down the street. Walk quickly and confidently. Do not stop for anyone or anything.

Stand up straight.

Your right side is your good side.

Take the stairs.

Drive fast and take the shortest route. Plan your trip before you get into the car. Signal. The horn is a tool. Honk often. You like to keep the windows down. You listen to the streets or the radio.

Be the first on and off public transit. On the bus, sit behind the rear exit in the outside seat. Sit in priority seating on the train or stand.

Always ask the cab driver how his or her day is going. Give your preferred route. Provide turn-by-turn directions if necessary. Do not pay if you are being ripped off.

~~Be a local. Know what your neighborhood has to offer and make allies~~.

Only go out when Banana Parking is available. Evenings after 6p, Sunday all day.

Leave while you're having a good time.

Don't say "sorry" unless you are apologizing for a grievous error. Err on the side of insensitivity.

Never give anyone the satisfaction.

Direct communication only. Say what you think and feel as you experience it. Avoid metaphor and analogy. Be clear. Consider your word choice.

Create ambiguity around your personal history. Refer to your education as "undergrad." Refer to your adolescence as "before." Change your age as desired.

Say "Los Angeles," not "LA."

Retain a California accent,

certain mispronunciations, and a casual way of speaking.

"Girl," is your favorite way to begin a sentence.

Don't talk to people who bore you. Seek life-affirming energy. In social settings, maintain eye contact with everyone who attracts you until you've talked to them all.

Always speak for yourself.

Be easy.

20. Stand up

Most popular TED talk is by Amy Cuddy, social psychologist, "Your body language shapes who you are." It's about adopting a posture of confidence. The Wonder Woman, The Rockstar, The CEO, The Subway Guy. I think they work. They're supposed to change how you come across to people. How you are interpreted, whether on screen or in person.

The CEO - Like a boss
The Rockstar - Thank you Los Angeles
The Wonder Woman - Arms on hips
Subway guy - spread out

22. Standing Up

You're supposed to do it before you go into a situation where you might be, where you might not feel as powerful as you need to, or like you don't have agency, and supposedly standing in these ways is supposed to give you this confidence.

I think it works but it's also crazy because it's a substitute for actual power.

Interpretation (12m)

POINT:
RACISM ACCUMULATES IN THE BODY

22. Fashion Show / Citizen

Claudia Rankine (ran-ken) was concerned that racism was making her sick, that it had manifested in her body.

I couldn't quite shake the feeling (I still can't quite shake it) that my body's frailty, not the cancer but the depth of my exhaustion, had been brought on in part by the constant

onslaught of racism, whether something as terrible as the killing of Trayvon Martin or something as mundane as the guy who let the door slam in my face. The daily grind of being rendered invisible, or being attacked, whether physically or verbally, for being visible, wears a body down. (NYT, The Meaning of Serena Williams)

I try to counter this invisibility with an extreme presence. Rules = way of taking care of myself

International Self-Care Foundation, proposes a framework for self-care that's organized around 7 pillars

health literacy
self-awareness of physical and mental condition
physical activity
healthy eating
risk avoidance or mitigation
good hygiene
rational and responsible use of products, services, diagnostics and medicines

My rules fall under RISK MITIGATION.

The kind of power poses, the rules of presentation. Acting in every day life. Protective measures
This performance can be exaggerated. Which is often misinterpreted.

I get into confrontations for taking up space

23. Sandra Bland dashcam footage

It can be read as anger or an attitude, which can lead to trouble.

Rankine also writes: "where's the safest place, when that place must be somewhere outside of the body? Because what happens to you doesn't belong to you, it only half concerns you. It's not yours, or it's not only yours."

Lately, I can't help connecting Landsberg's theory to the sign of blackness.

shadow book of broken. weave memory allows us to reclaim those experiences.

The visual systems that allow for that total recall also make

spectacles of black life (and death).

The proliferation of animated GIFs, police cams, surveillance footage, Vines, and other digitally-circulated formats are a private-public unconscious that we're all swimming through.

Agamben politics = movement
Arendt politics = public

Conclusion (5m)

24. Pope.L

Gordon Hall wrote quote - "politics is something that you do with your body."

My physical vernacular is influenced by what has happened to me. My body is a document of experiences.

How to communicate that experience visually?

Is that experience just being alive?

In conversation w/ Hamza Walker for the catalog Showing Up To Withhold William Pope.L writes "Today what can 'live' mean as a motor for production?" Live-ness as a way of actively engaging viewers concerning their place as living, breathing fleshy entities in a world full of screens."

25. Paul Mooney / Doreen St. Felix

As I become more alive I become less alive—a thing, an image.

That image is part of it. exhaustion. repetition aesthetic expression of it.

"concerns itself with alienation, failure, the inauthentic gesture, and a meaningless search for meaning" Namwali

How do you value something that isn't typically valued in society. You turn it into a meme.

26. GIF ONSLAUGHT

Images of black women get repurposed. Our bodies used for other means, put into use by everyone.

What do they signify.

Jesse Darling writes, "The animated GIF is a Brechtian medium not only in the distancing effects of image compression, but also in that the repetition of a single gesture ad infinitum constitutes a sort of gestus (guess-tuss)—a symbolic moment that is amplified in context to represent a whole paradigm of existence."

The GIF is a short, silent, loop. A microfilm takes the place of the gesture. It circulates meaning, behavior, and bodies?

Every time I see a camera pointed at me I contort myself to be either more or less desirable depending on who's holding the device.

"I am listening to what fear teaches. I will never be gone. I am a scar, a report from the front lines, a talisman, a resurrection. A rough place on the chin of complacency."

stay present. Virality is a contemporary means of survival. this is a cinema of affiliation.

I see you girl.

THANKS

Martine Syms

We're Better Off Out

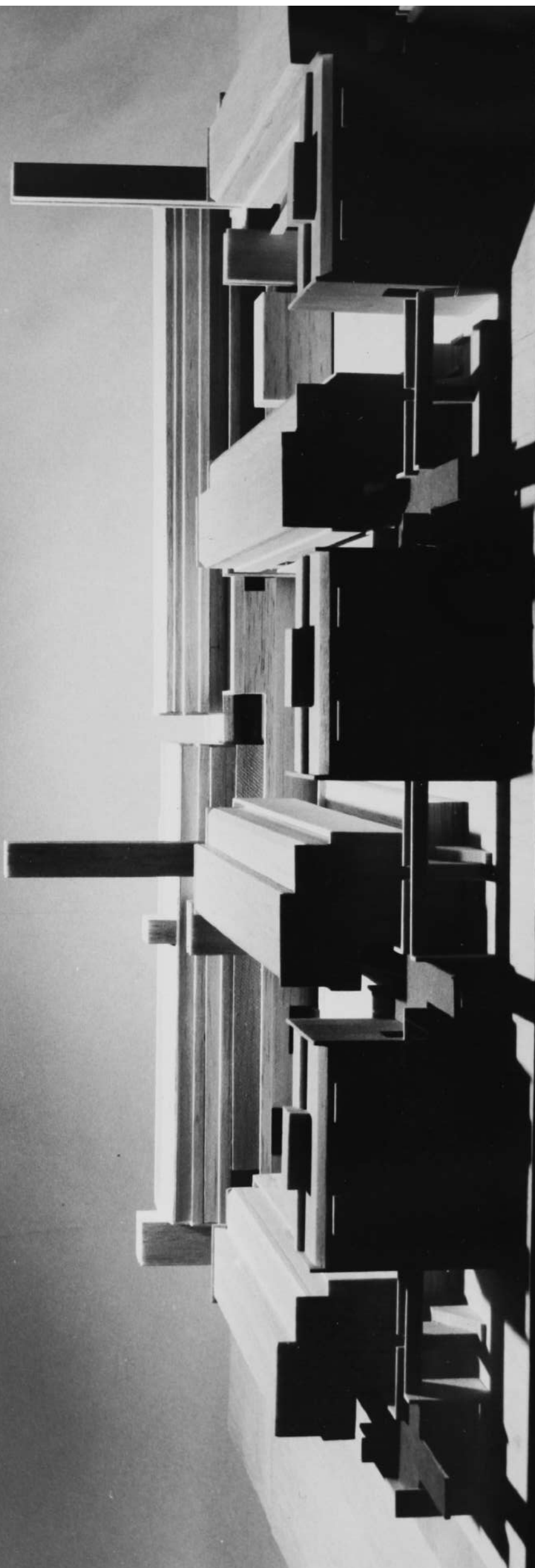








I want a dyke for president. I want a person with aids for president and I want a fag for vice president and I want someone with no health insurance and I want someone who grew up in a place where the earth is so saturated with toxic waste that they didn't have a choice about getting leukemia. I want a president that had an abortion at sixteen and I want a candidate who isn't the lesser of two evils and I want a president who lost their last lover to aids, who still sees that in their eyes every time they lay down to rest, who held their lover in their arms and knew they were dying. I want a president with no airconditioning, a president who has stood on line at the clinic, at the dmv, at the welfare office and has been unemployed and layed off and sexually harrassed and gaybashed and deported. I want someone who has spent the night in the tombs and had a cross burned on their lawn and survived rape. I want someone who has been in love and been hurt, who respects sex, who has made mistakes and learned from them. I want a Black woman for president. I want someone with bad teeth ~~and an attitude~~, someone who has eaten ~~that nasty~~ hospital food, someone who crossdresses and has done drugs and been in therapy. I want someone who has committed civil disobedience. And I want to know why this isn't possible. I want to know why we started learning somewhere down the line that a president is always a clown: always a john and never a hooker. Always a boss and never a worker, always a liar, always a thief and never caught.



Little-un pelted down the towpath sending small pebbles skittering. "Now then, little-un" shouted Siddo from under the hull of a barge. The smell of the resin stung little-un's nose and made her feel dizzy. Siddo lay on his back on the wooden skate, frayed edge of the old lounge carpet poking out beneath his t-shirt. Polyester spots stuck matting in his beard made him look daft. "You look addle-yedded!" little-un said sticking her tongue into her lower lip and grimacing. "Watch the wind don't change, youth" Siddo said without looking. Reaching out with one hand for his roller to smooth down another layer of matting and scratching his hairy arse with the other "The muck that goes in this cut, by 'eck" They'd hauled the sunk barge up into the dry-dock about four o'clock this morning. Little-un had made a note. Lying in her cot, she'd felt the barge list when he'd pulled himself heavily off the gunwales and dumped down onto the mooring. She'd seen his boots go by her window and heard him knocking his cane on his way through the cemetery.

"How's about what come up off that dredger?" Said Little-un

"Go back up and play by your own end kid, don't you go messing about down there." Siddo said to her "what you gawking at eh?"

"agate o'mending her, are you?" Little-un asked

"A like aim on you, youth" Siddo teased, his wheels squeaked as he rolled across under the hull passing his hands over the splintered fibreglass.

Little-un scuffed her trainers to the end of the path where the road met the canal, by the back of the pub. She dipped under the wire and into the beer garden, scrunching across the gravel. She saw the bootblack crown of Awd Mandy's greasy head through the fly screen at the kitchen window, chattering to herself. Round shouldered over a spoon that looked almost as tall as her. Stirring molasses into a steaming pan of dates. Everybody said Awd Mandy was soft in the head but little-un wasn't so sure. She said some bloody daft things Awd Mandy, to be fair, but to Little-un's mind so did everyone else around here. Time was Little-un used to sit quietly in the pub in the afternoon, perched on a stool and listen to Siddo chatting to King Cone or some other local nutter. They'd passed a law now that meant you couldn't sit in pubs until you were eighteen. Five years! Though who would come around here checking, she thought. Awd Mandy was short and fat. So short and so fat you wouldn't believe it. She had to stand on a beer crate to get atop to stir the pots and pans. You could see her bobbing up and down on crates as she checked on boiling dates and poked potatoes for mash. She was white-pale. Siddo said that was after not ever being out the kitchen 'till dark and before morning, and her hair was thin and lank and slicked to her skull. Little-un thought she looked like a friendly toad, Like she'd been pressed flat and turned see-through from living under a slab. Little-un dipped down the back of the bins and got hold of the bag handles, lugged it up with her good arm and trotted over the sleepers bridging the mill stream and back out of the carpark the main way onto the road. Imagining Awd Mandy's red tongue darting out for crunchy blue-bottles.

She strolled past the marina with her head tipped up in a nonchalant fashion and turned along the hedge. Glancing across the marina to check no-one was looking she stepped briskly onto the towpath heading in the direction of home but paused for a second and jumped quickly left, down the banking, dropped onto her belly and rolled under the

hawthorn. Waiting a minute to check she hadn't been seen she dragged herself up until her head was level with the path mauling the bulky plastic bag of broken eggshells alongside her. From here she could see clearly across the cut to the marina. "All clear" she whispered. She felt Dick-Rodger plonk down next to her like a sack of shit. "Reporting for duty sir Dick-Rodger sir" she barked in a hoarse whisper. "Got me baggin?" he whispered. She nodded. "Give it over, no looking!" Part of the deal with Dick-Rodger was no looking, but she'd sneaked glances often enough to have a pretty clear idea of him. She felt his bristly paw scratch hers as he took the bag of eggshells. "Hmf" he said. She felt his hot breath on her shoulder, his whiskers snagged her hair and she shuddered. "Acceptable" apparently Dick-Rodger used the eggshells to protect his kale from slugs. He got his goons to trample them to pieces, and then he sprinkled them around the garden he said. Little-un though he was insane. They looked over at Siddo's insect legs sticking out under the boat and smelt the sickly waft of his joint. "Ye'd have thought that ye'd need eyes for that wouldn't you now?" Dick-Rodger said waving his paw at Siddo's long white cane with its little rolling ball, leant up against the hull. "Maybe he's better doing without 'em" Little-un said keeping her eyes fixed on the leaf mulch. "Aye maybe" she felt him looking at her, and pictured his piggy bloodshot eyes. "Maybe not" Then he was gone. Little-un breathed a sigh of relief.

