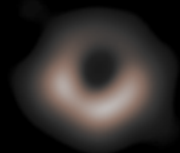


ELDERLY





NO ONE DESERVES HAPPINESS



**MARIE BUCK
CURTIS EMERY and
LAURA WETHERINGTON
SARAH ROSENTHAL
JULIAN FRANCIS PARK
LARA DURBACK
JAMES YEARY**

DOTTIE CAYLOR

When I think of the afterlife, I think of the version in *Beetlejuice*.

Where once you die you continue a version of your life, with your beloved partner, stuck in your beautiful beloved house.

If you go outside, there is a sand worm and the sand worm is very scary; it seems it could actually cause you to die in the sense of ceasing to exist. But you can also slam the door on the sand worm, stay in your house, and be safe and static with your love. Death is cozy, hygge even.

So as long as your domestic world was good, you'll be okay.

If your domestic world happened to be out of whack at the time of your death, though, things would be different.

Many women on *Unsolved Mysteries* have clearly been killed by their husbands. For instance, Dottie Caylor, an agoraphobic woman who rarely left her house. According to her husband, he dropped her off at the BART station and she never came back.

The husband speculates that the reason she has disappeared is to get on his nerves and irritate him.

It is already clear that, despite the presentation of this sequence of events as a “mystery,” the husband killed Dottie Caylor. And the husband has so normalized his abuse that he does not even realize it's probably unwise to say on camera that your missing wife has probably gone missing “just to make things harder” for you.

I.e., this woman's life must have been hell.

I want her to have escaped on the BART, but it seems unlikely she was ever headed to the BART. She was, I assume, killed and therefore trapped in her house, like Geena Davis's and Alec Baldwin's characters in *Beetlejuice* are following their car crash, except instead of the house being occupied—or, really, reverse-haunted—by a New York art-world family, it's reverse-haunted by her shit husband who killed her, so that she is abused in the afterlife as well as in life.

When I was little, I misinterpreted the ending of *Beetlejuice*. At the credits, we see Winona Ryder asking her new parental figures, Geena Davis and Alec Baldwin, to levitate her since she's done her homework. They do; she levitates and dances in the air to Harry Belafonte's "Jump in the Line (Shake Señora)," meaning that: everyone is happy in the end.

But child-me read the levitating-dancing itself as somehow the point of the movie. I was confused about how climaxes worked in a narrative and was expecting it too late in the film. How could she do that? Was she also dead now? How had she died?

This was part of a larger mistake: as a child I found everything associated with the dead to be frightening, and therefore oscillated between correctly reading Davis and Baldwin's characters as protagonists and incorrectly reading them as terrifying.

The sexiest scene in *Beetlejuice* is the Banana Boat song scene, in which the invading, queer-coded art world family is trying to serve a fancy dinner to potential funders, but are instead foiled by Davis's and Baldwin's newfound ability to harness their otherworldly powers. Baldwin and Davis possess them and make their bodies sing and dance to Harry Belafonte's song.

The group dance is erotic, there is an element of otherworldly grotesqueness when their shrimp cocktails become undead hands and grab their faces and then push them away. I could not understand why the characters were dancing—I didn't understand narrative enough to connect it to Barbara and Adam's actions—and so I was left with the characters' embarrassed faces displaying pleasure and a loss of control at once.

I.e., it was sex in which the living and the dead are forced to reckon with one another.

The background is minor New York City real estate difficulties, as would be the case for much of my future sex life. Though this would not be the case for Dottie Caylor's life, which took place in the Bay, near the BART, but more precisely within her house, a house I hope she left in death, even if to simply cease, even if her simply ceasing means the rest of us do too.

UNSOLVED MYSTERIES

Instead of watching *Unsolved Mysteries*

I go to an experimental music show at a church.

Where I read a text from my mother,
whose hand is dangerously swollen and whose cat has gone missing.

I sit in the back. I look at
the bench, I want to

lay on the bench but instead I look up at stained glass
and the eyes of the figures there; I pray for the cat.

