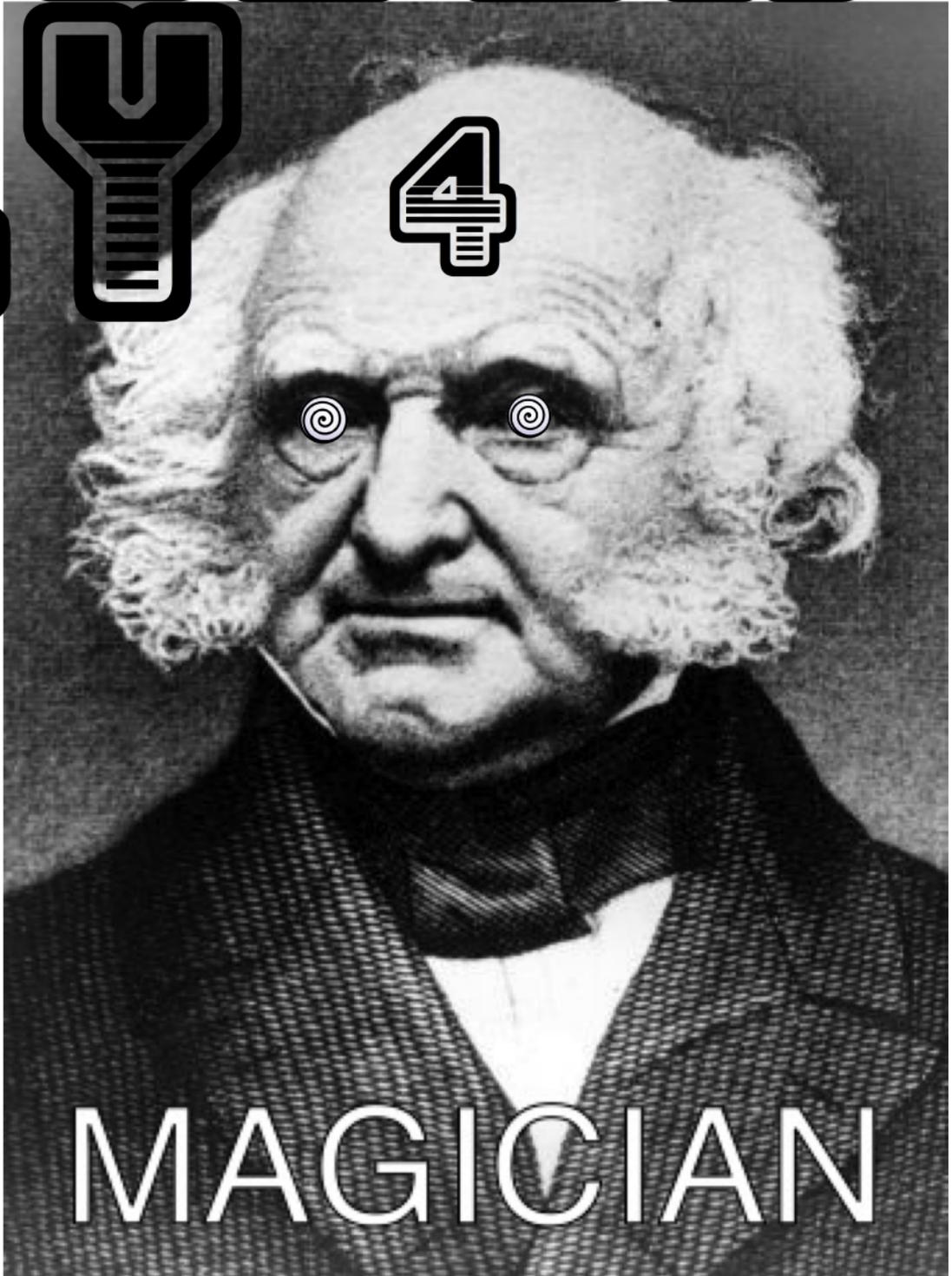


ELDER  
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MAGICIAN



# Elderly

OKI SUGIYAI

IAN DREIBLATT

BEN ROYLANCE

GREY VILLO

KIT SEHLÜTER

ANNA GURTON-WAEHTER

TYRONE WILLIAMS

## UNTITLED

Remember yelling my name from your apartment balcony into the street, and I yelled back up from the street soaked in the sudden Kreuzberg rain? Your lover was afraid of the ghosts overflowing from the toilet, showing up on the peeling wallpaper. We dragged many beds into kitchens that summer, stuck in our borrowed apartments. You showed me pictures of the Clarice Lispector quote you wrote on your belly: "I'll tell you a secret: my dress is beautiful, and I don't want to die." You'd been repeating it for a week after seeing that queer Swedish film your friend directed. I told you about the paintings of clouds in a room in the National Gallery in London and how they glow and seem to expand with the changing natural light overhead and you looked me in the eye like always and said you didn't know that with delighted credulity. Recent visitors remind us of the city we live in, relegating us back again, to the position of perpetual visitor. The light is precious when it arrives so rarely. We said the city is built this way: to funnel the wind towards our legs and the sun down those alleys, and not these. You said you wanted to feel present, or to glide, for a moment in the drugs. After you took out the stitches from your chest by watching Americans with no health insurance do it on YouTube, you showed me the stitches remaining and the spots where they were gone. *The present*, you said, touching the holes.

## UNTITLED

You walk into the cinema. You carve your way with a knife. A gun makes a black space. A wire transmits the image, a strangling device, cutting here and there. You walk out of the cinema. You're in the streets, the air feels strange. You think rain. Broken street lamp or lightning? You check and they say the weather is "fair." It is mist and the mist disperses the lights. You're in the street but it also the inside of a casino, with dirty carpets and a fog machine in the corner. Objects are