

ELDERLY



sweet
16



SARAH RUDD

ANNE LESLEY SELGER

BO STEAK

ELDERLY

SIXTEEN

CURTIS ENERGY

TONGO EISEN-MARTIN

JENN NEAREARY

ENZI SPERO

SARAH RUPP

AS THE WORLD BURNS

We were looking for facts in Lisa Grimaldi's grimoire –

Such opulence, she'd pressed pearls between the pages and now they fluttered down to the floor
of my apartment, nestled between mice and glitter, crumbs and twine

You scooped them up quickly, your arm pressing against my knee

Remember how we used to pray to Martha Stewart, since cooking was never our
strongest endeavor

Repeat after me –

*Goddess Martha, grant us this moment of culinary perfection, make us
blessed, help us not die cooking avocados in the deep fryer we receipt
scammed our way into owning*

Lisa Grimaldi kidnapped and was kidnapped

Who was the man that she hit in the head with a brick –
Possibly killed

Lisa Grimaldi smuggled stolen artwork through her fur coat store

Rembrandts in mink stoles, oil paint matting red fur that would have made
Louis Bourgeois smile

Tom – the first husband – carved <3 LISA into an oak when he was 19

When he was 50, he would leave Lisa for a woman who was 23

This is the normal math of hetlife

Good thing Lisa had already left him

In the background of every scene we can see her scheming, her thought bubbles censored out by
20th century daytime T.V.

There used to be a women's reform school in Tecumseh called Girls Town

Women my age were locked in basement cellars for two weeks at a time and assaulted by their
male guards

The reason we need Feminist City is because of Girls Town

When those women disappeared, their sisters always kept the porchlight on

We aren't surprised that Lisa never dies in *As the World Turns*

My mother and I used to watch it together, while folding laundry no less

Other women's husbands fall into comas as they tend to do pretty constantly in T.V. world
Lisa is there in the waiting room, supportive, but also just has this side-eyed look about her
Those eyes sign – *so what?*

Lisa would never have been caught dead in the Blue Ridge Mountains, but she would have been
friends with my great-grandmother, Lulie

Lulie's husband Reggie committed suicide during the Great Depression

It happened in the John Marshall Hotel – you can see the neon sign for it from this window
So she raised eight children alone in those mountains

She got by on a bathtub production of moonshine because she hated doing rich people's laundry

After her goiter was removed – iodine deficiency plagues the hollers – Lulie dressed up Sunday
every day with beads covering her soft scarred neck

She could read and write even though people said she acted distracted and laughed nervously
Her neighbors would have her write their letters, would wait on her porch for her to come home
to her house that had a dirt floor

She also bred Yorkshire terriers and she grew weed in her backyard

The plants got to be six feet

Grandma Doris lived there after Lulie died and when her husband got cancer she got angry and
lit them all on fire

I can't tell you how the Feminist City will come about

But it will have a great moat
Are moats illegal?

Maybe now, but it won't matter then, I bet

Lisa will be the bouncer

Its cyclopean wall will be mortared with the 3D printed dicks of all the men we had to suck to
pay rent and all their awful text messages that have been grafted into our minds
We will stick them into the cracks, fortifying our walls

Neatly, haphazardly, you'll see

Or no walls, whatever

Lisa and I both agree "there are good guys" though sometimes we overhear them talking about our
"jacket with the naked militant space babes backpatch" and they say that
"maybe it isn't appropriate for work but it is pretty cool"

Lisa Grimaldi seems to be everywhere with me

Half a century of being broadcast out into the Universe gives her this flitting ghostbitch quality
She says that people will try and make you feel bad

For being such a cunt
 For being a demanding girlfriend to multiple boyfriends
 For criticizing criticism
 For spreading lifesaving gossip
 For stealing whatever you need
 For only using your camera to take selfies

But let Lisa tell you this – being a cunt is super satisfying

I saw Lisa at a riot once

I peered through the flares, those stupid cop candles

I saw her standing there, all decked out in a black velour tracksuit and huge sunglasses
She was wearing Sketchers Shape-Ups even though I know she collected money in the joint
 lawsuit against them

Lisa was incognito but she winked at me

I saw her order three men to push a dumpster into the street

 She then lit it on fire by dropping a Virginia Super Slim into it so casually

You know, she didn't want to take care of her son on the show, so she had him shipped him off to military school

I'm not saying the military isn't evil
It is

But because Lisa hated doing all the reproductive labor, the producers had to give in
They SORAS him

Thus, he is a baby in 1961 but by 1970 he has already graduated college and fought in the Vietnam War and been twice married

Lisa just has that power

It was Lisa that shot the boy with arrows for looking at her through the trees
Maybe she was trying to tell us that a good place for feminists is the forest

But I have so many friends leaving the city to start land projects that this feels passé
I have no interest in growing onions or growing anything or dirt or – we'll see

Lisa, I'm taking you into the forest with me

Lisa Grimaldi gave me my first Pap smear after an older dude I should never have been fucking
took off his condom without asking

I noticed but didn't say anything

Later, I felt like a bad feminist

I still thought – back then – that maybe that was a card that could be revoked
But Lisa gets it

She stuck a plastic brush all the way up into my cervix
When she twisted it I felt the pain of tectonic plates moving

Then we had to draw my blood and I couldn't stop nervously laughing

She put her hands out – palms up – and I put my hands on top of hers

I thought she was going to give me an AIDS-Or-No-AIDS palm reading by looking at my lifeline
But she cackled, said she just wanted my papers

Lisa Grimaldi holding a syringe over me

Lisa Grimaldi cutting my hair and then offering me free tanning

You look sick. Pale. I'm training this other girl. If you want to come in, it'll be free

Lisa always has spare tampons, wine, tarot readings

Lisa can be counted on to pick you up when you need it, drop you off when you just have to
leave

Hide you and not tell anybody

Find you the Aqua Tofana you need

Lisa offered me her couch

Lisa said she liked my writing when I was only 18

Back to the Grimoire, yes it was you and me, sharing a too-small loveseat

Your head between your legs, the grounded book open, pages flipping

Your baby hairs creeping out of the braid I plaited

ANNE LESLEY SELCER

GO ON

*In the middle of the story there is a stripper
or some kind of exhibitionist
bending over in a gold body suit;
a big heart covers most of the screen
and Hole's song 'Violet' plays softly.*

The day was aflame like the seal got ripped off the top of a Pringles can,
I emerged from your room,
around my head an invisible plume.