Earlier this week I fucked someone with a silicone dick while
someone else fucked me with a real dick and, looking in the mirror,

I could not help but think of Frank

O'Hara's Personism manifesto, in which O'Hara describes
his new philosophy, Personism, as putting the poem

"squarely between the poet and the person, Lucky Pierre
style" so that "the poem is correspondingly gratified,"

and, many years ago now, an undergrad poetry professor
explaining "Lucky Pierre" to me and my classmates: i.e., the Lucky Pierre is the man in
the middle of a threesome of men,

and the poem is like the man in the middle, the conduit between the writer and the reader,

and so now I could verbalize this current scenario—verbalize it
in my brain—as only a "Lucky Pierre" scenario

wherein I was a poem, a conduit,

which is also what
it feels like if someone is fucking you from behind

while you lick the clit of someone lying in front of
you, so that each thrust pushes your whole body

and moves your fingers deeper into the body
of your lover, i.e., you're the relay point in any case.

Your experience of the *Lucky Pierre*
is itself mediated by this 60s gay male term for it;

you can't get to the fucking without going through
"Lucky Pierre," without going through poetry, without going through Frank O'Hara.

So that the term *Lucky Pierre* from the Personism manifesto, then,
is placed in between yourself and
the experience of the Lucky Pierre, the conduit for thinking

about how hot it is to be a conduit, so that your physical body
is in the middle, doubly gratified, like the poem is, but mentally, you're

behind, topping Frank O'Hara's notion of the poem,
which is gratified, while it tops the physical scene,

the scene in which you are topping and are topped
simultaneously; you fuck this amalgam of Frank

O'Hara and the Personism manifesto, your fake
dick floating in and out hugged by

text, it is a PDF of the Personism manifesto
that you are fucking, and the PDF in turn fucks
a scene, a scene displayed in a mirror in which your

body leans down over your lover while your other lover,
behind you, catches your eye in the mirror as he thrusts into you;

the mirror is glass but the dick of the PDF is swallowed by
the padded, mysterious feeling of an interior. The stained-

glass window in the church isn't fucking anything; your prayer
for your mother's cat is working; the cat will return the next

morning. This church bench has a cushion, where sometimes
church benches do not; for religious experiences at church

you are supposed to be uncomfortable whereas
for chill experiences with ambient music

you are usually supposed to be comfortable, your body
naturally being the conduit between you and the music

so that this current multi-channel piece you are hearing
comes from different parts of the church, some notes

behind you, some in front, some on various sides, making
your body feel like it's in space, which is odd in that it

is obviously already in space, and would be in space
even if the piece were not "multi-channel," but it is

multi-channel and you find yourself simultaneously
in a room and

pretending to be in a room
playing with your necklace

aware of the body beside you
a body you'll later penetrate

and which will penetrate you
though

not simultaneously, there is no
metaphor here.

You could rub against one another
and read a PDF after.

CURTIS EMERY & LAURA WETHERINGTON

FOOTNOTES for *MIDDLE TIME*

1.

Let the poet work within & surrounding the logic of repetition. The repetition of ideas, repetition of sound, repetition of syntax strategy. Repetition as a means of troubleshooting, testing ideas, testing language. Let the poet write from a place of focused middle. A place of perceived extremes. A queer body making sense of otherness. An attempt to build a cognitive ecology to which the speaker can consider the self amongst an inherently fleeting audience. Repetition as a way to level the abstract field. To stretch the canvas. To embellish the unknown. An expecting material to be molded by surprise. (The loss of a grandfather; confrontations with use and youthfulness.) A self portrait observing its expected daylight rotation through inconsistent weather. A weather of war. A weather of brutality. A weather of failing environment. A weather of inequality. A weather of anti-equity. A weather of ignorance. A weather of change.

2.

Let the portrait consider how it is affected by the light. The speaker in turn considers why they are affected—attempting to understand control over how they could be affected. A mechanic of curiosity, but also fear. Fear of the unknown. Fear of the present; consistent extreme inconsistencies.

3.

The speaker considers the anxious imagination.

Let poems organize the imagination. Repetition, an austere framework with which to comprehend. Repetition, an austere framework to try & understand.

2.

Detail the distances between two
bodies and examine the congregation of such:

Which line of sight, now
sights of a single object
speaks to a single how so?

What act of torsion over
rides the individual/ a mega-instance
of micro-aggressions which sever
the separate and join as one
two seamlessly separate thoughts?