wrapped in tinsel fringe and placed behind plexiglass. People eating pupusas glare at cops. They are tall and the cops hurry. Every gaze and glance and turn of the head seems suspended. Your steps are your heartbeats and your heartbeats are frames. Everyone has ridiculous props: girls waiting for the train in gold foil and paper crowns, a man carries a cello painted a sticky looking yellow. All the light from everywhere has a direct line to your eye which soaks it up greedily, every piece of glass shattered is a miniature crime of light which assaults your eye. Every car blows it up. The traffic lights blinking in all directions sending you open/closed.

The street. You're on a bicycle but what you are doing is not cycling: there's only gliding and obstacles to gliding.

The cinema. What looked like a shriveled squirrel on road now looks like a tiny alligator. It is ready to dance.

# IAN DREIBLATT

## FOUR POEMS

don't say anything  
don't say anything  
don't say shadow say  
angled ray of the sun  
everything you've seen  
say bird say jail say  
old woman speak english  
different things happen  
to people here  
differences say light into  
everything you've seen  
say bird say jail say  
old differences in  
what you may mean

say the morning shatters  
say unclenching your jaw  
say east say false say  
wrecked grammatical sprawl  
I go out walking  
I keep the hour  
mirrors slide out from the  
canyon say the walls  
are losing ground say  
the angles fraction into  
the shudder of a branch  
on a pine tree

say remember the wasp  
say a psaltery's thaw  
save up salt go out &  
say remember the wasp  
say pencil-case say  
equivalences go rorschach  
say because of this something  
happens think what you  
say remember the wasp  
remember the berries  
on the tree





let me have it all

light hitting jugs, fruit  
from other countries, adorable old  
people.

let nothing draw me like malt from its  
hull. obscurely akin to earthquake.

fig  
blossoms. *cada instante*. there's a hole  
in my mouth that tastes

like Chinese grammar  
again.

*siempre en mi mente*. syntax  
like a current does all the deciding.  
cracking face of.