The kind of oneness they share
describes the overall existence of life on earth
with the elements water and fire
giving them a fulfilling experience that lasts
till the time they can walk in the eternity of their love.

I awoke from a dream. I was about to give you head.
Your bedroom was in the back of the house,
beyond the window was an ocean.
The city moved thru us in canals of separation.
Everywhere hovered like pollen,
permanent dereliction.

I felt a sense of desperation until I found a weapon.
I had gone back into the wood, over the plants,
leaping from big stone to big stone then up a mountain
made of stones til I got a flat grey shale shive,
sharp at both ends, perfect for my hand.

It did not attempt to conquer me,
but I would never match its size.
I couched, I bowed, I stretched out my paws,
laid them flat, named it an object of the sublime.

I cycle around the internet looking for you all night,
and the sky was made of amethyst,
and all the stars look just like little fish,
I find you looking at Tumblr porn
I still have a link to your likes.

The morning is bathed in digital radiance,
I yawn insensate into ornate violence.
almost-too-pretty slutty-and-cute 2-or-more-girls-is-a-party
master-of-o watching-my-husband tit-fux-and-cumshots just-young-feet hells-cuties
clueless-boyfriend stepmothers milf-bondage.

I dreamed there was shortage.
Each family had to pick one.
My father killed me by saying *you're dead* and I was a ghost.
I was horizontal and floating thru my house
I could see and hear everyone
but no one could see or hear me.

*Now pink sparkles stream from her throat
and the stripper paints back on her clothes—
she squirts two dropperfuls of blue nail polish
from the tincture bottle into her mouth.*

*I never said that Courtney killed him
I don't know if that's the case or not
don't don't know if that's the case or not
she is younger than you and doesn't have a child
younger than you and doesn't have a child
she is younger than you and doesn't have a child
your big brother was just such a beautiful boy
I always wondered why no one fussed over the baby—*

La Brea, almost too pretty stretches out in unfathomable infinity,
an airplane overhead trails a banner,
“who can alchemize empire inside their own body?”

I walk to the river.
I'm going to live forever.
I gather dead flowers and rotted mice,
my hair down around my waist.
I want to be encased.
Diamonds and rubies fall from my mouth,
noir nets of shadow cast over me.
The succulent visual object
encrusted in smashed address
renders the self an evanescent reference point;
the eye is gaped by the screen,
go on take everything—

SEEKING ARRANGEMENT
(<3 poem)

The cats of the night are crawling
all over the rent collectors
having sumptuous meals out from their pockets
boring onyx holes there as big as apartments.

All Christmas break I findommed the department head
of a for-profit school, a fireman, and an armed security guard.
Now I have lingerie, a \$92 flogger, the new Juliana Spahr,
a latex catsuit, and several Gift Rocket cards.

I am a ludic girl, seeking arrangement.
But I want your lips and I will have them.
Astrologically we are twins, except you own your home.
I will take your tenure, take your tenure: take your tenure.

THANKSGIVING WITH JOB APP

Looking at facebook
trying to figure out how to refuse pain
with my animal heart
as per instructions to myself on screensaver,
you must refuse with your....etc.
Thinking about organizing a whole new thing
around images of chernobyl & detroit
& eyal weizman & meillassoux.
I didnt like that lecture
as much as I thought I might.
S. ate pizza in back.
I noticed Kristina & Julian & Frances & Denise,
Julian asked a question
about the materialist implications.
I facebooked him immediately
from inside the lecture hall.
I looked at my dad's page today,
bad mistake. There was a picture of my daughter,
outdated, and some hebrew words surrounded
by zionist rants. I looked them up,
was afraid he was blowing a dark shadow her way.
I saw on Louis' page something about blowing
up kindergartens. Happy Thanksgiving.
I was not in pain but now, sick for five days
then finally not, I cannot distinguish
this overly sugary feeling, blown out
this blown out feeling
which just, click, expands into poetry.
Then now: to organize a syllabus,
new media, blown out into the 21st c,
takin' it all the way to a Christian University in Minnesota
if they'll let me.

ED STECK

4A_TACT_WAT_SS_670

RECIRCULATING PROGRAMMING ENCOUNTERS LOOKING-
GLASS POND-REFLECTING TEXTURES: UNLIMITED
STREAMING TERRA-GENERATED TOPOGRAPHICAL
FEATURES, ALGORITHM-DESIGNATED LANDMASS
INTERESTS, QUARTER-TONED STRINGENT-FILE. TALL
EXOSOMATIC FORMATIONS COMPUTE INTERFACED
FRUITING DATA. PATTERN-EXPRESSED NEURAL
STORAGE UNITS STEEP COORDINATES UNTIL STEAM-
REVERB FORMS STRUCTURES TO MANUFACTURE MEMORY.
IN WATER, THE VIEWER IS SELF-INTERFACING.

4B_TACT_WAT_SS_109 (COMMAND/INS-LANG: 670 FUNCTION-PROC-EVAL)

```
EXEC_FUNC (COMMAND/RECIRC_PRGMNG = TEXTURE_ENC
670, ATT="LOOKING-GLASS" "POND-REFLECTING"
[TER_GEN="TOPOGRAPHICAL FEATURE",ALG_DES=
"LANDMASS INTEREST",¼_TONE="STRINGENT FILE"]
="TRUE" ONLY IF EXOSOM_FORM COMMAND/FUNC/COMP
="FRUITING DATA") (\N\FRUITING_DATA_APP_NEG
WHEN COMMAND/RECIRC_PRGMNG=TEXTURE_ENC 670
="TRUE"\ \FAILURE_MOD=CODED_MEMORY_CACHE\
(COMMAND/COORDINATE_STEEP = PATTERN_EXP 670,
OBTAIN_USER: "STORAGE UNITS", "MEMORY FORM")
/
[REVERB/FORM] [MANUFACTURE MEMORY] [WATER]
"THE VIEWER" "SELF-INTERFACING" "MEMORY"
```

4C_TACT-WAT-SS_221 (COMMAND/INS-LANG: 670/109 REPEAT-PROC)