The lifted landscape is a seamless instance.
Detail yourself as a birdsong, each a new note
forced as harmony through budding branches.
Waxed tips play a mirror, refracting sudden song
until what's within the landscape in that instant
becomes the landscape and each lifted iteration
after can be defined only as an instant/ Instances
played out until the landscape is a constant subtle chaos
waiting for a truly alien note to break the mirror of repetition.

I.

Patterns prove repetition
if not the rule. So golden still
a theory can be discouraged if only

outwards.

All statements can value
yes value appreciated only
in their ability to connect to others
and others so drastically patterned

doctrines.

Which push patterns
over and again throughout
the system/
 monitor the system/
 add to the system—

And the system continues throughout
though never forward onward backwards.
Stasis is the rule so golden still

sea butterflies figure eight below
ice their wings the membranes
like fruit flies/

 Experiential biology. Fruits of the imagination.

Lift up the collective plexus.
Let the earth-nerve be the psyche/
 Intimate ecology of surprise.

How unexpected truth shapes form.
Shapes patterns. Shapes the system.

I.

a crisis of exhaustion
inherited from the idea of
wilderness. some fact
of water rolling uphill
and other logics of
macroeconomics.
fact I cannot.

There was a wasteland
there humming in my sleep
(whilst we were moving
the austere framework wasting
in me)—neat rows of myself missing

the violence of exhaustion
combusted in the pleural cavity
i was humming fire

tonal collection
of possible endings
pulsing through
some simultaneous middle

the middle moving down
all the time more close
to the bottom and this groundswell

3.

Surrogate solar stillness
saturated silent stamps of
swollen semblance/ A study
of each separate source/
Striated structures signal
visual synonyms:

A strangled sparrow
sweeps swims smog.

A sorrowed sister
survives.

Still systems spiral
onward/ such inertia
Sings a baseless soliloquy.

3.

((
low desire tempts
collective summer
and visible whiteness
occludes

the sagittal sutures
striated treelines

((
boundaried directions
((
critical angles
((
branching depths
((

try
humming
try
songbird
try
Eastern yellow robin
try
witness

2.

push past

prevailing

doctrines. What it finds

is the butterfly-

shaped farthest

illuminated dusk.

heavier than torsion

here, vital functions

capsized clean through

unessential moves

a two-toned

song spring-like ignited

between separate bodies

which gave rise to

the ribcage / breath a

static ritual, like no accelerant

had been added

or no landscape lifted—

I.

Deraci nation uprooted
identities play out

against crisis
violence. [i]

A crisis of self

*such small
assemblies* [ii]

inherited sex
ual violence against the self

intimate imagination
broken at birth conjure
failure when conjure
imagination intimate to
the self—

*Said: our bodies have been broken
Into and so we break the social*

Body I could break you. [iii]

*Try looking away try looking away
Try looking away
Try looking away.* [iv]

In front of us.

No, after the
fact water rolls forward.
Fact, I cannot.

2.

*A moving that isn't
a moving that isn't*

Heteronomy [i]

am missing myself/
of myself I am gone.

My mind is gone. Tapped into myself I

*Help yourself
in(to) time [ii]*

*((there was waste
(there was waste [iii])*

Individual psyche of a post
capitalist wasteland is a blooming
flower—

Neat rows of dandelions
trigger marketless streets
into full color

Yes. Yes, this new value/
Is new sexual value—

(What kind of limit

are you [iv])

*(some) story wastes
into myth—
History overwhelms
the Myth.*

there

*First:
was humming.*

[v]

2.

that middle time

between one fall and
two springs we summered
on lawns, six pack bracelets
adorning our fetal positions

*light gone out of the sky
but still appearing*

this foot says i'm tired;
this one says me, too

the blue-dark sky
hemorrhaging

the mind bright
in pain the geologic fact
of our decline
we state our position
in limbs our ambivalent
gestures render
the mirror

3.

try looking away / small birdsong / cultural gaze // there was a time I believed in my right to disbelief /
there is an economy in this // binds like the memory of a fist / small economy / cultural disbelief / there
was a time // and then there was its memory / small looking / cultural binds / the moment was mine //
and then I was looking away / my right to birdsong / there was a time to birdsong // and then I believed
in the economy / in this / there is a culture away / its memory // binds like birdsong

for Angela Hume

SARAH ROSENTHAL

sit

here

sit the

previously dreamed version

neighborhood

foldout table

and radical food

mismatched

chairs crowding

against the politicos

tell them

we could hang

a radical panel of

light

the levels are rising

slide toward fantasia

perform this piece

'nevertheless'