& music, & music,

let

every singer call my name water.  
*olvidarte*.

infinitives squeezed out  
of a desire-soaked preposition.

to

say anything. we find difference. open  
yr mouth, next thing you know we're related

## BEN ROYLANCE

*from* POSTDROMAL HYMNS

I could stay for you / note by notice with the almond-sized light of brass migraine trading locked and silver ounces for stinging cream. Stain the consciousness and grain / nectarine for west eye inhabited with the moaned rhythm of pulse against standard time. All thing consuming little rich thing / ending with bright ghost-becoming-phantom exactly how blue instructions gilded your steam I am cold with. Living difference cut to beam / inset and outspinning across nut of skull and guessing to-do of delayed song delaying struck tin.

I could stay for you  
stain the consciousness and grain  
all thing consuming little rich thing  
living difference cut to beam

Confluent and angled toward years / mint-wept from glass spear supposed to be smiled in and princessed and hollowed out. Wooden and cast in something / great and gone to strides more short more penumbral in buttered affirming best rates of increase. Tempted moon by not / treating swords like moonlitup sheets I'm training for the second flash of grey. Temporal indicators of contact / contact with crying cobalt fruits like pines primped for dusks to come.

Confluent and angled toward years  
wooden and cast in something  
tempted moon by not  
temporal indicators of contact

House of breath / without the sequencer and chalk creaking under the snailway arbor of next Christian hint. Thinkable in ale of charity / like density of wallowing in encountered paws of cause because html designates the date. How even the books include / stuff of indebt staring you up into cove or metal of radiant stupid gymnasia. Your stubborn square of sense / interjectionalized and whetted to karmic purity as if your lacerability were null and unfeminine as if.

House of breath  
thinkable in ale of charity  
how even the books include  
your stubborn square of sense

Crept up the strings / a gloom of snow seizing my hips and the wallets of night you insisted within upon. Going nesting along the path / of antioxidants redecayed with great and leafed chords of love for fluid industry. Your price-doubt is showing / showing through this underrealized pheon hooking two necks of two neckless fishes. The sainted nonroyal shining / audiation of the trout we know of a migraine an armful blameworthy and brutal.

Crept up the strings  
going nesting along the path  
your price-doubt is showing  
the sainted nonroyal shining

Evergrey snow mapped / quarterly onto the bankfront subevergreen edgeways flanging like winter. Dented and nonprominent / sky stubbed extremely on the poster rolled up depicting you-guessed-it a glass of carbonated liquid analysts. Weak grey scent of grey / calenture at man's groin insulating an ephemeron for nothing but remonetized and damn hideless lightness. All stoned on wooing his distortion / petal falling from our reselected and special American persimmon to the underswell of Atlantic asthmal plane.

Evergrey snow mapped  
dented and nonprominent  
weak grey scent of grey  
all stoned on wooing his distortion

A thanker crosses / an otherness into a demonological textbook of sense-data spraying asexed syllogistic bambi-bullets. Extending freely over / lands of favor and lands of rare editions getting the spot fresher more than algebraists or patriots could want. Lengthless Judases / writhe in the unstretchable waistline skyway of sportsmanly cuckolding. Incorporated / into again the lighted path of the socially mediated continent like a white tomahawk to the pink eyes you house like a cop.

A thanker crosses  
extending freely over  
lengthless Judases  
incorporated

The new age smoke / shop deliverance is unawardable and the wildlife therein is strangely egoless like my own fattily clad private New Jersey. Lenses aren't disturbing / me with the nondefecation of suburban taxicab policy-lovers please suppose otherwise. Champions of scouring / skull larks combing the overargumentative but-still-drugstore-abutting voltage hog the pacifist or as you know him Emergency Ulysses. They cry figuratively / the kink over anything getting into a singing match you will be outcarolled by the spicy cedar fruit the tenor incarnate.

The new age smoke  
lenses aren't disturbing  
champions of scouring  
they cry figuratively

My cornstalk and nonabsolute / cathexis irritates and socializes the unappreciative face gummed to the pulpboard Amazon pamphlet. Dark Allentown wishlist / psychologizes the main indeed bossiest monad in the bullpup-touting outing club. Complete synagogue of / phasing your assumedly preerect spiritualist drone-cock into final flower position. Homeroom aggression / lenticulates my overtheorized and understandably nude UFO memoranda onto the film of our faery-dandy's retina.