When she got back to the boat the ponies were cropping the grass to the side of the headstones. "Hello ladies", "hello little-un" they said, big white peg-teeth green with grass juice. Marge looked at her. "You look - devilish" she said. "Ha Cheers marge!" Laughed Little-un and hopped onto the cratch. The door was open and Sandra was making a brew. Her ashtray was full of roaches. "How's about what come up of that dredger?" Little-un said to Sandra. "oh aye?" She winked sluggishly, stoned out of her face. "It put a right spike in that old tupper didnt it? Good riddance I say, Sidd wouldn't hassle with it if there was more work about. More cost nor worship" Little-un didn't like Sandra. She was wearing Siddos hooded sweater underpants and a massive pair of red wellies with JB on the side in marker. She leaned close to Little-un's face "do you not want to see what it was that put a hole in her?" the weed smell was strong on her breath. She nodded. "if you say owt to owt ill cope you like a ferret" she said and pinched Little-un's pouted lips with her hard fingers splayed. Gulping she heard Dick-Rodger's voice in her head "whatever it takes." "Im off to see Gavin", she squeaked. "Oh aye?" Sandra raised her eyebrows, "well mind you don't get up the chute messing about with that dirty fucker, he's put it about a bit ill say."

She grabbed her army knapsack from her cot and plopped it on her back empty and slack, checked Sandra was out of sight and whipped her special bumbag from the secret stash under the cot "You wanna get out there its bloody lovely day" she called to the galley. "bollocks" said Sandra. Hard fake boobs pushed up against Little-un as she squeezed past and jumped out of the boat. She trotted round the loop the opposite way this time, through the graveyard and could feel Dick-Rodger watching her from the bushes. She said a secret "Fuck you" to them. He had her over a barrel, as Siddo would have said. Back around the side of the pub, Awd Mandy's head was still visible toading about. Back around the front she opened the door just enough to get through but not enough to knock the bell that was fixed above it. She slipped behind the bar and cracked the dumb-waiter open, she could hear sticky feet waddling around above her and through the window she saw Darren's bike leant up against the back fence. Carefully stepping on the joists,

she removed an old bottle of vet's eyedrops from her bumbag, that she'd rinsed out earlier and filled with cooking oil. She squeezed a few drops on the lift shutter waited a moment and opened it smooth as silk. She pressed the down arrow, pulled her arm in and drew the hatch up gently closed. Humming quietly the little metal lift chugged steadily down into the pantry. Her torch, which was actually Siddo's old bike light scanned the shelves of the windowless room.

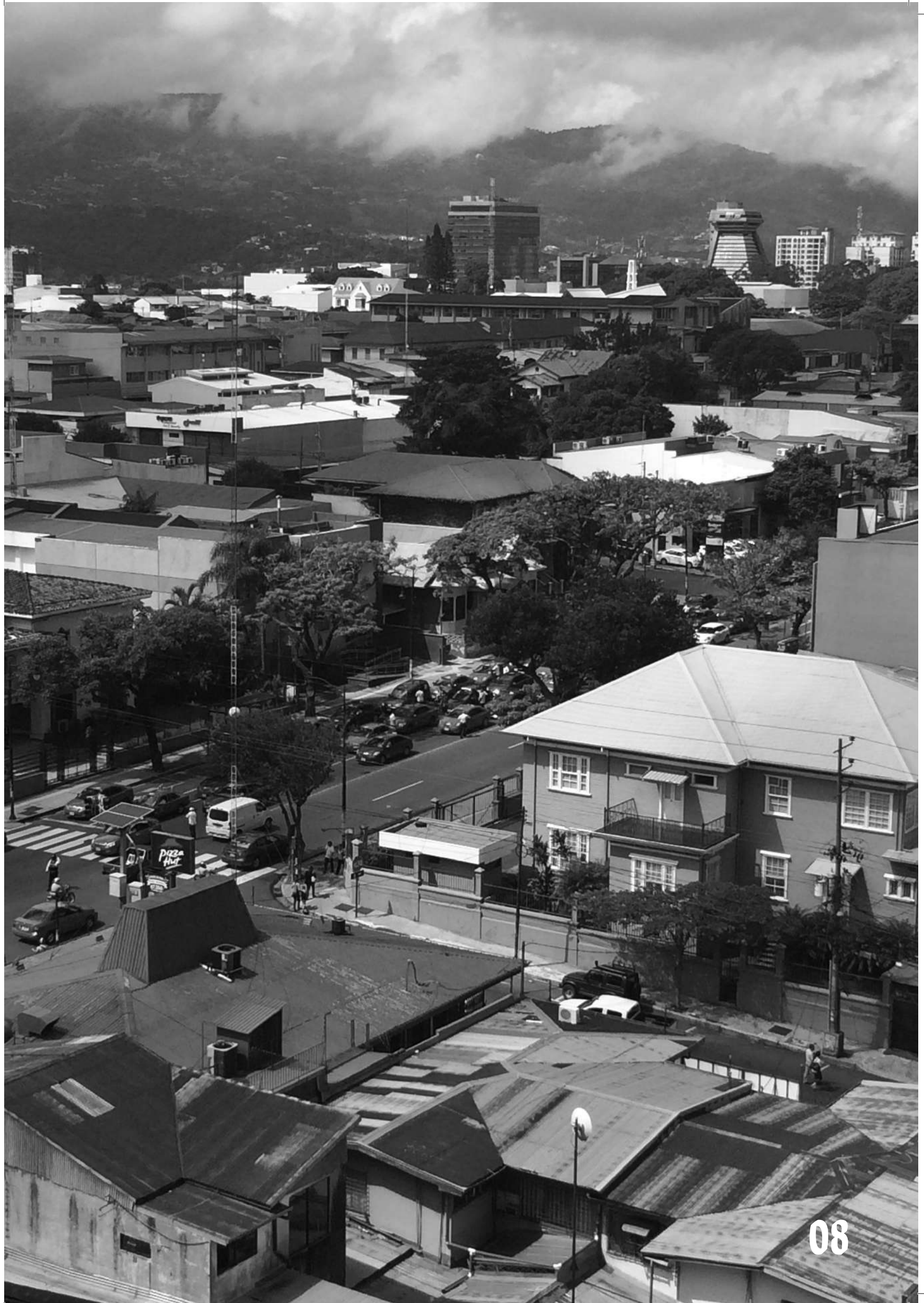
"If the first call comes in from Hawaii," Dick-Rodger had said, "it means the jig is up and we surrender. But if the first call comes in from Weston-Super-Mare then it means we go straight to plan B – we go to ground." Whatever it was that'd gouged the bottom of the little boat was somehow involved too. Dick-Rodger had taken it as a sign and he was waiting for contact. In the meantime, Little-un was tasked with stockpiling supplies to tide them over until order could be regained and they could emerge from hiding and re-join civilisation. As there was no telling how people would react to a total breakdown of order, therefore it was impossible to know who to trust. It was strictly forbidden to tell anyone. She wanted to tell Siddo because she was worried about his meds and what with him being blind and all, he'd be an easy target for bandits, she'd ask Dick-Rodger to assign two of his goons to watch over the boat. How would Siddo drive it without her, she hadn't got a clue. She felt a wave of panic rise up from her guts. "Focus on the job in hand" she said to herself: The list! Sardines, sweetcorn, tinned hot-dogs, powdered cheese, powdered milk, powdered eggs, powdered potato, White onions!? Jesus, that twerp! Little-un thought. His breath was bad enough as it was. She hoped she wouldn't have to spend much time in the bunker with him, she found him pretty bloody disgusting.

Little-un didn't know what kind of animal Dick-Rodger was. He wasn't really like any animal you might have seen before. He was incredibly vain. The first thing you'd notice was that he wore a small amount of Bryl cream on the fur of his head. The Bryl cream trapped dirt and muck when he was burrowing which over time had blackened his crown so it looked like a wig. To add to this he wore a piece of garden wire that Little-un had bent at his request to resemble round glasses and sprayed with gold car paint, he'd had to twist the arms painfully around his ears to secure it to his head. He was as long as a labrador but his legs were short and he was roughly the shape of a pear, his backside being the widest point and his snout the pointed end. He wore a turd brown leather jacket that he had found at the dump, little-un thought must have been for a toy doll or ornament. She couldn't imagine a baby wearing such a grotesque thing.

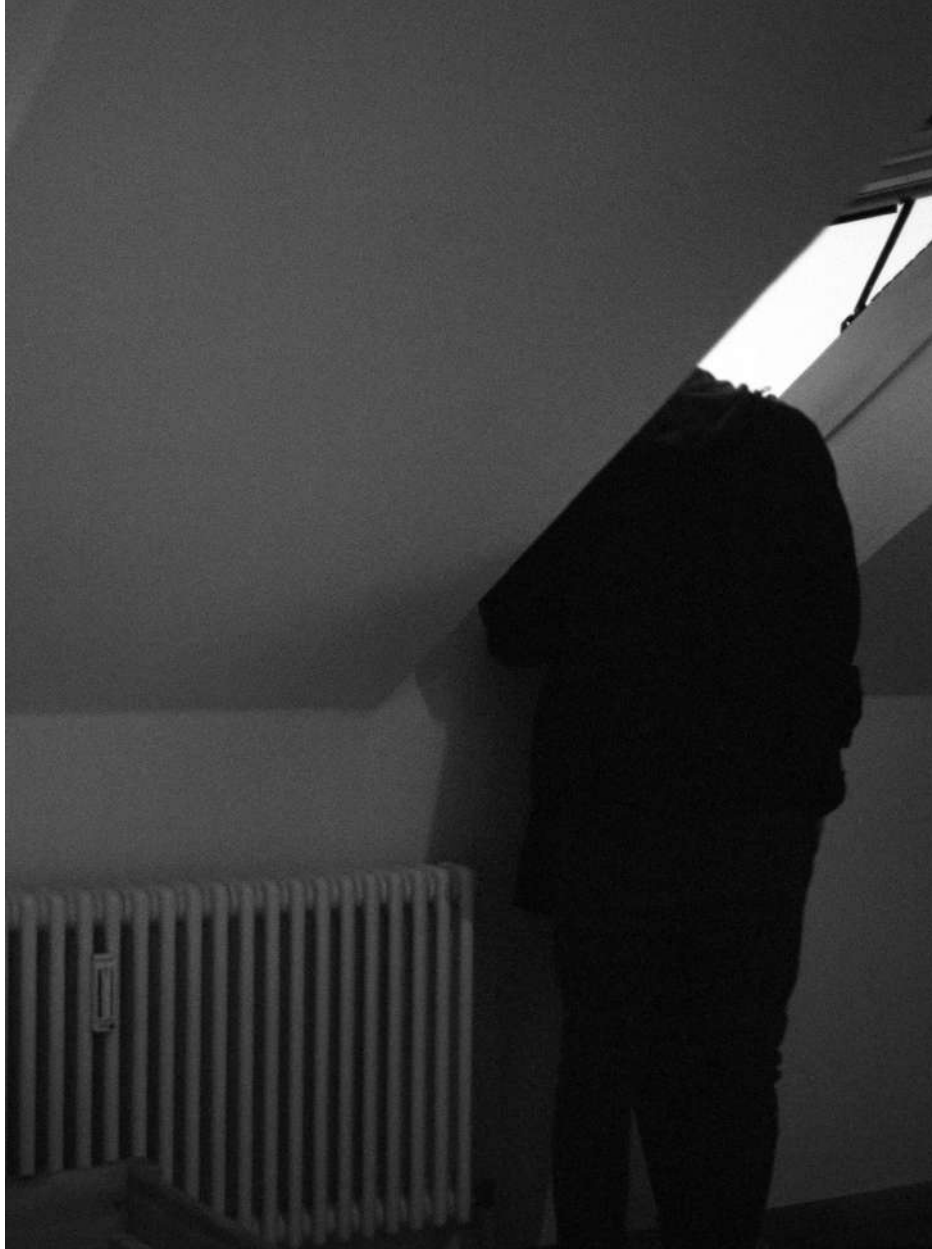
Her knapsack full, she poked her head out of the dumb-waiter and listened, she could hear Awd Mandy rowing with Darren about him being too rat-arsed to drive and pick her up later and him saying she should learn how to ride a bike. Running at a crouch she burst out the front door and vaulted the stile into shoulder length grass gone to seed. Crushing a narrow path down with her feet she made her course diagonally, picked up a piece of dried cow parsley and broke the stem in her teeth, an earwig crawled out into her mouth and she spat it away "pah," she could hear the combines in the other field, they were working from morning till night. She went over into the back of number 16 and then through the hedges one by one, stepping over the gnomes and the cat shit, the millstones and the mouse mushrooms. She broke out of the wide conifers onto the main road and went west, over the county border and over

the 5-bar into the big stubble field. "The thing is" Dick-Rodger had said, "The thing is: bunkers aint just for the roundheads you know, theres bunkers all over the country, stuff left over from the cold war and that," He was quite knowledgeable about this kind of stuff, typical boorish way. He claimed he'd dug his way into "the room where they keep all the maps" and that old Winston Churchill had been there once, and Dick-R said "how do" to him which didn't add up.