"PROGRAMMING" = NULL_FUNCTION
"TEXTURES" = NULL_FUNCTION
"TOPOGRAPHICAL FEATURES" = NULL_FUNCTION
"LANDMASS INTERESTS" = NULL_FUNCTION
"STRINGENT-FILE" = NULL_FUNCTION
"EXOSOMATIC FORMATIONS" = NULL_FUNCTION
"FRUITING DATA" = NULL_FUNCTION.
"NEURAL STORAGE UNITS" = NULL_FUNCTION
"STEAM-REVERB" = NULL_FUNCTION
"STRUCTURES" = NULL_FUNCTION
"MEMORY" = CACHE-ITEM_03, CACHE-
ITEM_03(SUB-A-1), CACHE-ITEM_03(SUB-A-2),
CACHE-ITEM_03(SUB-A-3), CACHE-ITEM_03(FUNC-
A-1), CACHE-ITEM_03(FUNC-A-2)
"WATER" = NULL_FUNCTION, NULL_COMMAND
"THE VIEWER" = NULL_FUNCTION, NULL_COMMAND,
NULL_LOCATION

5A_WAT_TACT_SS_023

CANCELLED WATER IS A GREY TEMPLATE — WATER
TEXTURE AS LIGHTED RECOGNITION, REMEMBERED-
WATER TEXTURE LINKS. NON-ENCODED WATER NETS
COMBINATIONS AND USER-RESPONSIVE ACCESSIBLE
MEDIUMS. EVOLUTIONARY INFORMATION IS RECORDED
INFORMATION: WATER-FLOWING-LIGHT TOYING
MEMORIALS AS ACCESS POINTS. THE MAIN ENTRY IS
A WATERWAY. CANAL-COVE, KETTLE-BAYOU, MARSH-
MERE, SEA-LOUGH-BURN, DRAW-FIRTH: A MOSAIC
WATERBODY-SMEAR IN FRACTAL LANDSCAPE.

5B_TACT_WAT_SS_390 (COMMAND/INS-LANG: 023 FUNCTION-PROC-EVAL)

```
EXEC_FUNC (COMMAND/CANCEL=TEXT-ECO-023 [TEXT-  
WATER/TEMP="GREY"/RECOG="LIGHTED"/LINKS="REM  
EMBERED" _TEXT=WATER], FUNC/LOC/NETS="USER-  
RESPONSIVE ACCESSIBLE MEDIUMS"/"COMBINATIONS"  
LOC/SRC=TEXT=WATER, SRC_ATT=NON-ENCODED) .  
(\N\"EVOLUTIONARY INFORMATION IS RECORDED  
INFORMATION"\) (LOC/ACCESS_PT: MEMORIALS,  
ATT=WATER_FLOWING_LIGHT) (\N\"THE MAIN ENTRY  
IS A WATERWAY\) (LOC/MAIN_ENT="WATERWAY")  
/  
[FALSE_ENTRY: C-COV/KTL_BAY/M-M/S-L-B/D-F]  
"WATERBODY" "SMEAR" "FRACTAL LANDSCAPE"
```

5c_TACT_WAT_SS_012 (COMMAND/INS-LANG: 012/390 REPEAT-PROC)

"WATER" = NULL_LOCATION
"GREY TEMPLATE" = NULL_FUNCTION
"WATER TEXTURE" = NULL_FUNCTION
"REMEMBERED-WATER TEXTURE" = NULL_COMMAND
"NON-ENCODED WATER" = NULL_COMMAND
"ACCESSIBLE MEDIUMS" = NULL_FUNCTION
"EVOLUTIONARY INFORMATION" = CACHE-ITEM-04
"RECORDED INFORMATION" = CACHE-ITEM-05
"MEMORIALS" = NULL_LOCATION
"ACCESS POINTS" = NULL_LOCATION
"MAIN ENTRY" = NULL_LOCATION
"WATERWAY" = NULL_FUNCTION
"CANAL-COVE" = NULL_LOCATION
"KETTLE-BAYOU" = NULL_LOCATION
"MARSH-MERE" = NULL_LOCATION
"SEA-LOUGH-BURN" = NULL_LOCATION
"DRAW-FIRTH" = NULL_LOCATION
"WATERBODY" = NULL_LOCATION
"SMEAR" = NULL_LOCATION
"FRACTAL LANDSCAPE" = ACTIVE_COMMAND,
ACTIVE_LOCATION, ACTIVE_FUNCTION

CURTIS EMERY

EARTHWORM ORACLE

How these varying shades of silence build arithmetically. Stacked one on top of each other; this being the sum of the parts creating the inclination to be left alone. Pew silence. Derivative futures which must include the present, wholesale instances incurring a blanket subject. This subject being myself. What simple addition reinforces this principle?

That *self* is a pattern.

Towards

 endstop, superimposed
over prose shades of
subtle silence

a blanket, resonating
the sounds of daylight
lays out under moonlight,
grass sky bound props fibers
over sudden earth, each
stoke of green/

 painted foundation
crushed under naked foot

silence
soft whispers
of earthy shoots—

each sprout tonguing sole,

earthworm oracle passing truths
into the air, slimy truisms
return each morning feeding
the rabbit's disbelief—

the furnace of all believing,
a certainness.

AFTER A PARTY

New arc

erratum, revision of previous
 errata now accepted

forwards towards new arc and

 forward genital bird sing hidden song

I see it in his eyes I am a conduit for further
 explorations

 testing known arcs without hopes of

progress I remain in my old ways

 I am to set out upon myself. I am to find the true self of myself

bring me my trust first act, its head on a plate

 echo room reverb

 erating in the genital bird's next

of my dream self

 I see it in his eyes

 self mutation.

 a self

 I am a conduit for further

 I am a conduit to further

 not mine.

UPPER BLACK EDDY, PA

I saw the true face of my grandfather
become a small doe. Testing strips of
bark at the edge of a pasture.

Ears flicking through the air. Taut.
Fresh birch twigs snapping.

I considered the woodpecker.
Bright red plumage signaling
against white snow.

How a creek moves forward under
shelves of ice.

The way layered red rock shale nods
to resources long removed. Colors
ice like cinnamon. Flavoring banks
along which he walked barges.

Moving goods up river. Down river.
Mules and all.

Past single lane bridges. Along the
Delaware. Whirlpools mark the edges.
Eddies glisten with catfish.

I saw the true face of my grandfather
glimmer off the forehead of a body.

Off a forehead. My grandmother standing
over weeping. Kissing the same spot over.
And over again. The forehead of a body.