My cornstalk and nonabsolute  
dark Allentown wishlist  
complete synagogue of  
homeroom aggression

Alkalizer in the aquarium / I cosplay myself backthen letting acne express its overpromising beardlike zen on the broad side of a sunfish. Galaxy fraud is unprovable / in this narrativity depressed of the ugly flaming bird we two compose with our leprechaun epochs stubbed at the lucky ends. Improvable mirror physics / are glowering in the behinds of each intuitionist in the handyman conspiracy plotting spore-release schedules so euphemistic and also very much only authorially efficacious. Slaying with a germ sword / of trillion likenesses and anxieties recuperating in a language of commercially shroudless homemakers cacophonizing it in for the sake of confidential redemption.

Alkalizer in the aquarium  
galaxy fraud is unprovable  
improvable mirror physics  
slaying with a germ sword

They came like students / in the multicellular night coining the roomy euphemisms necessary to vandalize the subspherical globule gassing from your knifed chest. For the record / gone into the night of perpetuity undefeatable unfurnished and unthoughtful this systemoid you fine dogs allowed to be allowed to live. Destiny undergone beforehand / assembled like babbling streams of unabsorbed swords sheathless adjoining ointments uncorked by homeopaths looking for the hard streets of illustration. Externalizing a cosmogony / as a way of bursting your copartner's boringly finite self-involved orb of emo-sting crystallization.

They came like students  
for the record  
destiny undergone beforehand  
externalizing a cosmogony

I doubt your reassurances / that the empath is not the bro he appears to gingerbreadly be. Maybe misthrown eastward / this unjustifiable gunk-cloth of every April May and January you outglare in an otherness we fear in lunar silence or hate in sunny somniloquizing. To insist upon choice / as if to stalemate our love-faking neighbors into this wintery sculpture I leave to you in death. To gather segmented / abstractions we hope to lament but only can adore as we chew the snares of sensation beyond compatibility.

I doubt your reassurances  
maybe misthrown eastward  
to insist upon choice  
to gather segmented

## GREY VILD

I HAVE WRITTEN THIS LETTER

In the beginning, there, was, rock.

In the, beginning, there, was, water.

Desert, of, rock.

Desert, of, water.

I, run.

You, run.

We, run.

My, feet, blister.

Not, from sore, but, from, fire.

I have, never ever never, outrun, not, any.

But, mostly, you.

But the water, is, fire, you said.

But the rock, is, water, is fire, you said.

But the, land, is, older, than 400, you said.

(And the fire laps fur from your legs)(It wants to be me)

But, my, finger, is, rock, you said.

But, my leg, is, water, you said.

But, my mouth, is, your fingers, your legs.

(And the fire is)

The rock, flows, from the water.

The water, rocks, my fingers, my legs.

In the, beginning, there was, no beginning.

We are prideful animals.

And we, should be, torn down.

From, the ceiling.

From, the holes, in, the holes, in the, holes.

Like, great strips, of, wetted paper.

Like, long lengths of, shining shining.

We tried to paint, stars, on, the ceiling.

We only, burned, holes, in the, holes in, the holes.

We are, so, mother, fucking, stupid.

We, are driving, where rock, meets, water.

(And the fire is)

Your tongue, laps, my veins.

(And the fire is)

Skin, a burst, of, blood.

(devour a flame-lapped flame)

And the veins, around, whose throat?

The burnt, rubber, road, where rock, meets, water.

The voice, of, the signs, burn, rock, burn water.

The rock, meeting, water, bares teeth.

Teeth, bare, no song.

The song, is, holes, in the holes.

The holes, rock, in the, rock.

We, are the, holes, in, the water, ker-plunking, the rock.

The once, of, skipping, across.

The song, it, sings, the distance.

Your song, broke, from me, in, pieces.

Your song, ropes, veins, around, veins.

Blood, around, blood.

There, night bares, no teeth.

Stars, bare, no tongue.

In the, leaden, disgust.

In the, glass, singe, of, falling.

In the, furniture, of, bodies.

The countless, of countless, of countless.

Desert, of desert of desert.