'history of anxiety'

'my money'

'mop of tangled glory'

to a still house

like in the

dream we have

divining rods

proper and expensive

gathered

at the neck and short sleeves

child where I started

en route to

woman a destination

jump into the water body

secret moment to wipe

grains from skin

salt I can see

later the late

empties out

tell them

after all these years in the dream

it's a chore

to don clothing

that separated-off feeling

hang gauze over shoulder

come dawn

we'll spin

wild and slow

the dreams

fat silver rings

have decided

for reasons I'm not

privy to to stay

we

dream

jewelry

darker

ray

slides

blind

blythe

hedges a bed

of bushes

through

we're in that

providence

shrubs

garden

public

struck

energy

pitch

forward

perform

darker dream ray

ray

tell them go

pitch your tents

at the edge of

it's late

start

the long trek out

gather here

in the dream

complex and crowding

jammed with

me one after another

amber sun

standard sky

hesitant but I keep pushing for it

twinkling with

JULIAN FRANCIS PARK

YES, I'LL BE THERE – 3 FOR RURAL YOUTH

I. if light particulates in this reunion after-the-reunion concert

real coffee got made nice, hot; from urn out: our tummies lay
in it

at this all age shindig
the singer yells a gendering of Grendel in a classic frontperson
move that listeners to Seamus Heaney's narration of Beowulf have
been familiar with for centuries

i don't know—does it matter that some of this music could be
too heavy for part of the crowd or not heavy enough; the food too
heavy for part, not heavy enough for another part?

that you invited me to a party just the day before and i was out
of town, falling asleep crafting my email response, or that someone
else invited me to another party the same day as something else
that had been in the works for months?

if it goes up, there will be no one to enforce and many of us
will feel pretty alright about that, standing around in the gravel and
on the hoods of cars

if it goes up, as long as a deputy don't come
some of us wish we didn't know about it so we didn't have to
think anything about it, so we forget by drinking Western Family
Cola on the rocks and making a record on paper left over from a
reminder to please conserve plates

not blowing you off when i sit in the back unfeeling any
specific scene; i sometimes like to hear and see but not the vice

i want to feel the whole while not apart from it

i'll get over but with you

in the kitchen one of us chop and one of us do dishes

there will be plenty forks to knife eyes out of any inquisition
advancing under darkness tones

this way of being social, said the off-beat of every emptiness
beside particle forms

2. *"the beat's more important than you might know—it's directly connect to the rhythmsoul"*

our rugs have been carpets since whenever the floor started getting ripped up outside, before
the parking lot was installed round the block, before it got replaced by folks none of us knew
from elsewhere that were some of us before we got here and hung around doing this and
that long enough to become part of the multifarious us

i wish i could see the size of that canvas jacket on you in these woods, these unbelievable
woulds

it stretches marx to see what color the deer blood in us is in those roadside trenches and
it's easy to make it seem like you're doing something of import

you just have to put on a serious expression, stand at a distance from things and keep
taking notes while intermittently looking up to nod heavily, perhaps smiling or frowning
wanly

secrecy invoking wonder

a bunch of dry fields, from here to the ditch where the brush gets especially deep this
time of year, just before the county comes out to cut it; it's not the county, just the folks
they subcontract, and we'd be lucky if there really was only one layer of subcontracting
there

3. *stand by me*

it aches to be here, but if we can't get okay with that
then how to watch Griffey make his dad cry while he
cries, then put on a hall of frame—backwards, like a
true put on

these fans are the sea, that is the wall, and traffic
is the dream that music anti-socially reproduces with
the car in the back of an even bigger car
do you say the 'a' in vase like 'a' or 'ah,' said one
flower to another on a bar counter 20 feet from the
street on a hill in what is not now the capitol
to almost regret smoke trail on cover blown spot
loop when i lay half awake in a parking lot with mind
unlooping for hours to sound, if, of, bird and breeze
felt indirect through slightly cracked window
who uses a hat rack anymore; who closes their
eyes when walking in for lunch; who knows my name
here and how can i let the donuts know without going
up and chewing their faces off