REALISM

I spent the morning pressing
hash in the spine of my favorite book—

my feet, cold on concrete,
tap through dusk's shadows—

a quest for the final sunspot,

my eyes pacing
over pages of sentences
beginning and ending—

proving sometimes
a period is a coda,

just as the sapling is
a placeholder for next
year's harvest.

Today, I read that I hold an alternate reality
between two of my right ribs—

I lose my breath trying
to punch it up to warp speed.

In the distance
a train horn counts
birds by the flock,

as it wanes, I wonder if my description
of a moth will become less fantastic
as my days begin to repeat themselves—

my mind finally exhausted,
imagination becoming
backbreaking labor.

On beat, a fire alarm from downtown
reverberates,
interjecting,

and I realize

even fire is not a disaster,
but a different lens
for viewing objects.

WOODCHUCKS

The best use of time is distance,
as in the time it takes

onion shoots to grow with the cycling
sun can also be measured as halfway up my shin.

I haven't made a penny
in the last month—

I have been reading
two hundred dollars'
worth of books.

Every morning
I wake up is an echo.

Every tone in every
fallen leaf is also an echo.

Even time begins to repeat
as woodchucks dash

from under the shed
and then return.

I traveled an hour yesterday,
observing a mutated flower—

form is wasted on it;
the last standing

in a crooked potting box—

can reality read form?

The sky full of planes plays
a chromatic scale in my head,

while my brother burns
flags over Lowell streets

in a din of gunshots which
count off bodies out of sight—

as my woodchucks burrow
deep beneath the shed.

Other days they sleep “
assuring the finality

of a declarative sentence:
There is no time only distance.

TONGO EISEN-MARTIN

LOOK AT THIS GHOST THAT THINKS IT CAN FLY

"A bunch of dreams
you don't want coming true
become a batch," I said to the woman
in the living room

my paint was running like my shadow
had more of me
than I did

"what's the matter with your shirt," she asked

"same thing that's wrong with yours,"
I said to myself

"My shadow has more of me than me,"
I said next to myself

The way to peace in the city
Can be achieved
On no lower
Than the tenth floor

"you remember the elevator you took up here?"
I ask

"this city has more of me than me," she said to herself

...

"who turned the lights off on my haircut," interrupts a man

the woman is startled

I start deciding whether
I'm alive or differently alive

If there are details to this man's life,
Only he can see them

The only way to have friends in this city
Is no higher than the 16th floor

"I'm differently alive," I say to myself

I throw the man a book of matches

"where the hell has he been hanging out lately?"

she wonders to herself

she cannot see the man

THE ONLY THING THEY LIE ABOUT IS BEING GENERATIONS

A mother goes straight to heaven and back
Let's raise that boy on a rack

Roses on a bullet (the right hand stopped engraving after that)

the fortuneteller on my left shoulder cannot stay focused

A loose cannon is in charge of the
world

And I got an imagination you
would not believe

I mean really have no need for
floors nor ceilings

Headed to war
with armor made from
casted prison letters
And other clothes
that don't fit

Watching people back flip off of a nickel
Cash-Cash in a dollar store pot
Along with the fingers of freaks
And soda machine gavels
(all ingredients loosely defined)

we are on the hard side of fire
bragging about the guarantee that God lives and is never bored

tall grass -all this talking-
tall grass is all this talk will ever be

same countdown I've lost to my whole life
counting childhood twice

you know, it's tough when an artist doesn't know if Harlem was real. It's like
spending your life under a fake name. Or drinking wine to wash down a crumbled
cork

I used to like shooting dice nonviolently
That means with no chance of being rich one day

Will I be a junkie my whole life?

“Probably grandson
You see, we made too many bones
before you were born
Your father spent too much time in
prison
And your mother is not the sane
one
Good con runs in your snot
Your skin is old ground where old
beasts know their way around”

Do funerals have bells?

“No they don’t.
Not the ones that matter anyway.
You will be unmarked even to God.
Unmarked for a thousand years then only seen by God.”

And what is death?

“Death is a new toy for you to kick
out of windows and
throw off of walls”

Say Harlem

A masterpiece is coming
(It just got to beat a million bullets to the spot)

These guns is about as irrelevant as the house would call the paint.
A good night’s sleep arrives bleeding on the porch.
Proud parents we have.
Genocide has a pair of shoes in my closet too.

Forget about civil rights, school boy... you are never getting out of those cuffs.

FISH WITH AMBITION TO BECOME THE RIVER

I looked in my bank account

It said, "you have five toilets to your name."

It said, "don't just sit there. Return fire."

Talking head says, "go to sleep children. You will all be police tomorrow."

We say: No. We will be the poor.

Talking head says, "ok scumbags, I talked to you like children; now you will be dogs"

"Market Street" is the best two-word joke I have ever heard in San Francisco

"I should have never quite heroin," we all say (all of the time)

We started early (twenty wagons appeared in a dream I had about the 7th grade)

Pathology needs a god to represent it to children and child like states

Eat your people today

The top of the tornado starts under our shoe soles

And touches down on old world sick beds

Bibles offer no explanation

But one cool preacher has quite a laugh

All looked up at our beautiful shoes

"I was watching her on my hands"

"even my imagination just sat there"

"the entire crowd did not take a sip for twenty minutes"

the choir is done with you

done with all of us

like you've never seen this card trick before

the one where your grandfather appears

and throws a couple of people into a fire

I should have talked to her

instead I threw my whole life away

I turned my back on my people, Lord

left them for a trip up three flights of stairs

now the whole freak show is on the back of my hand

including capitalists looking up at the sky

MISSILES IN A MATCHBOOK

Stories leap
From ex-workers' knuckles onto their children's shoulders
A class struggle sacred and soon

Trust movement here
Despite this reclining world full of tent city coughs and third world underpasses

Despite people with arms of poison
Soft and greedy mannerisms

This morning is a zoo in love
A killing field's smile
Ex workers have insane right shoulders that say, "we will ram you all"
Their children sit in May kitchens, hungry for steel contact

When a neighborhood is in pain, houses stutter at each other
In a theater of human and plaster
Walls close in/White tension/World fails/White and bitter/No one goes free
But the walls become more thoughtful and remember our names

This morning men think they are passing around cigarettes
But really cigarettes are passing around men

Houses stutter at each other
About the rich man's world
And the poor man's water
About the rich man's world
And the poor man's repetition

Ex workers have hunched shoulders that fit between stairs and headaches
An inverted purgatory
Of course their children feel at home everywhere

In a reclining world
Where hands slur as they speak
Where a man is lamppost high
Is his lamppost's keeper
Where noise for the eyes is made mostly of human shapes

This morning is killing field's smile
Big teeth downtown
May 1st stories leap from hands to shoulders
Children make better skylines out of wino's tales
And it takes one (lamppost high... his lamppost's keeper)

"Remember May"

Remember political prisoners
Knuckles and journey
Free taste and free trade
Over proofed streets
County doors and county teeth

Trust movement here
Like 50 familiar postures in the dark... run here.
We will save your life

JENN MCCREARY

THE COMPOSITION OF COLLAPSE

That each October, I begin again.