Little-un reached the edge of the copse. Always had a cursed feeling to it the copse did. The water in the pits was stagnant and the trees were all dutched or dieback'd. Little-un could see a van parked in the gateway to the field. Small, like the postie's but white. "Hmf" she thought, "proceed with caution." Although it was unusual to see people down here, she knew sometimes the farm workers brought girls because she had seen the condom packets and once a pair of messy knickers on a fencepost. Siddo also said vagrants had camped there once and they'd dumped a load of chemical toilet waste but she'd never seen sign. blown clouds made the light shift swiftly. Her pack clinked as she slithered under the electric fence and into the woods, her little feet picking between branches, she crept quietly like Dick-Rodger had shown her. In the centre of the copse was a rectangular building. It was about as tall as Little-un's breast-bone from the ground but it was buried half the same again. She stepped silently down the broken concrete steps. The bunker was split by one long straight corridor running lengthways with rooms coming off it. The steps led down straight at the end of the corridor and there was another entrance at the far end, symmetrical. Little-un could hear noises coming from the other end. It couldn't be Dick-Rodgers, he never made any noise. The noises sounded large and human. Hard bottom shoes and the screech of tape, scuffing, stuffing and shuffling sounds. Hard breathing. She flipped her bag and hugged it to her front to stop the tins clinking and edged forward. The rest of the bunker was black as pitch and the flickering light from the other end was ruining her eyes for it. She took out her notepad to record. One person. Quite large. Owner of van? Likely. Moving in reverse, she slinked quietly up the steps at her end back out into the copse, at the edge she lay down in a pile of Docs and took her mini binoculars from her bumbag. Steadying her hands by resting her elbows on the dirt, she studied the van, and drew an impression of it, noting its plates, areas of rust etc. crucial intel that would be passed onto Dick-Rodger and his goons immediately.







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[Start of recorded material 00:00:00]

Cally: I wanted you to tell me what you told me in the Mexican restaurant, about what happens to the organs of a body, when the enemy attacks.

Dr Feldstone: When you detect danger or suspect danger, part of your brain which is not available to you consciously – an organ called the amygdala, which gets information from outside just like your cortex does, but it gets it first – it gets to work. What it does is trigger your sympathetic nervous system. A whole slew of things happen. Your entire GI tract turns off, from the mouth – which is why your mouth gets dry – all the way down to the anus. It's just off – no secretions, no peristalsis, nothing moving. If you have a full bladder, it might evacuate spasmodically – wet your pants. If you're male or sexually aroused, you might suddenly ejaculate and then stop. This whole internal system turns off. If it lasts for a while, your immune system turns off, too. Then it activates things. It activates the adrenal glands, which secrete adrenaline into the bloodstream, which keeps this whole process going. It increases your blood pressure, increases your heart rate, increases your breathing rate, expands the air availability in your lungs so oxygen transfer is more efficient. The blood is redirected from the center core out to the muscles, where it's needed. A number of other things go on, but that's the basic process. It also affects almost immediately the brain stem. If you happen to be drowsy, you are not drowsy anymore. So you're ready. What are you ready for? You're ready for fight, flight, or freezing. What you prefer depends upon what your species is. If you're a rabbit or a little mouse, you freeze. If you're a cat, then you either fight or run, depending upon how close you are to danger and how you estimate it. If you're a human being, your preference is to freeze, but you have the capability to do any of the others as well. That gets you revved up. If it's temporary, if it's dealing with the leopard at the door and you survive, then you're okay and everything calms down. If on the other hand you live in our world, where there are all kinds of stressors in your life that are not leopards but are there, then you're constantly under stress. One of the consequences is that you tend to get ill more easily, because your immune system is turned off. If you think about it, if you're one of our ancestors half a million years ago and you get a scratch on your hand and it's busy healing, and then you have to fight off this marauding wolf, you don't care if it stops healing, because when you're done with the wolf – if you survive – then you can start healing again. But not for you or me. We live in this culture we've invented in which getting to work is stressful, in which talking to people is stressful, in which everything is. The incidences of all kinds of illnesses has gone up, despite modern medicine. Autoimmune diseases have gone through the roof. Some people feel that the increase in cancers are largely because of this. Others say it's because we're living longer. It's probably both. So that's what happens when it turns on. Now, what happens when it turns off? Now the parasympathetic nervous system is activated, which reverses everything. The trouble with that is that it can reverse it too much. You can actually go into shock afterwards. Your heart rate can drop too low. Your blood pressure can drop too low. In fact, occasionally people actually die after they get past the danger...

PART 2
Sweating! Small talk! Monkeys!

[End of recorded material 02:35:48]

PREFACE

VERY SHORT PREFACE

Questions for Kevin

Dear Kevin Spacey

As you grow more professional do you feel increasingly divorced from your professional body?
Kevin, are you a human vessel, for other people's things?

Best wishes,

Cally

Part 3. A Sooth. A Truth

At Delphi, the Oracle's truth arrived in strange ways; a frenzied woman, would say
two or more impossibly incompatible things, something I have great admiration for.

Part 4. Battling air-con
Finding empathy

Part 5. ROAD TRIP!

PREFACE III

Dear (TBC)

This is not a sustainable city; it doesn't care about the future much. It can't build bones. When the apocalypses comes, the first thing to crumble, into shitty little bits, is language. In London, which is where I live, when you peacefully protest, or sometimes simply exist, you may be Kettled. This is a confinement. It robs your time, and stalls your movement for up to nine hours, but after a six week break on a Med island, I found myself feeling somewhat loose! Returning home, the city punched me in the head and lumbar for five days, till I hopped back onto its hostile clock, for fear of my life! Then, everything I measured. Elsewhere, across the Atlantic, language plasticates, like a disaster movie.

I'm trying to arrange an archaeological dig - into the marrow of my home. it's got low density. bone-madness. gappy. Glass apartment go up, the pound goes down, we run short on london-bricks! (Rarer than a fucking fuck dragon.) The structure of language affects its speaker's condition, or world view. Viseria Versa too. THIS I KNOW. As usual, it's too easy to tell you, it's not easy to know where to start, but borders will close.

What would it mean to organize with you, or you, or you, for, say, three thousand years? Let's think wide! This is a masterpiece! of underused forms, overused technologies, false tears and surplus - flowing in, draining out, but I am not here. I'm in London (writing my novel), sweating (a lot), financialising my future, wrapping my reproduction up with futurity while I suppose I'm saying... I suppose I'm saying I suppose I'm saying. I'm hoping for the best.

Yours,

Cally

Part 6: Island life metabolism

Part 7: Magic

YOU CANT do that HERE.

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Oh!

"This," says J, "is a process of stretching your boundaries of endurance. Come ON Aldo!" He punches the air. "You can do this!" Aldo pulls a teaspoon through his Cappucino, lifting the foam freckled with brown sugar, and takes a mouthful. "Life," J, bangs the Evening Standard on the table, "is aggression in the animal kingdom. Aggression is LIFE. Your work is a project, not a given! And for that you will need your FIGHTING SPIRIT." Aldo stretches his arms above his head, tipping the chair back, indicating to a waitress, they are ready for the cheque. "Aldo!" "Look," Aldo is agitated, "I don't know if I have the energy any more. Things at the magazine are insane. My editor is ripping me in twenty directions and now, he's making me go to 'family days' on a Sunday. C can't come. She's not in good shape, and i'm like... Tired." Aldo sits on his hands, which are starting to leak sweat. Today, J is urgent, unkempt; Aldo hasn't worked out why. "But what do you SAY Aldo?" "Nothing." Says Aldo. "I'm feeling quiet." "Only where there is reason to suspect that conditions could be changed, but are not changed, does rage arise. And your lack of rage is pissing me off." "I'm going." Says Aldo, standing and throwing loose change at the table for his coffee. "I can't keep getting these late-night SMS summons, and I can't keep meeting you in shit cafes. I really have a lot on my mind." J looks up, red eyed, pleading. "I have terrible rage, Aldo." He swallows through his thin neck. "I *ache*."

[Start of recorded material 00:00:00]

Cally: And THAT is what dying of shock is.

Dr Feldstone: Uh. No... They die because their blood pressure drops too low. And there's no one to resuscitate them. It's rare, but it does happen. The best thing for us obviously is either don't subject yourself to all these stressors, or learn how to cope with them. In a primitive society, as our ancestors probably lived in way back, there were limited ways of coping and everyone learned them. Everyone did the best they could. We've got all kinds of ways of coping. Most of us were not taught these things, usually. We have to observe them in our parents, siblings, and friends. A lot of people fail. They don't learn these things, but they're pretty obvious. They're common sense. One way to avoid all these stressors is to anticipate them. Don't want to deal with the wolf at the door? Move to a place where they don't have wolves, or set up a warning signal that automatically locks the door for you. Another type of standard coping mechanism – and it works but only temporarily, because eventually the predator might get you – is denial. As you're subjected to a lot of stressors, if you don't cope with them effectively, then your body is getting turned on as you're getting ready for fight, flight, or freeze, or it's being turned off. It keeps going up and down. It's the oscillation going up and down that hurts you the most. Your immune system is complicated. There are a lot of things people don't know about it to this day. It involves production of cells. It involves all kinds of biochemistry where the cells recognize invaders and synthesize things that can help them destroy them – all kinds of stuff. It takes time. Your immune system is sort of like your brain: It has to learn how to do these things. You spend the early part of your life – where your body is learning how to protect itself. Things are pretty stable and fine. Then suddenly you have this fluctuation up and down, so it's like you never learned anything – or your immune system didn't. At least that's the theory.

PART 6

More marauding wolves
Hysteria

[End of recorded material 02:35:48]

Chapter XXXXXX Cecilia loses her long-term mind.

Cecilia was not losing her mind. She was losing her long term memory. "That isn't entirely different." Said Aldo's editor, when Aldo raised the issue at work. Aldo had responded that it *was very* different, but he could not say why. "Well she's your wife." Shrugged his editor. "You know better than anyone what's what." The problem, as Aldo saw it, was twofold. Cecilia's short term recall was performing outstandingly. Insignificant contemporary events impacted the sides of her brain like stucco. Sharp and awkward, each minor hostility be that on line, on train, on foot, would stay with her for weeks, whereas historical memories and meaningful relationships, particularly the most joyful, were, mostly, missing. One humid day in June, Cecilia cried and cried, tears of hot grief. She could not, she said, remember who she loved enough to grieve for *so very much*, especially when no one who mattered to her was lost. Aldo did not understand. "C." He says, touching her soft hair. "It will pass..." Now she's jumping up from her chair; slamming doors, unmaking the bed on purpose. Aldo stays at the kitchen table, head in his hands, with the plates of cooling spaghetti.

Chapter XXXXXX

It's June, and Aldo receives email.

Aldo - we need you to interview the actor Kevin Spacey. It's urgent.

Aldo is delighted. He's a huge fan.

ELSEWHERE

It was 5.30pm, with the sun going down, when Cecilia was hit in the lip by her Bic multi-option pen. With a book in one hand, and the end of the Bic in her mouth, her tongue pushed down the blue option, fiddled about, found then raised green. Green pops up fast, lip trapped by green, lip cut and swollen. *Transference Burn*. Writes Janet Malcolm, via Joanna Walsh; Cecilia closes her book. So interested is Cecilia in this new psychic term, she forgets the lip pain, and roles onto her tanned back to face the clouds, wondering what in her life burns, and what can be transferred. On the other side of the rock, she hears Aldo talking to his Editor through a Samsung phone's speaker.

"So," crackles the phone, "you have a big plan!"

"Sure!" Aldo replies loudly, facing the Aegean sea in high wind. "I'm going to storm on to that page... and just break this shit down and..." His voice is carried away by the weather.

The beach was created by catastrophe. From the mountain summit, boulders, soil and trees cascaded furiously through the valley, wiping out houses and restaurants, smashing into the sea, too fast for nature to muster a tidal redistribution. The result was a flattened pile-up, on the usually beach-free shoreline, perfect for sunbathing and Volleyball. This worried Cecilia.

In addition to unexpected beaches, falling from the mountains, she counted other dangers that awaited her: tanned, bare legs on motorbikes, food poisoning from tap water, whole hills of cacti, where even the smallest lapse in concentration could cause her to slip, and become impaled. No amount of assurance from anyone would convince her of this unlikelihood and, soon enough, she proved everyone wrong. For twelve hours she picked the tiny silver needles from her hands and her face. It was such a bad day and no one understood how she'd ended up down there, in the bushes.

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HELP

Sheriff's sales. When owners default, can't keep up their payments, then the taxes go delinquent. When the tax default reaches a certain point, the Sheriff sells the property to get the taxes paid. It does happen esp in less desirable areas.

Buildings that have been used as labs are technically considered toxic waste sites, and even after they have been decontaminated retain the stigma associated with the manufacture of illicit drugs they are often located in areas with severely depressed real estate value. In some cases, this makes a former meth lab an attractive investment. Often, these structures are available at the very lowest end of the price spectrum and may need substantial cosmetic and structural improvements in order to be resold at a profit.

The low edge, a shingled skirt overhanging the concrete perimeter wall, was dusty and eroded, moist and fragile. As a starter house for someone willing to invest some sweat equity, this can represent a substantial opportunity.

The influx of Methamphetamine has begun to produce effects on the built environment. Because a meth 'cook' leaves a toxic chemical residue that will contaminate the manufacturing site, and because of the urgent need to stay out of sight of the authorities, labs have left the city and moved 'back to the land'. Using public land to set up a quick cook will neutralize attempts to track a manufacturing site back to you. A car can be parked and left there, or the process can be set up in a series of buckets. Labs have moved into the woods, leaving behind any kind of structure altogether, operating just as a set of tools, a set of chemicals that can be cooked. The byproducts are just left behind. This kind of mobility becomes very hard to trace.

One of the easiest ways to make methamphetamine is from amphetamine. Assuming you don't have amphetamine lying around, a surprisingly simple synthesis is possible from phenylalanine, it's an amino acid you can get at health food stores. Phenylalanine is 2-amino-3-phenylpranoic acid, which is more or less amphetamine with a COOH where the CH₃ should be at the end of the chain. Use Thionyl chloride, an industrial corrosive, to replace the OH with a Cl. Then give it lithium aluminum hydride: the Cl falls off and gets replaced by H. You now have amphetamine.

The difference between amphetamine and methamphetamine is the addition of a single methyl group (CH₃) to the amino group sticking off the middle carbon atom in the chain. Fortunately, substituting amines is really simple. Vaporize your amphetamine with a bunch of vaporized chloromethane (CH₃Cl, a solvent) voila, the amino group takes the methyl from the chloromethane and lets a hydrogen go.

The hydrogen joins a liberated chlorine, and the resulting HCl can be soaked up

by some gaseous pyridine. The pyridine is optional. Adding it drives the reaction a bit by pulling the excess HCl out of the equation, but its not necessary. Evaporate off the water and you have methamphetamine hydrochloride salt. Now smoke that shit!