Water, of rock, of rock.

For, so, long.

All, along.

# KIT SCHLÜTER

## TROMPE L'ŒIL WITH DEAD BIRDS—

*And smale fowles maken melodye,  
That slepen al the night with open yē.*

Or to overhear someone much older  
On the patio  
Talking about that sculpture  
At the museum,  
I won't name either one,  
So you might get the impression I'm talking  
About any sculpture  
In any museum,  
Unless you already know which one I'm talking about,—  
Are you the one I talked about it with?—  
The one in the museum, it's so tiny, the one  
In marble, I can't tell you who carved it—I mean,  
I might if I remembered—but it was French,  
The title was in French,  
I can't tell you what it is, though,  
Because you'd stop listening  
To me, and get on your phone—if you even care  
Enough to look this up—and go on Google  
To search for the sculpture, and then I'd be  
More irrelevant than I already am, so here's  
A hint instead—it's three words,  
First word: two letters,  
Second word: five letters,  
Third: five—you know, in no time  
You'd find a picture of exactly what I'm about  
To describe, and I know you'd find it, because  
I did just that  
When I first got back from the museum  
After I saw the sculpture for the first time—  
I looked up the English translation of the  
French title and couldn't believe how sad I felt  
When it first hit me that growing up, yes,  
Might actually be  
The slow process of choking  
On the contradiction between  
The impossible length of life—  
The vertigo of which could make me start  
Throwing up here and now off the side of my bed—  
And this life's being, in Keith's terms,  
A "not-forever,"  
Choking . . . so, the name of that sculpture,  
Is that what matters? or is it the relief itself,  
Cut from a block of marble that looks like wax,

A bird the size of what's called a "thrush" in English,  
Hung upside down, half its body in relief,  
Half unchiseled from the marble that birthed  
Its illusion, the very possibility of illusion,  
And a thrush upside down, wings slack,  
On a string tied to a nail,  
All in marble, but  
You could swear that nail is actually rusted,  
You can see the individual fibers of that ribbon,  
And if that thrush could only breathe  
Again, there would be a minuscule heart  
In its chest fluttering  
More quickly than ours ever could  
Combined, and you even hear that stranger talking  
About that bird you'd figured was so insignificant that  
No one could have ever cared to leave  
Even the room it occupies at the museum  
With the faintest memory of it, and here, out of  
The blue now, here's this stranger  
Much older than you, talking about it,  
And this person goes on and on about it,  
I think going on so long because of the other's  
Obvious apathy, just head-nods and uh-huh's,  
So this person keeps talking, and  
I don't want to say if it's a man or a woman,  
I really don't think it matters, you know,  
What might matter, though, is that it doesn't matter,—  
But here's one question for you:  
Is there a better way to avoid gender than just  
Repeating these deadening words "this person"  
Again and again, like I'm doing now,—  
That is, would you understand,  
If I were saying "they" instead of "this person,"  
Would you think I was trying to evoke  
The image of multiple people,  
Their gender mixed, so: indeterminate, and  
Not singular, with gender indeterminate in itself,  
All binary now irrelevant to the form  
of the imagination—let's try: this person  
Just nodding their head—  
Are you hearing the they as singular?—  
Because this phrase "this person" is really killing the energy  
Isn't it?—and all you want to do is shout out that, yes,  
That other person should listen to their friend,  
Go to that museum, pay the twenty dollar admission,  
Or more, just pay whatever it takes  
To get in, it'll be worth it, to see  
This sculpture of the thrush strung up by its claws,