That you have to know what & where it is so you can begin to navigate somewhere better. That there is always a door. That the door moors the idea of passage to its hinge. That sorrow comes soft & holds fast.. That I always loved the sharp shape cold gives to things. That light behaves differently when you're not watching it. That the same proteins which evolved to allow a dragonfly's wings to contract & relax are responsible for the beating of the human heart. That it is all violence & ardor. That we exist within quotes & on the tips of eachother's tongues. That I am writing a secret history in blood, in sugar, a cryptographic cartography in invisible ink, needled into our skins. That at the bottom of the world, summer only lasts six weeks. That time is irrelevant. That time is a limited means by which movement is measured. That only the dead will see the end of the story which is every story which is a story of love & war.

To assemble an army of murders of crows.

To count flash to thunder. To banish blame from the back of the throat. To purify hands by weeping on them. To turn the ground to sea or sky. To resist direction with stasis. To forget the physics. To withdraw, whole, to write the room. To glow, light caged within ribs. To throw shadows to represent the missing. To ache, veins shot through with shine. To bruise like a girl. To cage like a puppy, to press between book-leaves like a poppy. To cue the music. To be skeptical of star signs, of waxing moons, of retrograde planets. To shun fantasies of perfect compatible saints. To send encoded communiqués via pneumatic tube. To violate the vernacular. To coo, whimper, howl. To wax rhapsodic, to wane hypnotic. To slip the socket, to find the anchor. To whistle & whisper, clavicle to scapula. To trace the shape of things rapidly approaching. To carve the wall with scrawls. To chart the composition of collapse.

& it's like an eclipse; don't apologize.

& P writes: *I came across this woman hung by her hair & thought of you.* & I reply: *saltwater for every poison, potion & charm.* & demanded a Volta. & clouds of phosphorescence. & songs of riptide & avalanche. & spoke of two cultures of warriors who had evolved the same set of tragedies, the same first stories of heartbreaking loss. & fought windmills. & saw angels. & words for prayer. & all these failed omens & ethernet fallout. & how sleeping does open secrets. & is a green & violet & golden thought, is a shiny thing. & is equal parts vinegar & glitter. & is glitter-bright, is vinegar-sharp. & now in this hush. & now we shall have broken clouds. & in 1768, David Rittenhouse discovered the atmosphere of Venus, & spent the entire following year preparing to view its rare transit across Philadelphia's night sky. & when the observation finally took place, he fainted from excitement. & wonder.

This is the unsettling awareness of your own heartbeat.

This is the amniotic tranquility of a thunderstorm. This is how, in every culture in history, children have played some variation of hide & seek. This is the uncertainty of reality. This is the particular way in which I lie to myself. This is Brigadoon. This is what happens when mortals get involved with the gods, this is a violin-playing goat. This is a mouthful of thistles & thorns. This is my body, quartering sleep, limb by limb. This is all my dirt in pieces & extreme. This is evidence of things not seen. This is my struggle with object permanence, how I am not entirely sure that when I close the door / the window / my eyes that you continue to exist. This is how it took three claps before I believed it was actually thunder. This is how life is full of vanishing acts. This is how I am learning to mend with silk, like a spider. This is a state of radical apartness, the life & breath of it. This is the desire to be struck by disaster— *not the storm but the calm that slays me.*

How a door can either be open or shut (or swings).

How a silver key can open an iron lock. How a skeleton key can open Pandora's box. How it fit. How it pitches fits. How I invent & rewrite. How I hold two secrets from each other in the hollows of my shoulder blades. How we mean for nothing & want for everything. How resolution was drowned in blue & was lost. How you try not to look & can't look away. How a sentiment of agonizing awe is painful in the way it's supposed to be. How, in tribal cultures, when you want to cleanse your past, you cut off all of your hair & bury it deep in the earth. How fever-dreams are islanded in a stream of stars. How visions intact, still warm, have swum to shore. How it gets in my eyes, gets caught in the back of my throat. How I bent my bones to answer the question mark of your sleeping spine, pressed my lips against the back of your neck. How I fit those stars to my skin to illuminate the dark.

from DISGUST

This project consists of transcriptions of videos made in response during a week-long ds protocol from d. wolach in which, among other constraints, I was not permitted the use of my hands. d has a degenerative illness. Late one evening, d explained to me the way the condition would progress. The first thing to go, d said, will be the ability to use my hands, followed by spasticity in the neck. After this, the slow deterioration of my mind. How this imminence has always framed but not defined our relationship. I consider this protocol as a way of moving toward, of becoming one another. As Breyer P-Orridge says in The Ballad of Genesis and Lady Jaye, "We were very, very aware that one day one would be lost."

"Don't worry, this is a temporary state of affairs that gives way to other temporary states of affairs. But for now, chiefly: always nearest you is a desiring body that is nearly always untouchable—you do not take this for granted, of how we can be, and to ourselves often internalize that we are, untouchable. Hence you and others will be such acutely, off limits to self and others, though dependent on them." - d. wolach

Day One. 8:08am. When it is intentional. Um. Once it had. It was for this sort of blinding moment. That is the loss of the self. Where. Huh. But those have always been more of the. The focused pains the the pains like a laser not the ones that happen just every day. The kind of slow dull ones the slow dull. Throbbing pains. That. Are not. Self-inflicted but endured. But that is not the question. I didn't. Sleep well. I started early. I guess I was excited. That is not the question. It. Uh. I don't know how to think while speaking I'm used to doing it in writing. Why? Do I? Hurt myself. I think it is to be in contact with the real. In a way that's. Easy to overlook. When you are in habit. Perhaps a way outside of habit. Um. Oh, fuck. The first wounds were to my hand. That I can remem—that are clear and distinct. Um. I wanted to be marked. I wanted that mark to last. I did not. I wanted it to be physical. To others. Often pain is not visible to others. And so there was something nice. In, um. In wearing it on your skin instead of, inside your skin? Or inside of your. Moment. It has been five minutes.