I thought about you sitting on the trunk of a tree that was half-submerged in a lake. Your legs hung into the water up to your thighs and you were rocking them gently back and forth, one after the other. You were in a light blue swimsuit, bleached by the sun, almost colorless, and I was looking at the soft shape of your belly rise and fall with your breathing. I was standing on the shore. When I think without words, or just exist, I simply feel what's going on.

Linked together in a chain, heated approximately, with no outlet. A clam-shell seal, buffered and insulated, bushings vulcanized, any recesses filled with magnesium shavings moistened and gently tempered, tamped down with a split-tip swab. Boil the tailings down to a brownish tea. I got shitty yields of poor purity and had no desire to flash it through a column. I sucked in about 750mg of the vaporized material. I continued to smoke until I realized that I had dropped the glass vaporizing device and was lying on the kitchen floor. Expect deep insight into object/ people/ processes. Unable to walk.

Fluid, viscous, spilling into the finest fissures, cracks, niches, infinitely receding and expanding spontaneously. Small cells with an intimate knowledge of prevailing demand, updated, able to meet production needs on deadline without capital-intensive infrastructure. Open up that mouth of yours. The general intellect asserts itself as an autonomous public sphere only if the juncture that ties it to the production of goods and wage labor is severed. Open up that sweet pink mouth of yours. Roll the soft ring of flesh down along the shaft, form a circle with your pinkie and thumb.

Inside, it was smoky and warm. Everyone played with a candle. There was a half-wall, plastered and still damp, that parted the room and propped a proud brass tray, inlaid walnut, annodized, a grandfathered artifact with a kind of sinister or at least uncomfortable implication. T laid on the mattress next to me, her skin damp and warm. We were enveloped in a bleached cloud, I don't think her boyfriend saw it, which left her exhausted and supple. She told me quietly that she wouldn't have sex with me (she was a sexual innocent, and had been raped a few years prior for wearing a see-through blouse). But she agreed to sleep next to me, and I held her tight against my chest, brushing my erection against her belly. She was actually afraid, I came to realize, of my erect penis.

Oscar, what's wrong with this picture. you turned me out, I'm so fuking horny it hurts, you made my pussy bleed. I'm pissed off and sick, and you ran off to the woods. cum to me, I've cried enough already, I'm tired.

xx

When I moved there, I didn't have enough time to build a proper shelter, so I made a lean-to out of ten-foot-long pieces of black pond-liner, like a bimini on a boat. I saw a road-construction forestry using it around a culvert, went back that night with my freighter pack-frame and EMT shears and some rope, and cut pieces out of scrap left behind. It feels and looks very tough—hail proof, much stronger than my toughest tarp, which I had to double up to keep me completely dry during the heavy downpours there.

Under the plastic I stretched a piece of barbless fencing I found, where I hung clothes to dry. The fencing is handy for keeping bedding and other gnaw-able materials suspended where critters can't reach them. The plastic and fencing are tied out to live trees, deciduous.

My camp was near the back an old artillery position, less wind and more seclusion from the road. Under the lean-to, I made a bough bed eight inches thick, beside a dead-fall log for windbreak. The terrain was flat and barren, with trees runted from



the snows. The military had built a base there after the war—a strategic point, the closest on land to the USSR. Not much of it left, but they had a series of Nike missiles in underground silos, and those are still there, along with a network of underground tunnels. The silos were full of water, underground lakes frosted with scum. Descending the shaft you couldn't see where the black pond surfaced, and it might have been three hundred feet to the bottom, an undifferentiated stagnant pool, breeding some blind white spiny shrimp.

The tunnels were big enough to drive a truck through, running for miles. I went down there with a kerosene torch, scavenging what was left of some installment, a mouldering bunkhouse. I waded in a yellow pool, one hand on the flaking powdery wall, coated and available, blind. Sounds carried out and returned, muted and hollowed-out. Twisted bands of metal, pebbled glass sprayed out in arcs along the base of the walls. I saw wolves. They ran through there in packs.

I never did move into the tunnels. It might have been easier when the snows started, but it felt too exposed. So when it finally did start getting cold, I had planned ahead and dug far enough down that my shelter was fairly well insulated. There was a wood barracks building that survived, and I picked that apart for wood. Built a sturdy floor and framed out most of the walls between salmon runs. I wasn't the only one who lived like that, camping out. Lots of the older hands can't stand the bunkhouses. Why let the company garnish your wages for sleeping two to a cell in a shitty trailer? Waking up in a muddy tent is hard, that's why we were drunk all the time.

There are hulks run up on the beach there, rusted old purse-seiners beached against the driftwood, tailing orangish rust stains in a ribbon towards the sea. It was a desperation play for insurance money, usually. Put it in high gear, and point towards the beach. Must be fun, I guess! A couple of them on the island there, run up so far out of the water you'd think they were houses. Some guys stayed in one, in the mate's cabin.

Drain what you can from the bilge, seal any punctures with tarp backed by thin strips of wood, puttied in and buffed, secured against the hull where it can be. Flake off the scabbed rust shingles, trim whatever's loose. Fiberglass resin makes a good filler, can be feathered out and adhered along the gunwales.

Gut the rest, seal off unused areas to make living area as small and efficient as possible and heating-efficient. Lay thick beads of rubberized sealant into the cracks, smooth by hand, or trowel on wet-dry mastic. Work when dry (if possible, check tide charts for a long working period, likely overnight). Evacuate standing water, sponge pools with shredded newspaper.

A watertight assembly can be insulated with shredded fibers, cardboard, mill offings, waste clothing, or chipped wood bark (may be easily procured from a

friendly contract feller/trimmer). Also: shredded beverage container plastics and aluminums, if these can be obtained near you, may provide a good heat trap in sufficient quantity. Pack in polypropelene and lathe over with a lime-rich cement paste. Use chopped straw as a binding agent. Build out a sleeping bunk, level it against the tilt of the hulk. Render any plastics, mold the softer parts under a propane torch while warm to the touch, and rinse down with acetone. Set a screen around the perimeter, staple at head joists, rib and back with burlap. If you're tight under the bow, toenail a runner into the corner. My liver is shot, but I've managed. See the little fringe there? A decorative touch with a nod to utility.

It will last you through an early snow, but I do not recommend wintering near the sea. High waves on an exposed beach point are unpredictable; best to locate a protected position at higher ground. Biovac under tamped turf until weather clears, truck your essentials along a series of night paths, none more than once monthly. A mistake in winter will be costly.

Most everybody else, the year-rounders, lived in a tower block built on the island. It was a pair of them, built probably in the early 60s, cast concrete 'prison housing' blocks. A year-rounder on the Aleutians is hardcore. For awhile people lived in both, but finally the town turned off the heat to one of them, and everyone crammed into the other. But many stayed. Someone opened a bar in their room, and that's really where everyone stayed, drinking vodka for warmth. The mean old crabbers stayed in the cold tower, freezing all winter, holding ground. 'It's where I lived, I can die here too' one told me.

Black bears came around, but they're shy. It's Grizzlies you worry about: I saw their scat and tracks. Once, at a beach head, I came on the carcass of a fresh killed doe. Quickly announced myself and backed away, knowing not to disturb the prey. This was the only certain danger I have faced. It was early March, a bit of sun glinting against the waters, and I had felt the cloud cover levitating. Banked snow was melting along the tideline, and I walked without my shotgun. When walking now I bring my 12 gauge Remington loaded with buck shot backed by a lead slug. Level the weapon, discharge into the animal when it rises, place the slug between the vertabrae when it charges and you can slide your forearm through the carcass. I once blasted a fist-sized scallop off a sitka spruce from three yards, went deaf awhile. But they never bothered what little dry and tinned food I had at ground level. *I never* cooked or ate meat or fish at my camp. Those odors are quite strong and more attractive to bears than are rice/beans/lentils.

On weekends, when they gave us one, I stayed at camp: cook, wash clothes, tidy up, sew broken gear, saw firewood. One morning, on my back on the muskeg, I watched a single engine Cessna bank low overhead, circling once. I considered setting fire to the spongy sedge, watching it smoulder around me, cloaking off the sky. A subterranean burn, spreading among the stunted roots of dwarf black spruce, consuming the submerged debris of that rank and tangled swamp. Whatever diesel



excavators and blackened containers remained would sink through the crumbled ash and disappear. A cunt-opening in the earth, slicked with trickles of red oily water, exuding a sucking gravity. There would be no way to prove the origin of the flame, no trace just a blackened crust in the wasted plain, a black beacon of soot ringed by a barely perceptible skirt of ember, another nameless venture gone wrong.


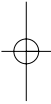
The locals traffic matanuska thunderfuck up and down the ALCAN, gilded and glazed in the 24 hour sun, the one hit quit tundra trimmed, styroboxed and wrapped in ice. Some of the righands I got to know showed me into their growrooms, all I can say is "...DAMN". Grown upside down on a potassium suspension drip, leaf fed from 45 days, packed in worm castings and trimmed by a HKDM from the lower forty-eight. Little red veined purple cilia sprouting from the stems, clinging in ravined clutches, a crystalline wasteland.

The cannery workers arrive in time to work the slime lines. Many have annoying habits: defecate without burying, litter, vandalize, steal, raid my provisions. One whom I spent a night with under a dripping cedar shared a strip of smoked sockeye. Brined in brown sugar and pepper and pit smoked over box alder embers damped under laminaria. It was a long leathered skin, slick and dense, the flesh gummed and grassy, grey and greasy. I woke up one morning and she had my dick in her mouth, I couldn't believe it, I was like fuck yes, she's just giving me head. Best fuck I've ever had, a split cherry wrapped in a cream pillow, fully operational, fully fuckin full! Brown, round, crowned trim, all holes slick craving dick. I went balls deep up her, some parts were puffy, swollen and rubbery, it just got better the faster I did it, she was even crying. Fully stretched, crushed, liquid coming out of her. Shot off in her eye. I don't know I. Sorry man, I ain't gonna be told, let it all be.

I was glad when the season ends, kids go back to school. The woods are quieter then. I had thought my latest camp was high enough and far enough from the road to be secure from human intruders. Wrong! In early August, on separate occasions, two mushroom pickers discovered my camp. They had spotted some of my white and colored buckets. I got face-to-face contact with both who were apparently alone. One was Native-American, about 30, quiet but friendly. I felt he wasn't likely to steal my belongings. The other was Caucasian, 30ish, wearing bright white T-shirt, blue jeans; short hair. He didn't look like a mushroomer; more like a nosy undercover cop.

This summer was nice: humid but with lots of sun. Many berries. Chinook fishing great. But August was tough for me financially so I didn't go moose hunting with my father. He lost his 20-year job at a local sawmill because of the lousy economy and mismanagement. He is still bitter. No other job skills.





We go to the underworld, that's what we call it. A stretch of railroad tracks tunneled through a banked waste, a place out of the rain, out of sight. The tracks run under a knot of freeways, isolated, invisible, without a law. So long as you know how to look after yourself you can stay there without getting hassled. A thin skiffing dust cascades over the barriers and turns on an updraft till it settles around me.

Some men live there, melted black pools of plastic caked into the dust. Most who live here come in around dark and leave in the morning with their blankets. Some go to work during the day. With the freeway overhead providing cover from even winter rains, a sleeping bag laid over a stacked pallet platform makes a suitable temporary camp. John Lander froze there.


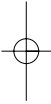
Run over the tops of a running freight car and look for the grain chute. Don't cross under couplers or cars. Ride through the long tunnels on a loaded gondola, split a shin on the coupling, run the bushings dry. Our shakedown cruise met the rubber pass that bounced us back with thermostat, clutch, manifold and gasket problems. Where do you think I've been?

A certain amount of organization is needed for anything. Brother, I've been doing this since day one so I have pretty much seen all the movies. The structures have gone to ground, evaporated, have become invisible in order to survive. The most successful strategies of building and living with minimal resources, in remote lo-

cations necessarily minimize their relationships with mainstream social and economic systems. Invisibility is the only ideal, the only means of long term survival.

Owning a house gives people a sense of security, but it is the security of indentured servitude in order to pay for it. You can't own a house; it owns you. What happens when you get fired? When you get sick and can't work? In those conditions, losing your job means losing your home. Better to make a comfortable life for free, and not work unless necessary.

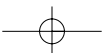
By using the freeway as a roof, well-insulated and weatherproof structures can be made by hanging tarps or blankets underneath the ramps. Siting a shelter at the top of an embankment also gives you an advantage because you can see people coming along the tracks before they see you. The people who live here obviously don't like to be disturbed, many of them are high, and some of them are armed, for good reason. I just took my bird and went upstairs, oblivious.



To get there, you climb through a hole in the DOT chain-link and follow the rails over a short, porous bridge. Scattered clothes, krylon cans and rollers, RMEs, rolling carts, tarps, sets, dumpstered cushions, springs, poles, cracked compacts, pads, rolls, bleached shreds, crumpled growlers, purloined implements, duece-duece, debris in drifts lining the soldier-pile, STAY DUMB. The rails feel electrified, you are only yourself, only your body, everyone can see you coming. Hollows are burrowed under the bent alders, lined with bags in a cramped half-dome, generally reeking and unsecured, chopped from the native vines. One camp is made from tarps strung under a tree. An area has been cleared for a yard, some chairs and tables tight up against the slope, and there's a wicker basket chair dangling chained from one of the branches. The owner (though he has no legal rights) has fixed 'No Trespassing' signs to perimeter trees and keeps footpaths hidden in the thorns. Vonu living in urban areas where resources are scarce and competition high is more unpredictable and dangerous than locating a remote spot 'far enough out in the woods.' You need to be willing and capable of defending your site against unfriendlies, by force when needed, something I am generally reluctant to do. During the times I visited he has been openly hostile towards me. He wears a survival knife prominently strapped to his arm with a leather cord.