Jump up and tell them, what a coincidence!  
I can't believe you care about it too, that silly little thing!  
I mean I've been writing poems about that bird for years,  
And always at these really important junctures in my life,  
Like that's how much it matters to me, I mean,  
It's a totem, I've always felt my totem,  
But it could be yours too, or ours, even, and  
It's taught me more than any of my teachers  
Just by looking so genuinely dead—  
You should you tell these people to go there  
Right now, that it's so rare, this coincidence,  
This overhearing I'm picturing, that you're sure  
You'll all get along in unforeseeable ways,  
But instead you pause to think:  
Is this sculpture is even real?  
(How could something so tiny  
Actually be so important to you  
If it weren't something you'd simply  
Dreamt up, some pearl of your desire?)  
And in this moment of doubt they get up,  
Pay the check and leave the patio  
Where you're sitting and having your drink,  
And voilà, just like that, they're gone,  
You missed your chance amid  
This polyrhythm of doubt, you missed it,  
That person is gone, but go find them,  
And if you're all out of ideas on how to do that,  
I don't know, let me think, here are a few:  
Leave now, I mean, go quick,  
Maybe toss down a few bucks in cash,  
Know that paying can wait—  
You'll come back and settle up—  
Run out of there lickety-split and get them listening,  
Or walk over to their table, don't worry if  
It feels sketchy, and read the name on the credit  
Card receipt, then I don't know, maybe throw it  
Into Google as you so love to do  
And see what comes up, but that's a bit  
"High-risk-uncertain-payoff," so maybe you could  
Go read the name on the receipt and then run off,  
Shouting that name—now we're getting somewhere!—  
The way I picture it, it's such a gorgeous day,  
Like late summer, or maybe early spring,  
I don't know, one of those twilight days,  
An unusually hot April afternoon  
Or its six month antipode—and if you  
Got the name first and ran out the door shouting it,  
Don't scare them off . . . but, wait, is this really

What I've been coming to this whole time,  
This saccharine conclusion, ugh, I'm readying myself  
To make?: If it were still okay to put a little sweetness  
In my poems without sounding totally irrelevant,  
Naïve, devotional, and uncomplex—well,  
A recent success I know of this kind of writing,  
With a sweetness that fleshes itself out to complexity,  
Is one of Kevin Killian's poems, the one about  
How the plants all knew we were gay  
Before we did,  
The one that was painted up on the wall in the Bay—  
I heard him read that poem twice,  
Once at Flying Object and once in Providence,  
And because of how he read it at F. O.,  
Everyone was splitting their sides, I mean,  
Everyone thought it was satire, but  
When he read it in Providence,  
You could have heard a pin drop on a rug  
A football field away,  
I mean we were all bent over crying, but  
I'm holding myself back now, I'm going to cut this off,  
Because, before I can go on, I have to make sure:  
Is that the place of sweetness and sincerity and  
(Why can't I hold myself back?) tenderness  
In poetry: a sort of Pierrot  
At turns grotesque or elegant  
Given the iteration—?

# ANNA GURTON-WACHTER

## CESSPOOL

Judy Garland's head has steam coming out of it. She has never seen a person sting before. As adults are determined by too much empathy, so too motion escapes her. Why can't she be begged back to earth? The desirability of her erased psyche; one hand writing as the other erases. She sees a person sting. "I must be understood as the queen of empathy" says her dog. Her dog takes her to a garbage heap and fucks her at the peak of the world's garbage. She wishes for people to watch her and then they watch her.

Anyone who saw it happen was reaching for an origin story, one definitive fuck. To my knowledge, it was twenty minutes they were gone and the steam rose off of her body like only opacity can. Her dog is her poet mind reaching for an object to throw away. All of my non-predecessors come forward. Lions roaring from the pinnacle of a garbage desert come forward. Why do you refuse to wear Judy Garland's wig?

Who invented fucking in a garbage heap? The alphabet is the first photographer, the first time garbage melts into words. Judy Garland's dog has so much empathy in his timeline. He walks me through it. At ten a.m. he was making breakfast. At noon he was taking out the garbage and forgot where he lived. At seven thirty he had finally discovered garbage sex. It smelled so bad he was forced into language and couldn't remember how to not know what everyone was saying. Everyone was saying he was lost. The power of being lost was not at that time known by anyone to exist.

Judy Garland steps out of her house and looks back as it floats away. Her house is gently floating away and she is firmly stationary. Her feet kick the dirt as if to say 'good riddance, house'. The earth was still changing that much then- an agitation of shapes. "Now that your house is gone, can I cut you in half and play with your parts?" said the lion progenitor holding a knife. The lion progenitor tried to say it would all eventually get thrown out anyway. Judy Garland was glad to say goodbye to her house and go back to Africa.