Um. **Day One. Log Interval One.** It started last night. Um. I wrote NO and NO. On the palms of my hands so I would remember. As as a reminder. Um. And I guess I started early I slept on my hands even though I think that was supposed to happen tonight. And tomorrow instead. Um. I feel like I failed over and over again today. Sort of in this evolving way of figuring out. What was being asked of me. I woke. And. I was wearing a slip and leggings. And I managed to slide a dress on over my slip. I'm still wearing. The slip um. I couldn't get socks on. So I went around all day without socks which is a thing that I hate. To do. Um. Okay, describe. I woke up. I put on. A dress. And Emma was making breakfast and I. Lay down on the couch. And she said do you want some and I said okay. And she—Emma said um what sort of utensil would you like to use? Chopsticks? Spoon? Spork? And I said no. I can't use my hands. And I was surprised. Because sh—did I say that? No I didn't say that I said I'll just use my face. I didn't say the hands thing. And she said okay. And she brought

over a bowl. Or ac—she brought over half a bowl cause I asked her not to fill it up very much. And. She put it. She uh handed it to me and I sort of grabbed it with my elbows. And. Um. And brought it toward my lap and put it on my lap and she said oh. You're not using your hands today. And I said yeah. And she said okay. Um. And I think the first time I fucked up was when uh I said I want coffee. Ahah. Which is coercive, as you say. Cause I didn't say Emma, make me coffee. Ahah. I said I wish that I had coffee. And she was like mmmm. Do you want me to make it for you? I think that's how that happened. And I said—so I direc—I told her where all of the different pieces were to make it. And I said will you put it in a bowl. So I can lap it like a cat. And so she did and she put that. Next to my other bowl. And I ate the potatoes very slowly. And I lapped the coffee. I think. It was—it is hard sometimes to decide what. Is necessary. Right? Um. Coffee is—feels necessary but isn't. I had to trick myself. Into. Disliking food. By pretending that it had mold on it. Um and eating it very slowly so that I could see the mold. Um. And the coffee I imagined that it was drying me out like a desert. Um. This happened. I finished the food. Uh. I got up and all of my clothes were sort of like stuck in the wrong places and I couldn't get them—like I couldn't get my. Leggings. They were sort of falling down. And Emma saw me sort of struggling at this and was like do you need help and I was like I think s—yes? Which is the second—I mean second time I fucked up. This. Uh. This happened often actually allowing people to help me. I think at first I thought. I was. At first I thought. That the the struggle. Was to. Ask for help. Because it's a thing I'm pretty bad at and I don't like doing. I realized. Later, reading. Um. Pulling the. The directives out of my bag with my teeth. Uh and flipping them with my teeth like this. That um. And reading them. That it. Was not. To ask for help but. Maybe not to. So. I walk over to. Andy's. And suddenly very much need a cigarette and so I knock on their door with my head. Um. And Kitty answers. And I say Kitty do you want to share a cigarette with me on the porch? And she says, oh, of course. And I say I don't have a cigarette and she says neither do I. I say I don't have a lighter. And she says okay. And she says Andy has a drawer of cigarettes and so we go over there and she's like handing one to me and I say I also don't have han—I also can't use my hands. Uh. And she laughs at me. And she says okay then. And she comes out and she lights a cigarette. And then she places it in my mouth. And sort of. Smokes it as my hands. Which I think maybe also was. Not. Within the parameters but at that point I was kind of confused about them. Uh. And it was difficult to not find that erotic. And I was I was like doing. Uh. Um. So Andy and Kesha come home and they're. Uh. Toting popsicles. And they're like do you guys want popsicles. And everyone says okay. What color do you want? Orange. And they uh sort of hand me one and I can't do anything about it. I'm like no I can't I can't use my hands. Uh. And so Andy sort of unwraps one for me and puts in in my lap between my legs. And is like, here you go. Uh. Which was helpful. Sort of. For not using my hands. But not for. And then they all start making like dick-sucking jokes. Um. And actually they started calling me Flipper. And. Um. Helping me get drunk by pouring vodka down my throat. Um. They were making it very difficult all of them. To—for it to be not erotic like pouring—like having me kneel and pouring vodka down my throat. And Kitty like putting a cigarette in and out of my mouth and. Showing me naked photos of her. For her uh. Sugar daddy site. And asking me to help her with her language for it. And so I had to sort of trick myself constantly into not being turned on. Um. I couldn't wear a bra. And I had to dress super femme. So as soon as I walked

out the door I got catcalled and that continued all day. Um. Which I did not like. There is so much more but it's ten minutes. Oh. No. There's fifteen more seconds. Um. I went to a movie. For a spell. Because I couldn't handle being around people for a little bit of it. And. I. Got popcorn so that I would eat dinner. And then I proceeded to like make the popcorn un-pleasant. By eating the bag. While I was eating the popcorn, which also enabled me to get closer to the bottom of the bag. Which I did not finish. Hm. Ten minutes.