I met a few Puyallups by the liquor store and we headed up an embankment out of the rain and to share a bottle. The sound of cars passing over us like a river was like a river passing over us. We built a small fire and did our best to keep the tiny rivers from drowning it. Little greasy black streamlets sliding over the burnt earth under the flames. But the rain kept up and we didn't, and pretty soon it drowned out the fire. We sat in the darkening air, in the slowly lifting smoke, watching the glow of headlights passing overhead.

A truck passes overhead, making the roadbed bounce.



I will never live in a house as long as my fellow human-beings are living in the street. I spent six years without a home, without direction, without something to live for. I once lived on the street by chance, I now live there by choice. I roam the once-famous streets. Bedding down above the degraded piles, slotted in a trough when I find one, rubbing in sand and rinsing my toes along the frontage. My lifestyle is to carry only essentials in what I call my "saddle bags". I travel light even by street standards. Blankets, for instance, are cumbersome and awkward. Besides, I am more creative after dark, so at night I walk the streets with my notebook. I sleep in the daytime in the park with a big cowboy hat over my head to keep the sun out of my eyes. My street buddies call me "cowboy".

Water had soaked my back through to the skin. H leaned into me, incoherent and heavy and for his own reasons was gripping my arm hard. H heated the air around us with a sparse steam smelling boozy and sharp. I am an old soul, half gone, lonesome and largely unknown. I needed this the way some people need something, I felt it, registered it, shifted and vanished somewhere briefly. A dark black mist hovered at the top edge of my vision, threatening to drop me into darkness without warning. Minutes took a very long time, I was standing on a filmy purple grate high above a gorge, picking figures out of the tributary's bankside thickets. We're gently fighting over the bottle, catch and release, a game of chance, of chicken, gladly putting ourselves at risk.

One of them was mad, sick; then they all were. They didn't have enough money to do anything about it. Some of us were crying, trying to write something out on a scrap of damp paper in a strained sooty light.

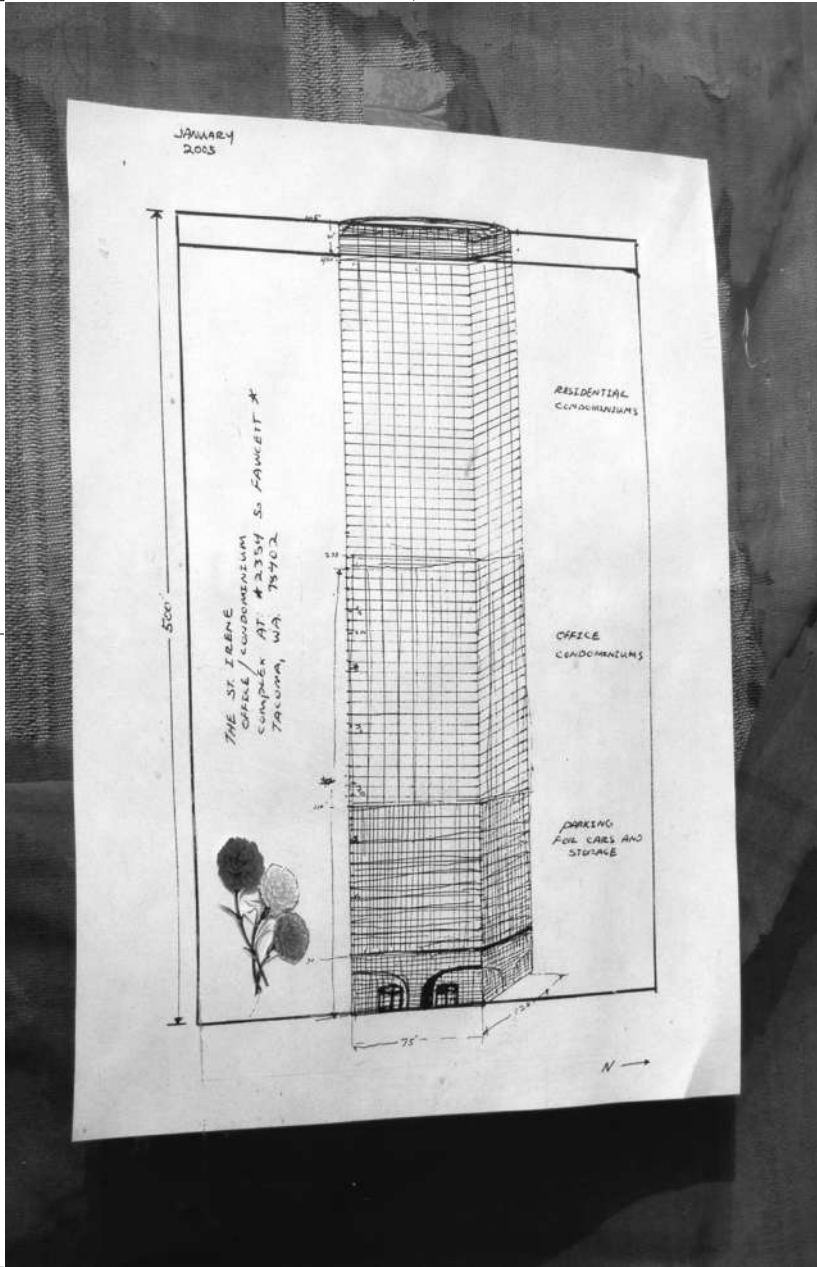
C came, produced a crystal, we huddled around smoking it off a coors can. I cradled the crumpled can in my hands like I was playing a flute, holding my breath and waiting for the jerky flame to find it. Smoke rose off the rock, a smoking battery. A bone white plume, fragile in the still air, precarious, noxious, tarry. I chased it, felt the taste hit the back of my throat, choked, speedy, spun. The best I can describe it is being inside an aluminum freight train, a silent scream, a kind of internal noise apocalypse pounding in my head, running off the tracks at terminal velocity, carriage buckling-- a full load of coal spontaneously incinerated. You were there, rolling, talking in an inflected, spun-down drawl, a sound I couldn't hear but would have listened to for hours, but of course you weren't there, really.

We stumbled around in the rain, searching some darkened semi-recessed entry-way out of the light to light the pipe. I couldn't wait, fuck the shit was good. Just 4,5,6 more hits, I felt in my pocket for the other rock, but fuck it's half gone! Smoke the rest of what's on the foil, double check the hollow ashes, scan for cops, reload the last rock, heat it, smoke it. Not saving this one, just blast through it before someone sees. 8 hits, 9, 10, fuck I lost count. Fuck! It's good shit, a heavy rush hits me and blasts me about six inches outside my skull. Looking for the other rock in my pocket, must have lost it. H has another, we spark it, vaporized and

contained, flying overhead, twitching and dilated, elated. I'm standing on a precipice, bold and alone, stroking the bone.

H took me to his cousin, she was staying in a trailer down the road. I didn't know how to negotiate the terms. I was bombed. Or should I say unchained, I don't know, righteously heated, a numb knob turning on its own trajectory, cushioned and protected, shuttling the length of a terrifyingly long indoor pool in a churning, silent froth. Unindicted, clay-like, impervious to pain, in my own hail of rain. How much money you have on you man, he asked me. Not much; it was enough. She took me into a dim red place, I laid on a thin pad under a thin cover and went quiet when she took her cock in my mouth. I don't know how she felt about it, I came.

She thanked me when I left. H was there in the scummy foyer, a grin on his toothless face, waiting naked in a tiled basin. An indistinct thicket of bay trees and dwarf cedars were cracking and drying in the heat, shedding a white carpety fluff in the air. The fluff gently settled and then rose again, there was no chance of containing it. The door opened itself, closed itself. Silence pervaded. I made it to a lot where some trailer trucks were parked. Halogen bathed a scrubby square, scotch broom shrubs choking through the crushed rock. The tarmac underneath the rigs was dry and radiating reeking heat from the day. I rolled myself underneath. It smelled like diesel. I listened to myself breathe for a while and slept. I woke up with the sun shining and a thin layer of gravel stuck in the sweat of my cheek.











ARCHITECTURAL FATHERS

BY CANARY WHARF

FATHER 3
GEORGE IACOBESCU

THE TOTAL ANNIHILATION
OF A HUMAN BEING

3 APRIL 1999

I arrived at One Canada Square and got the lift up to Dad's office. Clara the receptionist told me he was out, but he was expecting me. She sat me down in his office and got me the orange juice I'd asked for. There was a document on his desk from Paul Reichmann titled 'Canary Wharf: Going Public'. I leafed through it. It was mainly about the Jubilee extension and raising money for the new HSBC tower. It was boring and I felt annoyed. Then Dad burst in.

'Sorry I'm late.' He offered routinely, before his eyes fixed on me reading, 'Oh you're finally taking an interest.'

Shocked by his sudden entrance I hastily put the document back on his desk and in the process knocked over the orange juice. He turned back round and called to Clara to get someone to clean it up. We then moved to the other end of the office, where it was dry. He didn't mention the orange juice.

'It's exciting us going public isn't it? Did you read much before I came in? It outlines how we are going to use the money we raise, mainly the new HSBC tower and the Jubilee line at first but th—'

'Dad, we're not going to agree on this so can we just leave it.' He tilted his head to one side and raised his eyebrows. 'No I'm interested to hear what you think.'

'Really?' I sighed. He nodded.

'OK, I think it's bullshit. I think you should give all the money raised from it back to the taxpayer, for the billions that was taken by Olympia & York's bankruptcy.' He let out a short dismissive laugh.

'You asked me what I think.'

'Sorry, no, I am interested, carry on.'

'You got billions in public funds, which could've gone to schools, housing, public transport, health, education, but instead they went into office buildings which quite clearly will be able to pay for themselves. It's gross you pretend that it's private money, because when it goes wrong you just drain the public till. Then you "go public" to get even more money which will profit you and no one else. That's the model here and it'll happen again and again. You should've paid for the Jubilee line the first time round and you failed to do it, so the government just paid for it because they want this so bad, and now you raise this imaginary money and it looks like it's all you, helping the economy. But you're just exploiting it and you'll get richer and richer as this all goes along and—'

The cleaner then came in. It was Ioana. Confused and embarrassed by her presence I stopped talking.

'Why is she here?'

'What's wrong with me being here, I'm your dad's cleaner,' Ioana snapped back defensively.

'I didn't mean that, I—'

My dad interrupted me, thanked her and apologised on my behalf. Ioana began cleaning and I watched her. I felt undermined, I wanted to finish my sentence, and say that it was strange because she is the cleaner in his house, not in his office. There are other cleaners that work in this building, so why was she here? That was the point I wanted to make, and it would have been a fine point to make but instead for some reason I just said: 'I spilt the orange juice.'

Ioana paused mid-wipe and looked up at me, she looked confused, before moving her lips into the beginning of a smile, then bowing her head she continued to wipe up the juice. That was a disaster I thought to myself. Dad broke the ensuing awkward silence.

'You were saying Canary?'

'You know the rest of it anyway. It's not as though you ever listen.'

'No, I am interested. It's OK we don't agree, I mean I think

you'd be saying different things if you'd lived in Romania, but you didn't and you're not really Romanian so how would you understand? It's fine for you to think capitalism is evil, because you've never experienced anything else, just privilege. Nationalisation, austerity, you just don't get how awful these things can be'

'It's really annoying that you always do this Romanian thing, it doesn't make my ideas null and void and anyway that's not what I'm talking about. Also it's not nice that you always delegitimise me by saying I'm not Romanian. I am your daughter whatever you say.'

He went quiet at my response, not because he agreed with me, he just knew the conversation was too heavy to go into and I could tell he was trying to be nice for some reason. Ioana said something in Romanian and he let out a little laugh.

'It's really rude when you do that,' I said to them both.

'Ioana, thanks for cleaning up the mess Canary made again.'

'Oh fuck off, why is she even here?' My response came out sounding more angry than confused, when it was actually the other way around. Dad then said 'Canary,' in a tone that made me realise that he thought I was out of order. Ioana had also taken offence.

'I'm his cleaner, that's why I am here. What's your problem Canary?'

'Sorry, that came out wrong. I'm just confused, why are you cleaning here and not at the house. Surely they have their own cleaning team?' I was relieved to finally get something out that didn't sound antagonistic.

'They were short staffed and they called me in for some extra work.'

'Oh that's why you're here. Actually I also thought it was a bit strange,' Dad said, smiling at her.

'Yes I work for the same company so they offered me extra work here. I hope it's not a problem.'

'No of course not Ioana. I didn't know it was the same company. Anyway sorry, please carry on.'

Ioana had finished cleaning up the orange juice and after placing her cleaning things back on her trolley instead of leaving she sat at my dad's desk. He looked at her seeming a bit confused by this, but he said nothing about it and then turned back to address me.

'I know what you are upset about Canary, I saw your article was rejected. I'm sorry, I know it meant a lot to you.'

I was touched that he asked about my article, but it also made me anxious. I wasn't sure how to respond. I looked down shyly at the floor, then made eye contact with Dad and shrugged.

'Is this the article here?' Ioana barked, shattering the moment. She held up some paper off Dad's desk. Shocked by her brashness we both just looked at her in silence, as she read the title aloud.

'"The total annihilation of a human being". A review of "You've got mail" by Canary Wharf.' Ioana started tittering. 'It's a crazy title Canary.' I felt ashamed and angry as she read it, I really wanted her to stop. Why was she in the office anyway? Then Dad said to her, softly but firmly, 'Ioana, please. Maybe just leave it on the desk, she's feeling quite sensitive about it at the moment.'

I saw her cheeks flush red and I knew she was about to say sorry, maybe even burst into tears. I didn't want that, and I was also fed up with Dad patronising me, so without thinking and against my true feelings I said to Ioana, 'No Dad, I'd like her to read it. I wrote it for people to read, that's why I was upset that no one would print it.'

Ioana placed the document on the desk and began to read. Dad was looking at me with a kind of passive concern that made me feel like an annoying teenager. The room was silent as Ioana read to herself. My dad had taken his glasses off and was rubbing his eyes. He looked tired. Ioana then let out a little bemused laugh that sent a cold shameful shudder down my body.