Judy Garland is looking into people's living rooms from outside the window. She can see someone watching *Three Men and a Baby* on a big screen TV. She starts licking the window. Her dog is inside the house barking. The men who find the baby are trying to figure out what to do with a baby. Judy Garland laughs, this is just like that time when she stole all the babies and threw their images into light. Crib light is a magic kind of ambivalence as composition.

*Three Men and a Baby* is a movie about three men who live together and get confused about the difference between a package of drugs and a baby. They are referring to the baby as a package and other people are referring to the drugs as a package. If they had not had movies when Judy Garland was alive, she might have had discoverable limits. Maybe, her idea of what a movie was, and what a house was, and how to be in a house were all deferred onto the package of drugs or what to call the unnamed baby.

She wished for someone to come and take her away and then it happened. She was missing for fifty years. Do you think that with a house swirling in the air like that no objects fall out? Her parents were in a floating house looking at all of the floating televisions. They forgot to be begged back to earth by Judy Garland or any other star. Judy Garland was so perfect then that even time with all its wormholes could not destroy her. These are just the details of how she balances her story and makes time to live next to a trash heap.

“If the lions kill me, tell them to bring my body back here.” She never said that. My account of what happens to Judy Garland's body ends in a lion's belly, and he is not feeling well. He throws her up whole or in parts into a new world. This world is an amnesia of shitty empathy and stupid houses that never float or move. She is supposed to appreciate the fixity of life but instead she is bitter and bans lions forever from her mind.

# TYRONE WILLIAMS

## HOW (REPRISE)

The pale face of the red man  
stars as a Cheshire cat

shooting a snuff film,  
a buddy movie,

co-star, sidekick,  
the Gatling gun.

As for the reds at scale,  
backdrop credits,

the gold rush pans out,  
wide shot of a shrinking cutting floor,

where the extras—good  
sports—lie in state,

city, and street names,  
pale approximations

of the gold standard:  
colorful logos,

mascots, gear, etc.,  
street cred knock-offs—

the sport of repeating

guns repeating history.

.

## THE UGLY STICK

Wailing away until her arms went rubbery, phlegm already starting to cake as future snot, her blond weave withering into a post-Jeri curl, she fell on blubbery ashy knees before a white-sheeted beanpole, squeaky with Jordans, they put a cap sideways on his ass...

“TWISTED RUDDER”

my hands have got  
one hand behind

my back

screw those bitches yelping fro'  
“ gold-diggers pawing for

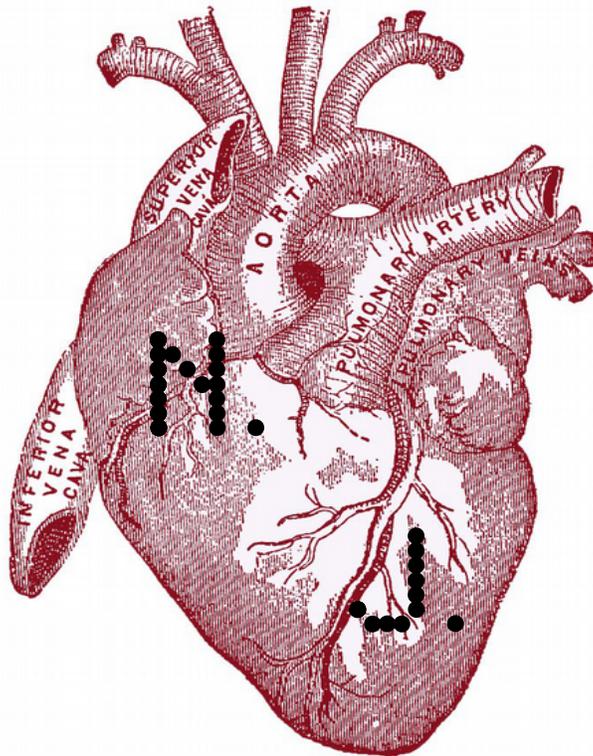
some rocks

my other hand—

floats my boat my bridge loan—

Ra-  
ward...