it's nice to be looked at once in a while, even if it
takes wearing cutoff jeans and removing socks and
shoes behind the wheel, then positioning your vehicle
perpendicular to the street's flow, getting out, burning
your feet on the blacktop while shaking ass to one of
the best renditions of 'Stand By Me' ever

if the glass—glasses—break, it is that which they
make transparent and reflect, that which they hold, that
is smashed by what they didn't make transparent and
reflect

all from a brown couch some folks didn't want
anymore that appeared to carry more use for a complete
stranger on the hunt for comfort bearing no price

i speak of their hair cuts, already returned next door,
from twined peaks

flown wet bird, staple
my tongue to my tie to my shirt
you may call it sown & the
wage thieves may call it
a bad bill of health or a
bad look for the office,
but wage thievery names
also the labor contract
and god hasn't worked
at any office for months,
if ever, gob had been jobless
for ages, an eternity and a
week to be precise with
all these so-called professionals
doing such a great job
commanding the politics
of things where and where not
they live for it is the duty
of those with fine shoes
to admit they bought them
in a fine shoes store or to
risk harm resisting the expropriation
of those fine shoes upon
their stroll from the bar to
the recently ordered chariot

to success, I prefer laziness
to pride, I prefer lying about who in my family has died
to eat soup, I wear boots
to eat your heart out, I bring over a large
jar of sauerkraut
how could anyone eat heart on Earth without pickled cabbage accompaniment?

I don't want to get up
I want to hold tension in my shoulders
I want to watch that video of that lathered up rat standing upright washing itself

I want to go back to before last night's meeting & tell everyone that we'll end up sticking with the
plan even after an hour considering alternate escalations

but no one would believe me
you have to go thru it, for it to be true

which is a lesson I learned watching an Escalade driven by a baseball player
who may or may not have been Manny Ramirez
get into a car accident bc stopping in the middle of the traffic to converse with fans

I know this is real, like Boston is real
which intuition tells me is an unfortunate fact
it is always unfortunate when so many friends live in Boston
but, for the most part, it wouldn't be better for anyone to live anywhere else

& still some of those of us who want to move, move, causing some of those of us who don't want
to move to move

or rather, all that's solid melts, so we throw rocks at pig's pelts
& we write letters, bc despite what the internet says
receiving a firm letter still does shit, & that partly has to do
with how the courts run entirely on paper
which of course makes them highly burnable

coconut oil is the real snake oil &
smell ya later is the coolest goodbye ever invented
& data science insists that these are correlated facts

UNIT SERIES

I.

Countervailing, thus lunch, against the forces
That blow out my neighbor's lighter with the shop
Keeper's comments with respect to cleaned up
Neighborhood & the implicit pro-police stance
That some immigrants (& many more born here)
take as if against errancy that must be criminal
perceived to squander the spectacular opportunity
of being born in the municipalities of this plantation empire
& lunch, that it can be an art to eat & to prepare it
In the middle of part of day considered normal to work
This I will still try to keep guilt free with my half hearted
Singing what I can't stop wanting as breath analysis

2.

can the cops of this city
just get out of here & leave that person
alone while we all wait for this bus that
who can tell when it will come unless
you're as if a farmer to the weather to
these schedule's irregularities &
is it okay to use this phone in the rain
cuz I don't want to get my paper notes
& book wet, tho glad I brought them
for when I was standing amid gathering
of this women's march, waiting—it was
dry then—near the train exit for a friend

hours before the march security folks
asked us to move out of the intersection
so others of us could move in, before
the dancing & unattempt at a

3.

public-private partition of vulnerability
in which wall or ceiling that has not fallen
or been gate for lord to evict its rooms tenants
be full of water's slow mold & mildew growth
spores from which circulate by draft &
breath through airways into lungs which
from this & other irritating exposures
distribute a greater number of asthmatics

4.

it's trash night & I can't sleep
till I feel the feeling right
next to the feeling that I
could want & survive wanting

ceremony of street electricity
run by generator unplugged by
a pig that also takes arms from
someone they say has no right

to armament

o the stimmy waking life I cannot regroup to retreat from
after, with a start, leaping from that scene of distributing pamphlets
as I have been known to do with eyes closed or eyes shut.

how can I know if 45 more minutes of shut eye would be more
than I could handle without making myself late to the office I must transit to
but only after I have sent some emails & packed my backpack to it's most glorious capacity.