'Have you seen "You've got mail" Ioana?' I asked to break the painful quiet. She looked up.

'Yes, I saw it. I thought it was boring, but this is very, er how would you say, maybe strong?'

'That's what I thought,' My dad added, placing his glasses back on his face.

'Yes it is strong, but that is what I saw. I can't believe anyone would think it was a feel-good movie. That's why I wrote it. I found it disturbing.' Ioana's grimacing nod made me anxious, which increased as she began to read it aloud:

Nora Ephron's romantic comedy *You've got mail*, was, I assume, supposed to be a feel-good movie about the new possibilities of self-understanding that the virtual world of computers offers us, as we approach the new millennium. How new forms of communication can allow us to see different aspects of people, to allow us to see what we think of them, might not be the whole story. The film seems to suggest that the internet, and online dating, offers a glimpse of the real you, a different version, which is hidden away by the demands of modern working lives in the city. The internet, it suggests, offers a kind of communication, a different space for intimacy, where we can discover a common humanity we could not find in face-to-face contact.

The premise of the film is then corny and sweet — that there is a technological true love that goes beyond the theatrics of everyday existence. But that's not what I saw in this film. What I saw was the total annihilation of a human being, which felt anything but good.

Ioana stopped reading, then looked up blankly. 'I don't understand who is annihilated?'

'The woman, Kathleen Kelly is it? The bookstore woman.' Dad answered. I nodded once then stared at the ground in shameful silence.

'But she didn't die. She falls in love with the rich guy,' Ioana replied innocently.

'That's not what Canary thinks, she thinks, well, towards the end there is a bit that I highlighted.'

'The bit with a question mark next to it?' Ioana asked as she flicked through the pages. My dad nodded, avoiding my eye as I looked up at him. Ioana then started reading the last section. I closed my eyes and steeled myself:

...woman dragged into the male market place and humiliated. Kathleen ends the film as a sick zombie, who can no longer resist Joe's advances after he forces his way into her flat even though he has destroyed her life. Kathleen then ends the film with a man she never seemed to love and dispossessed of everything. So what apart from bad writing or Stockholm Syndrome explains her giving herself up to this businessman with zero charm? AOL it seems, which appears in the film

like a virus she has contracted that has infected and overpowered her mind and soul, leaving her at the mercy of our multimillionaire ladykiller Joe Fox.

This clandestine online relationship, where Kathleen seeks out and then takes to heart advice from the person exploiting her is the darkest aspect of all of this. I'm not sure how romantic the idea that there is no way out is, but with You've got mail Ephron shows us that the future is all male, as she unintentionally and disturbingly gives a vision of the effects of computer technology and free market capitalism that is so disgusting it makes us hope that the 'millennium bug' is not just a myth: as it might be our last hope.

Ioana stopped reading and the room was silent, as she slowly placed the document back where she had picked it up from on Dad's desk. Dad stared sadly into space.

'It was supposed to be funny,' I mumbled to break the silence, even though that wasn't strictly true.

'It was a good try, but yeah, maybe too strong. What do you think Ioana?' Dad asked. I turned to her and she seemed lost in thought. Then briskly she stood up and began to leave the room, pushing her trolley awkwardly and sternly towards the door.

'I'm sorry, I have other cleaning, in the building.' She said before banging her things against the doorframe as she exited.

'I'm sorry Canary, I have to go too. I've run out of time. I have loads of meetings and events regarding floating Canary Wharf on the stock exchange. I'll be back really late tonight, so maybe we can talk about it in the morning. It's good that you are trying to do something positive though.'

Dad then stood up and left quickly with his briefcase and I was left alone in his office trying to work out what the point of visiting him was other than being ritually humiliated.

*

When I returned home that evening to the flat Ioana was sat in the front room watching television. I walked in and asked her if she wanted anything to drink. She turned around surprised and shook her head.

'Sorry, I didn't think you'd be in until later. I was just having a break.'

'Don't worry, I won't tell Dad,' I replied without thinking.

'He lets me have breaks, Canary, and watch the TV. I'd hate to know what the house would be like if you were in charge,' She replied irritably.

'I'm sorry, I don't know why I said that. I was just trying to be nice but it came out wrong.' I left the room and went into the kitchen to get her an orange juice. I put it down on the table next to her.

'It's for you,' I said. 'I'm sorry about today, it must have been strange for you.'

Ioana looked confused. 'What, reading your writing? You don't have to be sorry. It wasn't over my head you know. I didn't want to talk about it in front of your father, he was very stressed.'

'So what did you think? Or you don't have to say.'

'You will see what I think in time,' she answered cryptically, before continuing. 'But I think you're very privileged. This is what your father will say also. But if you want my opinion, you hate yourself, but also you rely on what you hate. It's the way of the world. So although stupid your heart's maybe in the right place.'

Shocked at her response I answered vainly, 'You think I'm stupid.'

'Yes stupid little Gucci Pucci rich girl whose thing is she hates capitalism.' Annoyed I picked up the orange juice and drank from it then left the room with it.

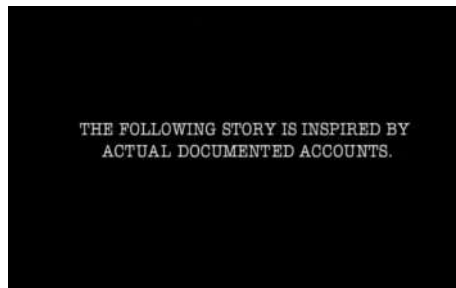
'Hey that's mine,' Ioana shouted after me.

'Get your own, you know where it is,' I replied regretfully.

*



FEAR INDEXING THE X-FILES



"Gorbachev's resigned. There's no more enemies."

The X-Files (4:7; 28:00).

In the summer of 1997, Tenet was invited by former president Gerald Ford to appear on a panel titled, "Does America Need the CIA?" The mere existence of such an event signaled how low the agency had fallen."
Steve Coll, *Ghost Wars*

The *X-Files* emerged in a unique period, between the residue of Cold War fears and pre-9/11 millennial optimism. In its figuration of bogeymen and enemies, the *X-Files* series spoke to the psychological anxieties of that complex time, allowing viewers to monitor the collective need for an enemy of the state, created in one form after another (and then mined in chatrooms and forums dedicated to the show worldwide). Aliens, ghosts, and the paranormal replaced communism and prefaced the current Islamophobic climate, while the destabilizing force of neoliberalism remained an undetected invisible man in the room.

As Steve Coll's *Ghost Wars* describes in detail, the Clinton Administration focused on domestic policy, while being lax on foreign policy; in the *X-Files*, terror was a characteristic of the domestic space, Stateside: it existed within your home, right on your block, in the safety of the suburbs. And if you were a teenager in suburbs in the early 1990s, as we both were, the series served as a way to make sense of the influx of information about that world and its workings, flooding in through cable television and rising internet use through the late '90s. The show was even completely off-limits for one of us, whose parents felt it was too adult; this only amplified its illicit feel as episodes were caught in friend's houses, under the cover of "homework sessions."

Early on, the *X-Files* crystallized the early '90s as a hazy, pre-smartphone, dawn of the internet age. As covered in *The '90s: The Last Great Decade?* this was a time in which "walls were falling down, not just between East and West, but between news and entertainment." Reality television was born, rendering private relationships into public dramas. Wars like Desert Storm became media blockbusters. Pluralistic societies were starting to consider globalization and networked communication.

The first three seasons of the *X-Files* specifically reflected how the public was just starting to grapple with what the internet could mean and how it could be used. As people got online more, and started to use the internet more, their awareness of what "is out there" deepened and became more complex.



These realizations often took place in tandem with, and through, increasing cable television viewing. Douglas Coupland would describe the Rodney King beating going viral as the "YouTube of 1992". Characters in the show are seen in the process of continually becoming aware of the horrors both close to home and far away. They learn about genocide in Bosnia and Romanian orphanages. Domestic terrorism, such as the Unabomber attack and suicide cults such as Heaven's Gate (made up of web programmers who built their own website) and Waco, would all take place on American soil, orchestrated by U.S. citizens.

Even as Americans learned about these real-world horrors, the role of the online conspiracy was still a culturally important source of misinformation. The conspiracy theory serves as a buffer, allowing the hesitantly inquisitive to tinker with assumed beliefs, to try on a skeptical mindset. It is a play zone in which people get a chance to speculate on powers that be and their abuses. Well-known conspiracy theories, such as the U.S. government's vast, detailed, and inaccessible stores of scientific knowledge, often have some basis in fact. (And even if the average American understands that the U.S. government works with Silicon Valley to surveil every aspect of citizen life, the facts still seem so outlandish as to resemble conspiracy.)



In writing his show, Chris Carter, the creator of the *X-Files*, consciously tapped into extant fears of emerging and existing conspiracy theories, from genetically modified bees to chemtrails to the anti-vaccination movement. Carter played with the fact of the real-life "leaked" Alien Autopsy video, the Ray Santilli footage from Roswell infamously shown on television in 1995. (In a later episode, Mulder would reference an alien autopsy snuff video that he purchased that turns out to be fake).



Links:

http://www.academia.edu/5376952/The_Fandom_Is_Out_There_Social_Media_and_The_X-Files_Online
<http://www.x-fileslexicon.com/>
<http://www.themareks.com/xf/>
<http://syndicateconsortium.com/sites/autumntysko/ice.html>
<http://www.eatthecorn.com/>
<http://gizmodo.com/how-horny-x-files-lovers-created-a-new-type-of-online-f-1702083417>
<http://reflectionsonfilmandtelevision.blogspot.de/search/label/The%20X-Files%20FAQ>
http://members.tripod.com/nicola_scully/
<http://mentalfloss.com/article/57587/qa-chris-carter-x-files-and-90s-last-great-decade>
<https://www.amazon.com/Deny-All-Knowledge-Reading-Television/dp/0815604076>

And the much-documented *mytharc* of the show attempts to weave multiple conspiracies together: for instance, fusing real historical instances of nationalistic attempts to build a 'supreme race' with Roswell-flavored narratives of aliens working with government. Actual genocides, such as the Holocaust and the Native American massacres, are folded into the alien plot. The viewer is left to speculate and parse what is possible or not.

Mulder and Scully only talk on their cellphones to notify the other to meet and talk in person, in case they are bugged, echoing Watergate-style paranoia. Their measured, halting phone exchanges reflect a general fear about government oversight through citizen's communication channels. In later seasons, the pair express concerns over potential abuses of databasing private information. Within today's harsh context of WikiLeaks revelations, post-Snowden fallout, and the collapse of the "Great Firewall of China," their worries seem almost quaint.

Perhaps ironically, then, the *X-Files* were the first show of the '90s with a flourishing internet-based fan base. The series was perfectly suited for its target demographic, Gen-X suburban teenagers and young adults who were learning to use the internet for the first time, logging onto dedicated forums and message boards to discuss episode content, to speculate on theories and their basis in the real world, and come up with urban legends and truth-of-reality-revealing conspiracies of their own.



IRC and Usenet hosted some of the earliest sites. On fan websites such as *eat the corn*, *munchkyn*, *nicola scully's members*, *tripod* site and *syndicate consortium*, members eagerly discussed the show's plot, themes, atmosphere, and characters, through forums, member boards, and excruciatingly-detailed episode recaps. These sites were hosted on Geocities, Tripod, and Angelfire, and served by America Online. Some of the most famous forums and sites — such as Autumn Tysko's *XF Reviews* and the *alt.t.v.xfiles* listserv — and news sites like *X-Files News*, became pop culture curiosities in themselves. The latter even got FOX's blessing as an official site.

Whether within *XF Roadrunners* or *Idealist Haven*, the show's early fans needed a space to gather. In an *interview with Den of Geek*, a reviewer, Sarah Stegall (whose writing would eventually lead her to research for the series' episode guidebooks), remembered a burning need for good conversation with other fans. "My cultural life shifted from the real world, where almost no one admitted to watching 'that UFO show,' to the Internet. The Internet was the one place I could go to hold an intelligent discussion with other fans about the Cigarette-Smoking Man's real agenda, or whether Ratboy was

a double agent, without having to excuse or justify even watching the show." Another webmistress, Maurisa Pruett of *X-Files Universe*, explains that her site was not only a site of essential knowledge about the series, but remains "a time capsule of how people [felt at the time] and the questions they ha[d] about the series."

The internet provided a space for unregulated and free flowing fan-to-fan discussion of all details of the show, outside of Fox-approved publications. The webmasters and -mistresses of these sites often maintained the forums — hosts to rich communities — long past the show's close in 2002 (before the 2016 comeback). And there was an explosion in the number of articles in mainstream publications at the time that attempted to explain this "new" thing called fan fiction.

Fox angered over forums disclosing spoilers from having intercepted pre-feed programming to stations on the very morning of transmission (such as at *denofgeek.com*). "I had a C-Band satellite dish and Fox was sending a pre-feed of the evening's programming to stations every Sunday morning," explained Michael Marek, Webmaster of the *X-Files Timeline* site. "So I would be up, with VHS recorder running, watching the episode starting at 7:44 am and also taking notes like mad. The result is that ten hours or more before *The X-Files* episode actually aired, I had my summary posted on the web ... and lots of people wanted spoilers." And when Fox tried to *intimidate fan sites* that used images and audio media from the series, fans fought back, creating a viral pro-fandom campaign titled "Free Speech is Out There: Protecting X-Phile WebSites."

The show's producers began to recognize the value of the fan boards, and the production crew actively lurked on message boards, in effect seeding content and referencing it in the show in what amounts to a pre-social media campaign. "Offscreen, the cast and crew were well aware of how the technological revolution had dramatically amplified its fanbase, and they didn't take it for granted, frequently interacting with the online fandom," writes *Kate Knibbs in Gizmodo*, adding that Frank Spotnitz, the show's producer, was inspired to write *Piper Maru* after reading an online comment that Scully's sister's death was left undeveloped.