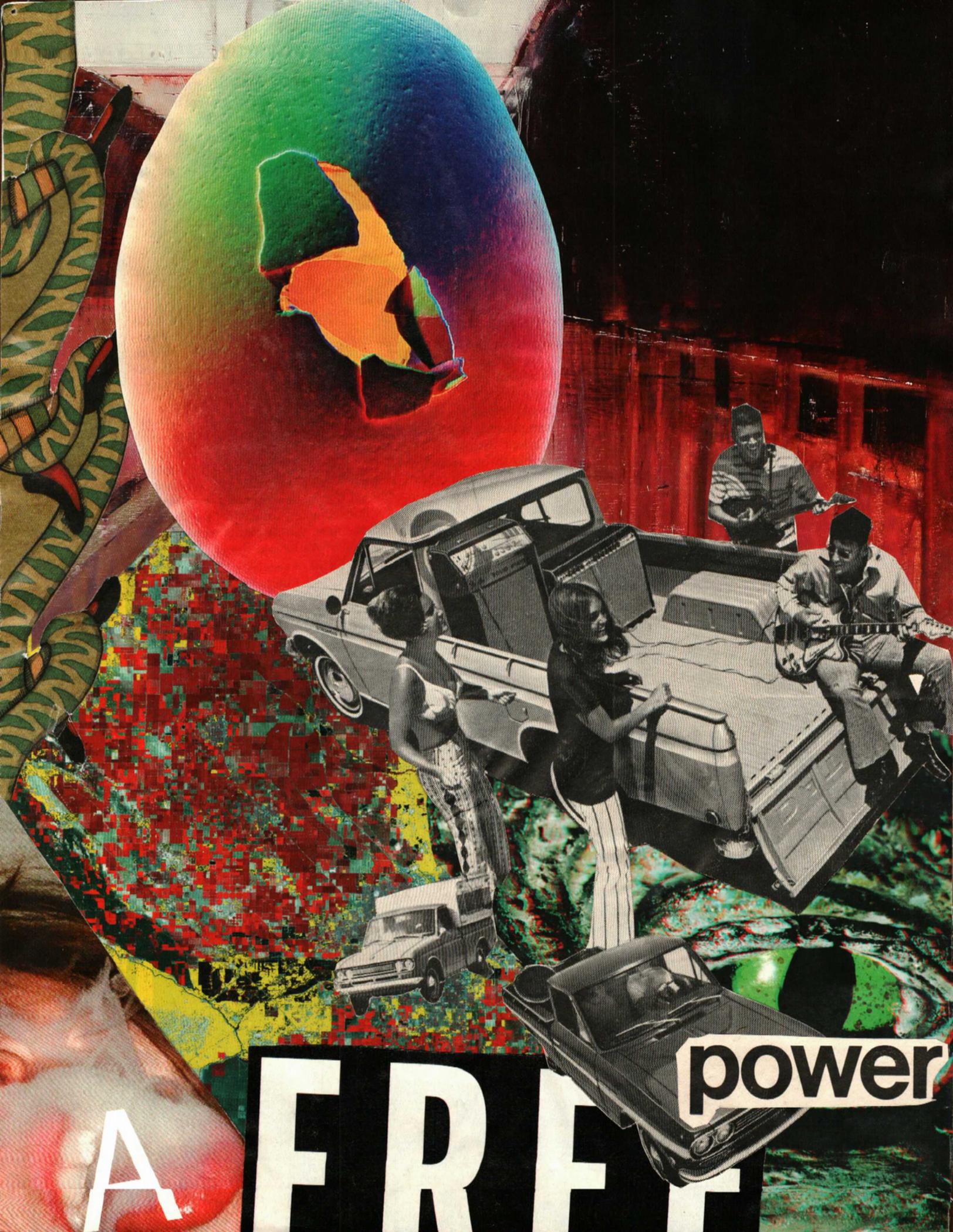
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# Elderly



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