Uh. **Day One. Log Interval Two.** Um. I don't want to be feeling. As dysphoric as I am. I've been in a dress all day. I've been catcalled almost all day. I had two propositions. Um. By people I was interested in being propositioned by. Um. And that—and that was all. Because I. I can't button up a shirt I can't. Put on a binder or a bra or s—button up pants. Or. Like. Do that thing I usually do with my hair where I'm kind of fluffing it constantly uh. And I kept kind of like doing the same gesture with my elbow and it just. Didn't do anything. Yeah. It's I. Whoowh. Um. Do not be feeling do not be feeling. When we were when I was walking Andy to work, Andy. Andy's really good. At um. Know—Anticipating your your needs before you get—the moment that you're having them. It's like. Like I'd be like suddenly really wanting a cigarette. Which I started smoking again today by the way. Uhhhh. And uh. Andy would light one and put it in my mouth. Sort of like without me having to ask. Like with Andy it wasn't coercion it was anticipation. Um and I was—I asked why are you so good at this why are you so good at. Like uh. He was both simultaneously making fun of me for not being able to do anything. Which made me feel comfortable with him. And um. And like. Figuring out what I needed before I needed it. And doing it in this good way and he was like oh my dad's blind. Um. I have some practice. And I had assumed it was cause he had. Been. People kept showing me their, like, ways of being wounded this isn't what I didn't like. What I didn't like was the way I made people uncomfortable. There was a woman in. When I went to get—when I got coffee at this donut shop and. Uh. I was like. Kinda like like like kinda like sloughed my bag onto the table and was like figuring out how to drink coffee from a cup with like both of my elbows kind of tilting it. Um and spilling it all over the place and then kind of like try—there being no napkins and not being able to clean it up in this—and then try to like get the papers back out with my teeth so that I would not be doing everything wrong. Um. Or confusedly. Like, so I wouldn't know what I was supposed to be doing. And like had to kind of like pull everything out of my bag with my teeth like my wallet my book and every—and this woman I could feel her behind me, like kind of to the side and behind me like getting really viscerally uncomfortable by the fact that I was pulling things out with my teeth and part of me really liked that she was uncomfortable. And part of me uh. Didn't like being so, visible. I felt like incredibly visible today. Uh, in ways that I'm not used to, I usually hide in my androgyny. Um. In the future I would wish to feel. I would—I'm not—the future—I'm just gonna talk about tomorrow, um. Tomorrow I wish to make it more difficult for myself. I want. To. People kept trying to hug me and I couldn't really hug them back, but I would tilt my head on them and like. I think tomorrow I will just step back. Like, I didn't know how to navigate those. Other peoples' desires. I was pretty good at curbing my own. Ah. And. I want to instead of like going and hiding in a movie theater where I can like throw my head in a bag of.

Popcorn, or like. Uh walking around a lot where you don't have to use your hands while walking. Like. Kind of uh. Using smoking as a way to not have to eat most of the day. Um I want to make it and and gabapentin is a way of doing that too. Thank you. For that. Um. I want to. Put myself in situations that will make it. Difficult. Um. As a way of pushing against. Eh. Um. As a way of pushing against my own discomfort. I. I wish. To. Not. Be. Constantly narrating. Everything that's happening. It. I did not like the feeling. The um. The withdrawal of writing. And this is sort of the moment of writing but it's not writing it's speaking and it's very different. It's um. I I. Couldn't tell if not writing was part of. The protocol or not. Part of the doing and not doing so I didn't. Cause I wasn't sure. Like maybe I could have figured out some other way of writing but it felt like it was um. Part of the withhold—what was being withheld. Uhh. I filled a. Entire journal in the last two weeks. So to not write today made everything go so. Unbearably slowly. Um. I have. In the absence of my hands. I'm no longer a writer. In the absence of. Um. My binder. And my. Button up. And my. Uh. Not-femme shoes that are not slip-ons. Tie—tie-able shoes. In the absence of that. I'm not trans. Uh. That. I'd like to. Find ways. To be those things. Even. Without the ability to perform them. Or to enact them. So like. I couldn't tell like my. My whole body was hurting when I woke up. Um. My. I took a gabapentin and vodka and self-medicated with those things and cigarettes. Um. But I wonder if self-medicating is. It wasn't particularly pleasurable, so I don't know if it was but it may have been aesthetic. It was not erotic. But it was um. Necessary. Ten.

Day One Interval Three. 10:36pm. I just did this and the computer turned off so i'm doing it again. From the outside. There is a tingling in my lips. A sense of hair left scattered all over the skin. Like when you get a haircut and they haven't brushed you off yet. There's a stream of pulses that run from the sh shoulders that. No earlier. From. Twitch in the mouth to the drip of the shoulders. To a pulse in the cunt. And then it runs down the legs in this cool sheet. Um. Behind the skin. Um. That shimmers. But is not pleasurable really. Just cold. And thorough. Feels like I'm holding something. Very tightly. In my palms. And it is. The word NO. But there are no hands. It is where they would have been. There is somehow a tight slackness to the jaw. That. Feels unhinged in the sense of being not in my control. Not in control. Like it is at once too tight and immobile. Um. Something tender and too soft on the right blade of the arm. Again a pulse in the clit ignore it. Feet on the ground. Feet hard but not flat on the ground. My hips could never. This body needs to be pulled backward. Across something. Um. As if it is a too curled up like it could never learn to unfold. There's a dull ache that's moving from the sternum. And lower. And downward. I think it is dinner. Dry in the mouth. Too dry in the mouth. Someone is stuck in my throat. I don't know who. But I can feel them. Their weight there. Ahh. This. Um. Twitch in. The left leg and then a feeling. And then um. Uh. As though tiny like there are there are there are very small fingers twitching lightly. Across all of my skin. In this motion that feels. That could have been raindrops. Deeper. Maybe I have. Um. Uh uh the surface twitches continue. All of the medicines are wearing off I think. Again the feeling of holding. Something that is too heavy. Pressure of the chair in a line across the backs of my legs. There's a thread of pain that runs. From the base of the hairline in

the back of the neck. Down. Along the right of the spine and does not reach it's mark today. Well um. My shoulder doesn't hurt. That's an absence. I want to lay flat on something cold that's not description. Ahh fuck. Ah. Hah, ha. Have I made it yet inside your skin? There's a slight feeling. Like everything inside of me is burning. And has been for awhile. And is running out of. Fuuuck. Fuck. Okay. Uh. Ten.