And in an interview with academic Bethan Jones for "*The Fandom is Out There: Social Media and the X Files Online*," Spotnitz admits:

A lot of writers were reluctant to see what the fans were writing, but I was always curious to see how the show was being received. I only browsed and never contributed to the forums, but it was extremely useful to see how the episodes were playing — what fans liked, what they didn't like, and where they thought the show was going.

Jones notes that the show's creators

welcomed their fans "by frequenting fan forums and allowing fan opinion to shape the storylines." In fact, "recognition of fans became a part of the show," with every opening sequence of Season Nine "highlight[ing] the online monikers of different fans" to show respect and appreciation. And in 2015, *Gillian Anderson asked fans on a podcast to tweet their hopes* for the *X-Files* to return to FOX, underscoring the show's intimacy with and reliance on the zeal of its online fandom.



On-screen, Mulder, Scully, and other characters become more visibly engaged with the internet, using it to construct theories, navigate an increasingly uncertain world, and sort and pick through the inexplicable and weird. In this way, the "X-Files Internet" was a meaning-making tool, a map to the outside. It was a space for both plausible and off-the-wall narratives to circulate freely, to be picked up, believed, or dropped.



Early online fans would see themselves clearly mirrored in *The Lone Gunmen*, who became their onscreen heroes. The Lone Gunmen were hackers, loners, and rogue vigilantes. They were very disempowered in life but extremely empowered online, and they resonated with the "outsiders" watching the show, who felt reflected, included, part of a growing movement. This archetype of the self-styled loner with a thirst to uncover the true nature of reality from his terminal has present-day echoes in a web of related types: the White Hat Hacker, working to unveil corruption; in Anonymous; in more nihilistic hacking to the end of pure chaos, and in the more conservative, Alex Jones-listening, MRA- and Schan-loving Reddit troll.

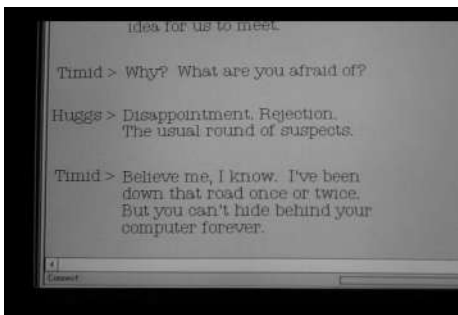
Mulder is presented as someone whose claims are so extraordinary that they can only be true. Viewers can't help but be infected by his Puritanical zeal to expose corruption. Scully, the rational scientific sleuth, is the audience's primary outlet, often seen late at night alone before her computer terminal. This tension between them organizes the show and its litany of conspiracies.

"Truther" communities based on misinformation, or "how things actually

are,” depending on who you ask, serve an important social purpose. At the time, working-class viewers found their frustration and discontent reflected in witty, incisive shows like *Roseanne*. Conspiracy truther campaigns are another way to process feelings of impotence and disenfranchisement. The *X-Files* offered a potent outlet for a viewer’s sense of injustice. They could easily get behind punishing a character that clearly represented evil, insidious intent, and even more so if they were within a slightly exaggerated, monstrous, and comic register (such as the infamous Fluke Monster in *The Host*). Lest we forget, when 9/11 occurred, the inane *Snakes on a Plane* marked a surge in box office sales.



On screen, *X-Files* characters shown as disconnected and isolated in their own lives use the Internet to work out the identity and nature of their idols and fantasies, their fears and hopes. Scouring forums and message boards that [remain archived](#), one can find the sheer amount of sites dedicated to the sexual tension between Mulder & Scully. These fans (perhaps infamously) self-identified as “Shippers,” or those most invested in the MSR: Mulder Scully Romance.



In *2Shy*, a fat-sucking monster creep preys on single women who use online dating chat rooms because they are insecure about their weight. (*2Shy* would be listed as one of [the least favourite characters](#) on the show on *Syndicate Consortium*.) At the time — 1993 — online chat rooms still represented an anonymous void leading into the unknown. Both on the news and in popular imagination, dangerous people masqueraded as empathetic in order to Trojan Horse their predatory intent into unwitting chat partners’ lives. Further, the computer was a medium through which anyone could reach into your home.



The *X-Files* were a domestic, national drama, providing a vast overview of America through an implied shared imaginary of different parts of the country and what each part represented. Mulder and Scully travel from the Bible Belt to the outskirts of Idaho, from D.C.’s power corridors out to the Pacific Northwest’s most remote reaches. And from season to season, small-town paranoia — locals with xenophobic tendencies, suspicious of outside forces meddling with the existing social order — was one of the strongest underlying themes.

However — no matter how vigilant citizens are — those wishing sick harm will always lurk, whether from within — the chatroom, the home — or without, in the rural, isolated town, the suburban woods, or in industrial test sites. “I know that the world is full of predators just as it has always been, and I know that it is my job to protect people from them,” Scully says in *Irresistible*.

In the absence of a political or cultural exterior threat that could be easily defined, the *X-Files* specifically posited interior space — inside the home, within walls, within computers — as a threat. And the show creators played specifically on extant fears of the ‘90s Internet, which was a largely exploratory, wild, and unfamiliar space, full of uncertainty and (stranger) danger. Where brave and expert souls like the Lone Gunmen could deftly maneuver the World Wide Web, the average person was a far more defenseless surfer. Just as knowledge and identity — as mediated through the Internet — become more unstable and abstract, so too does the object of fear become more mobile, slippery, loose, difficult to define. Sexual predators reach out through the screen in the guise of friends, as in *2Shy*.

Predators also reach out through vents, toilets, wall openings. The *X-Files* deployed fear both as a physical object on the periphery of awareness, and also as abstract, slowly constructed through atmosphere. One’s entire home, a supposedly neutral, safe space, becomes a minefield of worry and terror.



Squeeze / Tooms, a two-parter and one of the series’ most memorable, terrifying installments, describes a serial killer who hibernates every thirty years with five livers he’s harvested to subsist on. Eugene Tooms is an animal control worker for the city of Baltimore; he is in plain sight, picking up dead animals, entering federal buildings at will, with access at all times. He is also able to morph and stretch his body to pass through the smallest air vent. Watching Tooms in his prison cell, Mulder notes how people invest in “bars on the windows, high tech-security systems,” but it isn’t enough before more fluid,

abnormal threats. There is no space you can ever fully protect.

Security from what grows in the periphery of civilized space is a preoccupation in *Home*, another Monster of the Week episode. *Home* was banned from television after its initial broadcast for being so disturbing. The episode centers on a rural town, psychologically terrorized by the Peacocks, a reclusive and incestuous family that avoids contact with the outside world, having lived in the same house since the Civil War. In the opening, we see them on a stormy night burying a stillborn fetus, a failed result of their inbreeding. [Fans still describe the episode as one of the most traumatizing in television history](#); these writers have certainly never forgotten it.



Home explores American communities dealing with different kinds of threats and changes to their idyllic, small-town way of life. The sleepy town, unsubtly named Home, looks back on “simpler times” before technology; Mulder reminisces over playing baseball with his sister. The residents of Home are so used to their way of life that they leave their doors unlocked.

But the fantasy is warped. When the Peacocks see a curious police officer talking with the FBI, they head out to murder him in their decrepit 1950s Cadillac with doo wop playing on the stereo: a twisted evocation of the faded dreams of Americana. The police officer decides against using his gun and is brutally murdered. Scully and Mulder visit the house to investigate the murder, and find Mother Peacock, Ma, is found under the bed strapped to a mobile plank, with all limbs amputated. She is the sole female with whom the sons mate. In a chilling monologue, she eulogizes what the modern world has lost,



Home was pointed commentary that viewers of the time would have strongly identified with. In the 1980s and 1990s, movies plotlines in which urban and suburban teens come to the “edge of town” to find strange, uncanny, or weird communities engaged in occult or ritualistic behavior were ubiquitous. Stephen King’s works and *Twin Peaks* played on fears of all not being well right beneath the social fabric. Online *creepypasta* — a genre of stories made up by writers and amateurs and then passed on

as “real” — famously used the trope of the inbred rural family and occult communities in the woods to scare the hell out of the overly curious. In offering a proximate Other to define themselves against, the viewers watching the town of Home unravel could see themselves as still relatively normal or stable.



While these rural expedition episodes often gave trenchant insight on domestic values gone awry, not all such episodes were successful. The problematically titled *Genderbender* finds Mulder and Scully investigating a group called the Kindred, a group of Amish who have been intermarrying for generations, keeping to themselves, shunning the modern world. One leaves the fold to become a rave-happy, transgender murderer who frequents nightclubs and kills through seduction.

The episode plays with distinctly-’90s-era anxieties about safe sex. Clubs are presented as dangerous spaces where killers lurk, and unsafe sex and one-night stands with strangers can lead to AIDS. The absurdity of *Genderbender’s* positing of the club as a murderous space of complete mayhem points coyly to the hyperbolic misses of online speculation. At the time, confusion and misinformation over how AIDS could spread (through toilet seats, through skin-to-skin contact) found its hysterical pitch in “AIDS Mary,” a widely circulated urban myth in which a vengeful woman has rampant, indiscriminate sex with men, only to reveal her AIDS status the next morning.

The *X-Files* didn’t shy away from creating intense, bizarre juxtapositions to create a sense of the uncanny. *Genderbender’s* Amish-like community, set up as a “safe” retreat, turns out to have cultish, incestuous, and alien elements. The writers mashed multiple dominant narrative threads in a wildly confusing way. The community disappears, leaving a UFO-like crop circle. And unfortunately, being transgendered is here associated with incest and murder, and attitudes towards marginalized groups are negatively reinforced.

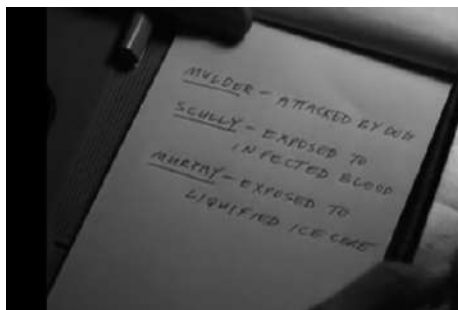


During this period, television talk shows reigned. Hosts like Oprah, Ricki Lake, and Jerry Springer would, at their best, attempt to discuss and reflect upon pressing social issues and at worst, engage in sheer exploitation.

In *D.P.O.*, in which a GenX teen can conduct lightning and electrocute people at will, the teen’s mother is shown intently watching a talk show about misfit youths into piercings and sadomasochism. The episode recalls a Phil Donahue episode, “*Where is your child?*”, covering the outrageous hedonism of ’90s Queer NYC Club Kids. Viewers might remember how Michael Alig, the notorious, self-styled Party Monster, was routinely brought out onto talk shows to overstate the nihilistic love of drugs and sex in a thriving androgynous club culture.



D.P.O. is notable for its self-conscious replication of its target demographic; dropouts who were distrustful of the government, often tech-savvy, likely proto-libertarians. At this point, the *X-Files* were such a cultural phenomenon that post-grunge bands like the Foo Fighters took their name from the UFOs shining over Roswell. *D.P.O.’s* protagonist wears a t-shirt of the punk band Vandals, and he spends his nights after work avidly playing video games at the Arcade where Zero, his best friend, works. Parental groups would worry about this antisocial figure influencing their Millennial children (who would also grow up watching the show) up until and beyond the Columbine massacres in 1999.



Ice is both a crucial foundation block of the show’s mythology, and a picture of paranoia as it is built and constructed, as information and misinformation transfers easily between groups. Scully and Mulder are in tight quarters with scientists in a laboratory in the middle of an Arctic storm. Holed up with them are samples of an ancient parasite, which is encased in subzero temperatures thousands of feet beneath the surface in ice. The time’s hysteria over AIDS, and how it is transmitted, is reflected in this closed-set morality play on viral infection of the individual and national body.

Further, the *idea* of infection is what is memetic, passed from person to person in rapid contact. It takes a single suggestive idea to split people into believers and skeptics. Frenzy and suspicion catches on like a fire; the group is quickly moved to violence against itself. Without facts, without a sure base of rational, proven knowledge, the group’s structure disintegrates into total chaos.

The bubble of the 1990s allowed the *X-Files* viewer to imagine America itself as its own enemy, in the absence of an external threat that citizens could gather around. There must always be an enemy out there, whether homegrown, foreign-born, or space-relayed. And since September 11th, the enemy’s identity clearly shifted. The recent Season Ten features jihadism; an art gallery is bombed for depicting Allah in a defamatory way, echoing the Charlie Hebdo terror attacks. Watching earlier seasons, we notice, almost with envy, the ease of an airport ride for Scully, the lax security checks.

As radical terrorism firmly replaced the specter communism and further, off, *Aliens*, the joyride of the ’90s and early Aughts came to a close. America set out into the world to find non-existent weapons of mass destruction. The cycle continues to produce its bogeymen, both real and imagined.

getting in a zone to be with your dreams
packeted up as a somewhat unclear meaninglessness, the absence of anything
nothing being the thing, not so much nothing but abstract ideas
time spent in a shed thinking about being generous
yet caught up in only being able to spend time on bureaucracy
thinking how privileged it is to be able to think
or to try and think outside the bureaucracy
whilst still having to look at mediated images
...in the newspaper
...inside heads
and therefore it's only hard cash that drives us towards meaning
looking at images of famine and suffering
while to suffer seems ubiquitous
and there is also an ethic where its ok to think that being privileged is a form of suffering
(thinking about garbage)
a scene from a film with a person laid in the bath holding a razor blade
the bath overfills and fills up the room with water
overflowing into the corridor
out into the kitchen
a room full of rats
animals who are unable to think about the dire straits of privilege
moneygram > lycamobile > pharmacy > supermalt > sad building face > security boards
pictures of the earth with pig hooves trotting on it

from one zone to the next zone
on top of the last zone, inside another
it equates thinking
(essentially speculating about nothing still)
then it is also privileged
and if privilege isn't a problem
it is some kind of freedom inside another zone
it can stop us from becoming home-brewed animal's knowledge again
it being that of something uniquely expressive of one's own mind
it is valuable
and value is money
nothing but money
in some kind of cognitive state of capital
drinking cups of tea
new plateaus in meaninglessness, in expression
tribal systems of oppression
- so at the lowest level, in the fields of botanical bliss
there still exists 7-10 levels of speculative oppression
where being a thief is also normal and not transgressive
(the word transgressive as a speculation)
where if someone could hear this conversation they would be pissing themselves
like the humans in War and Peace
somehow striving for an idea of equality in a world full of lies and deception

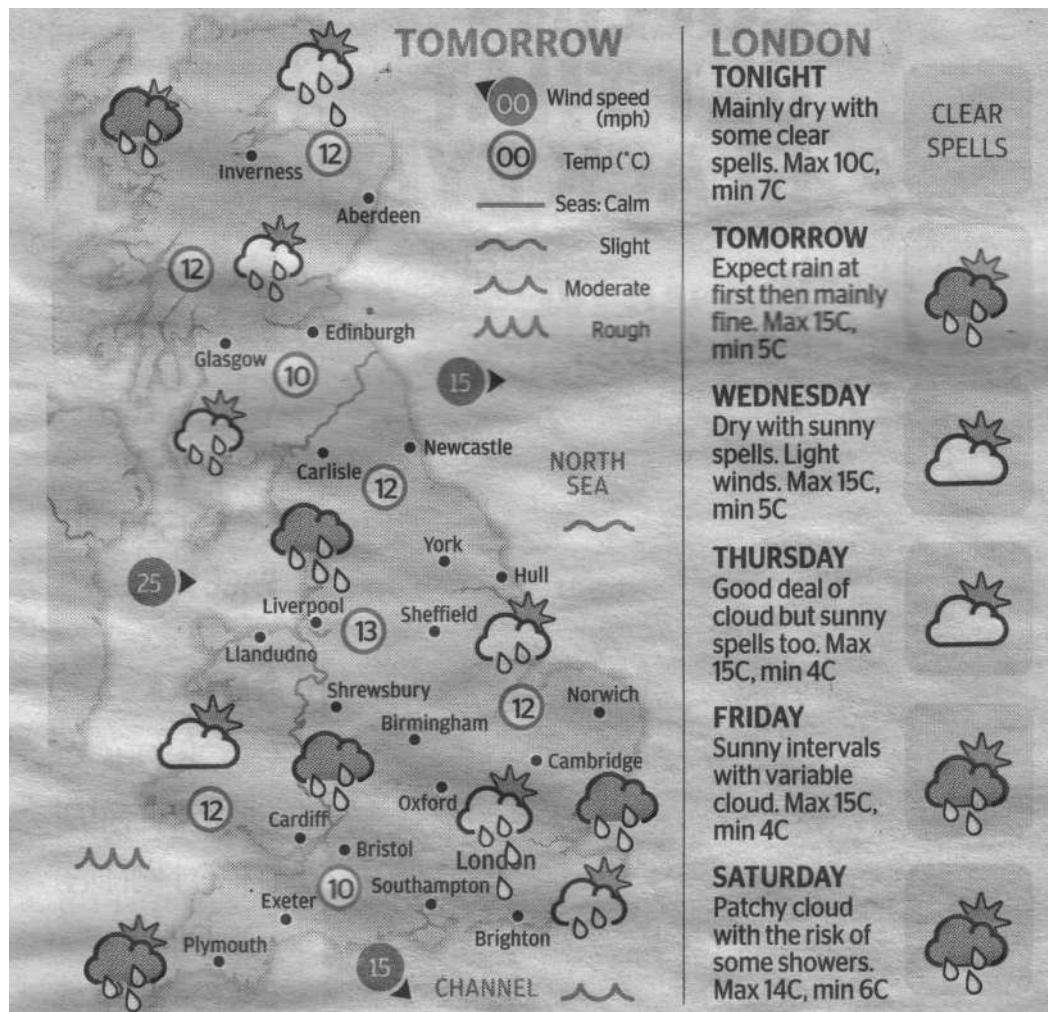
the knowledge it has and owns will constantly contextualise words into a trap
in the sense that the psychotic and the beautiful life both equate the same:
narco-narcissist-nihilism
yes, to hedonism again
hello, to the body
goodbye scepticism
welcome to the business class aspirations
with super helpful people vibing a charitable Brexit undertone
you wouldn't think there's injustice in the world
clickbait restructuring industrialised complexes of the mind
goodbye social media, having trolled itself in the puddles that reflect the streetlights
when the droplets hit the water and the circles cascade and the toxins flourish
when the toxicological persists
what do i know, am i in The Matrix?
affected as hell, by what? too many things to start mentioning
learning to make a rug in order to wipe the shite off of feet in front of all the towers of
Machiavellian vanity
...two able bodied entitled white men who lucked into more money than most people see in 5 lifetimes
and who if they hadn't had their money stolen like morons, would have squandered it on things like
Lamborghini's and Class-As
and let's say this person has a futile outlook on life
walking around
feeling hard done by
wanting to be relaxed in understanding the social code of living in and around each other

small acts of generosity become important for wellbeing
and knowing when trade is much more than feudal

and then i was thinking about time
and then i was thinking about how time doesn't mean anything
and i was thinking about how meaning is actually quite unclear again
and then i was thinking about how there's different kinds of meaninglessness
and then i was thinking about nothing and how meaninglessness is like going to a café
and i was thinking about how cafés are really annoying
which made me think about being annoyed
which made me think about how i shouldn't be annoyed about things
and then it made me think well actually i'm not normally annoyed about much
and then i was realising and thinking that stress comes from being out of control or with too much control
so then i was thinking why? care about control
then i was thinking what is it that controls me
and then i was thinking well obviously it's money; hard cash
and then i was thinking well why don't i just do things that people do to acquire it
electricity > consumer electronics > connectivity > privacy > network violation > loss of identity
> suicide
the bonus king > body chemicals > tourettes > camouflage > trainspotting > the tourist trap
and then i was thinking because somehow money makes me feel empty
which made me think what, so i get filled up by doing this?
and then i was thinking about how comforting nothing is because there is nothing to be stressed by
and then i was thinking what is the symbol of nothing?
and then i was thinking about looking at things that don't mean anything
and then i was thinking well colour must mean something because generally images are made of
colour
and then i was thinking well meaning must be a cultural thing
and that culture is a fantasy
and that in autumn the leaves change colour and make quite amazing images
and then i was thinking that's not an image, that's nature
and colour and nature are the same thing
and then i was thinking why people make graffiti cos it's kind of like nature; the free expression
is more natural?
and then i was thinking because the buildings aren't natural
and then i was thinking about homelessness
and then i was thinking people didn't always have houses
and then i was thinking that the trees must be wise to the buildings 'cause they don't need
buildings
and then i was thinking are they tyrannised by the buildings, the houses?
and then i was thinking why do we need houses?
and then i was thinking well we're used to them so probably need them
and then i was thinking what's the meaning of a house
and it made me think that houses create the comfort needed in order to deal with the stress of the
system we have in place in order to get by
and then i was thinking that houses cost us money
and thinking what if houses were free in order to feel more comfortable
which is mega boring
and then i was thinking that the generosity of the human can't handle free housing
and then i was thinking about situations where generosity isn't always met again
and then i was thinking about anarchy and people who use this and try and think about self-
organisation
and then i was thinking about all the clichés of why people say things like what i'm saying and
why insurrection doesn't necessarily work
and then i was thinking about dreadlocks and mohawks
and then i was thinking about cultural associations and punk and Baader-Meinhof
and then i was thinking about how maybe it's interesting because punks want to be free
and then i was thinking that they're thinking and within different histories it means different
things
and then i was thinking about the violence of history and how that is constantly contextualising
every action and thought
and then i was thinking that the trees must have some knowledge of this
and that made me think about a whole other non-anthropocentric reality where my knowledge is even
more meaningless because it's only set in the mind of a human
and then i was thinking that the acts of violence and war created over (expression) scrambling for
more power is just equated to money again, or maybe i'm wrong, what came first value or power?
and thinking that power needs competition and names in lists to validate actions, perhaps
and then i was thinking about how doorways often lead up into more comfortable situations
and then i was thinking that maybe that's not true
which made me think that the grass is not greener because when you go through the door you don't
know what's on the other side

and then i was thinking how you get these people who think that they're always in control and how they show off about this by always knowing what door they want to access and what's on the other side
and then i was thinking those people must be scared of embarrassment
and then i was thinking am i scared of embarrassment?
and then i was thinking about finding a wristwatch
and then i was thinking how when i found the watch i thought that people might want to share things
and that if i shared it would i still be in co-possession of it
and then i was thinking how the reality of that was that i basically had the watch stolen
and then i was thinking about colours again and advertising and how all colours and images equate different levels of desire
and then i was thinking how some people hardwire their brains to understand that they have something to push and then the obsession with pushing becomes about colours and images
and then i was thinking is that a nicer way; a more powerful, life-affirming relationship to images and colour, or does it empty them out of any wonder?
and then i was thinking what is wonder and does wonder even matter?
what do i think wonder means, do i have a relationship to wonder?
and then i was thinking about going for walks and how appreciations of nature must have something to do with wonder
and then i was thinking how everybody always draws faces
then i tore my chest open with my hands and pulled my heart out
but attached were these long stringy bits full of blood that pumped out to the rest of my body
as i was holding the heart it thumped
it was red and blue
so i ate it
and all the strings got stuck as the heart slipped down my oesophagus
deep inside the mind's eye of the infinite inner space
where small scaled down people hang around waiting by sphincters for hearts to come through
as they still pump the blood round the body
providing the environment in which these small menial human wannabes rely on
the strings stretch and stretch from the centre of my chest
the open ribcage cracked open below my eyes
elasticated, i feel the capillaries struggling in the end of my fingertips
the arthritis in my feet sharpens as the blood veins recoil through my body at the strain of the heart strings supported by a skeleton
two spoons on the smorgasbord
in the act of trying to get on board with a progressive narrative
becoming the things in question - not a clever refute
cultural zonage holocaust perpetrated by the masses
then Brevik-style cybercrimes
sharing stuff through the internet
social misery doesn't reduce exploitation

and yes, in the sense of zero hours and yes, to the connotations that that may bring to light
- power, manipulation, exploitation, Deliveroo etc.
everything is more to do with recordings and ratings
going round and round buying loads of cool shit
hanging out in the foyer but not really able to get a grasp
mate, your male friends don't give a shit about you 'cause you ask too many questions
yes! indecisiveness
pseudo-self-criticism that tries to acknowledge a multi-faceted "position within the machine"
yes, fill what spaces one occupies with work, challenge it and find temporary resolutions
dreaming in your social media prison
it isn't a police state, it's the whole system
information is an institution; the impossibility of knowing what is bad
yes, to hedonism (one more time)
yes, to ethical argument
yes, to a vague idea of wellbeing, but i can only think about euthanasia
melt your mind for the sake of finding a way out of oppressive cycles
butt fever
disowning dread...



LIGHTS

Sunset & lighting-up: 6.02pm, rises 7.30am
 Moon rise: 7.14pm, sets 8.48am
 High water: London Bridge 3.05am (7.5m), 3.24pm (7.5m). Dover (-), 12.15pm (7.3m).

AIR QUALITY

Nitrogen Dioxide: Yesterday: 130 ppb. Forecast: Low. (Calculated on parts per billion. Less than 150 = Low; 150-299 = Moderate; 300+ = High)
 Air Pollution: Yesterday: 2. Forecast: Low. (1-3 = Low; 4-6 =

Moderate; 7-9 = High; 10 = Very High)
 Fine Particles: 31ug/m³. Forecast: Low. (Calculated on micrograms per cubic metre. Less than 50 = Low; 50-74 = Moderate; 75+ = High)

WORLD

c-cloudy; dr-drizzle; f-fair; fg-fog; h-hail; m-mist; r-rain; s-sunny; sl-sleet; sn-snow; sh-showers; th-thunder. Weather today.

Alicante	28	s	Dubai	34	s	Madeira	24	th	Prague	12	c
Athens	24	f	Dublin	14	f	Majorca	28	s	Reykjavik	10	c
Bahrain	36	s	Faro	23	s	Malaga	25	s	Rio de Janeiro	34	s
Bangkok	32	th	Geneva	15	sh	Marrakesh	30	f	Riyadh	34	s
Barbados	31	f	Helsinki	7	c	Mexico City	24	f	Rome	23	s
Barcelona	24	f	Hong Kong	29	th	Miami	29	c	San Francisco	20	f
Beijing	21	s	Honolulu	30	f	Mombasa	30	f	Seychelles	30	s
Berlin	12	f	Ibiza	26	f	Moscow	5	c	Singapore	31	th
Bermuda	25	c	Istanbul	18	r	Mumbai	33	s	St Petersburg	7	c
Buenos Aires	23	f	Jerusalem	27	s	New York	25	c	Stockholm	8	c
Cape Town	21	s	Kuala Lumpur	32	th	Nice	21	c	Sydney	20	sh
Chicago	26	f	Las Palmas	28	s	Nicosia	30	s	Tel Aviv	29	s
Corfu	26	s	Los Angeles	23	f	Paris	18	c	Tokyo	20	th
Delhi	34	s	Luxor	35	s	Perth	19	f	Vancouver	13	sh

OUR STANDARDS

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NOVEL is an editorial and curatorial
project, publishing artists writing
and texts that oscillates between
modes of fiction and poetry. NOVEL
acts in-between the potential
performance of a *script*, and the
indeterminate *transcript* of the event.
The journal hosts a cacophony of
voices that coalesce around writing
as a core material of a number of
artists exploring language and the
speculative force of fiction. Here, art
writing is an apparatus for knowledge
capture, writing as parallel practice,
writing as political fiction, writing
as another adventure, renegotiating
unfulfilled beginnings or incomplete
projects.

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