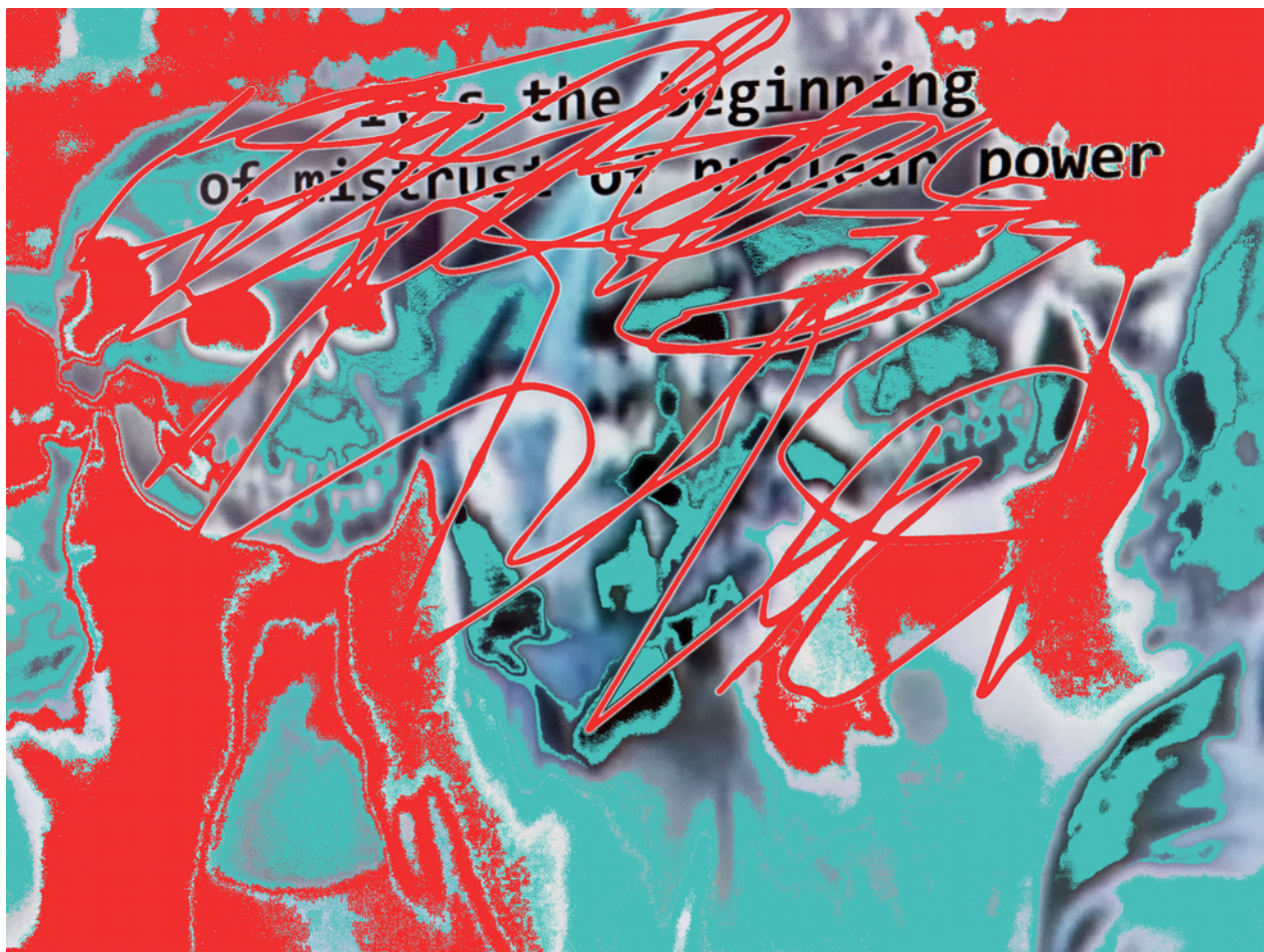
Ah **Day One. Interval Four. 10:52pm.** It's a collage. Um. Of all of the encounters today where I fucked up. If they were allowed to thread themselves out. So it starts. Ah. With my clothing being slightly undone. In a way that I don't like. And with Emma coming up to me and fixing it. Coming up and asking permission to fix it. And then sort of very very slowly putting it back in place. But it loops. In that as soon as she's gotten it back in place she undoes that action slightly more. So it's slightly more, um, askew, than it was just before. She intervened. And this continues and repeats. This back and forth of being askew and being made. Being dressed pretty much. Is the opposite it's the erotic the. Having someone put your clothes on you. That is followed. These things happen one after another. Or one day after another. Longer pause yeah. Um. That's followed in one of the photos that Kitty showed me that she chose not to put on the sugar daddy site. It was. Of. Her black dildo on the table. Behind it. Uh, she's standing with her skirt hiked up so you can see her ass. And so. The second day is. Her. Just right on the tip of the dildo. And slowly over the course. Maybe an hour or two she lowers herself onto it. All the while um. Being the hands that. Move the cigarettes that she's pulling in and out of my mouth while I smoke them watching her. Take three. Um. Is a combination of Andy and Kesha when they came back with. The popsicles. Um. Where Andy is just pouring instead of just pouring the vodka in my mouth is just pouring it all over my face. Making fun of me and rubbing it into my hair. And sort of like pouring it so fast that I can't that I'm having trouble breathing. While Kesha is fucking me with the popsicle as it melts and runs down my leg. After that. Um. That one sort of continues for a minute with the walk to work. Where. Heheh. Where Andy moves my body. In the way that he moves his dad's body through. The city. His dad who's blind who can't see. Um. He has to do it sort of continuing to do it. Through all of his normal activities. Through work at Trader Joe's. Through the walk home. Through the work break. On the when. Uh. When we got to Trader Joe's and where—Andy was smoking the last cigarette before going in to work. We walk over to this ledge and I look at it and there's a. Just. Horizon line on the on the concrete ledge of gum. Like old gum with cigarette butts stuck into it. And uh. And you could just see the accumulation. Of. Ten minute breaks. That he's had since he started working there. And I want someone to take their ten minute breaks out on my body. Or. Maybe. You know. Like maybe I. I'm just there outside someone's work the entire time that they're working and every ten minute break they come and they have a cigarette. And then. They put it out on me and then I wait. And then it happens again. And this happens every day for a week. Or for a month. They can put their gum out on me too that's okay. Is this too many fantasies? I want it to be a collage. Um. The. The man who asked me for a light in the park and I couldn't. Cause I didn't have a lighter and I didn't have hands. Uh. The one with the strange contact lenses and the hands that got burnt—uh, that got s— mangled by a propeller—by a boat propeller. That he would just slowly run his propeller hands down my

body until the wounds opened. And then leave. I showered. Today. And I would like to have finished that imagining cause I c—cut it off. I you wished. Uh. It was uh to like Brillo wash someone while they're showering, very slowly, in water that's a little too hot so that it's a little painful um with one of those metal. Wire. Scrubbers. Making little marks across the skin, until. Their skin is not only red from the shower but from the marks. So you. To be scrubbed or to scrub someone raw in that way. I wonder what you're doing if you're watching this. Or what I will be doing when I'm watching this. Or if it will go. It's ten minutes. There's so much more, still, again. Ehh. Oh. Three minutes. Oh. Oh. Oh ah. Hahh. Aah. Ohhh. Ah ahah. Aa-ah.

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We are still not for sale
I'm tired of explaining this

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KEEP IT WILD