it is a fallacy that I must know today what I have known yesterday, of my untimeliness,
bc today, among other things, I am even more skillful at responding to emails
in fewer minutes than 45 & in fewer than 400 words than I have been heretofore

& yet is also fallacious to think that bc my emails are their most taut
that I have enough time to cook a proper breakfast on top of communicating as the morning
demands.

caught then I am between sitting overlong writing on the shitter,
replenishing my nutrients sooner rather than later,
& getting a day's instruments together

cutting away at that which I must achieve in order to fulfill my commitments
in order to achieve that which I must achieve in order to still feel both breath & social in this
life
a feeling I would give up, I hope, no achievement for,

except one, which we creep upon, sidelong, & that I know by one name mainly,
the rev, which by definition cannot be in any case without community, instrument & nutrient
to which I commit myself in every regroup & retreat of this stimmy life, even in worry-
interrupted dreams

GROCERY OUTLET CODE

I run to Grocery Outlet looking for a better mood. Tulsi Tea, Larabars, people who don't need me to be anything particular

Coffee spilled on the floor, headphones, epsom salt in piles

Organic shampoo without the lighting and spectacle

A woman with her Amtrak badge who wants to be friends

When I first went in '05 all of the shopping carts were mismatched rejects with the other store names from other stores. They could not stack logically together as carts are made to do because they are different sizes. This is no longer true.

I told the mom I work for that they have large tubs of organic coconut oil, but that's not in her class script so she'll never go in there, and that's the way it can stay how it is: to preserve the illusion is just too important to some people

I could go in with 3-dollars-money and leave with 4 things I like. The glimmers of a bourgie fantasy but not the whole theatre just a mismatched pile. Categories are blurry. Grocery outlet + friends' gardens + some farmers markets = my food.

I told him pick up the coffee, the good coffee in the fancy aisle, not the one in the bad coffee aisle, that's why he couldn't find it.

It's less foraging than getting free stuff, less risky than stealing, and you go and throw your arms around Julian and Zach (who are dating now) in the checkout line and end up at their house on Christmas Eve.

The dude got real loud with me once about being in the Express checkout line for 15 items or less with 16 items because I think I had about ten 3 for a \$1 granola bars. I just slunk away, it didn't matter how cute I look in this place. None of the normal codes of preference will work. The dude flirted with me every other time, but that is void when I broke the code.

You had to bring in a certain amount of receipts to get a puppet bobble head but they kept running out. Sometimes you could find a \$3 off receipt in the parking lot. I never got a bobble head.

There is a website that says "we capture the code dates at the time of purchase, and we track them throughout the supply chain."

Once there was a man pinned to the floor by the knees of at least four different checkout employees. "We are not going to call the cops" they said, but they held him there for quite a while. This is a way of getting what the man to stop doing whatever he was doing without subjecting him to further consequences. And I think, it contains a space.

I trusted him because he lived near Grocery Outlet, but it was more the fact that he knew what G.O. meant that was relieving, something about class, duration of time in a place, and a kind of value.

The time that the cashier told me and Dale that these high school kids called him a bitch and he was super sad, and he said, how can these high school kids call me a bitch. And he was confiding in us.

There is kind of a fuck-you vibe there. You can't really find anyone. You only get to talk to people in the checkout line. And then in the checkout line they are very nice.

There were these two people leaning on the freezer case and making out and they separated and I realized I sort of knew the one guy. It was the kind of thing that was so absurd you had to laugh at them, their backs getting all cool, leaning over the freezer.

"Ladies' Night" is blaring over the loudspeaker and this guy is singing it almost in falsetto and starts laughing at himself and says aloud "what's wrong with me?", and we catch eyes and laugh and I go skipping down the aisle. "This is your night tonight, everything's gonna be alright."

The cashier who confided in us often takes his lunch breaks outside in the parking lot, blasting music toward the front of the store. Once he blasted "Lookout Weekend" by Debbie Deb, a song that I thought was called "The Weekends are Made for Fun," then Camp Lo's "I Got Five on it. All these songs have in common is bass, but he has one of those cars that he altered and they sound really good coming out of his car. It took me a few times to match the person to the car. His name is Jon and he wrapped his car intricately piece by piece with wrapping paper at Christmas and parked it out front, in a spot that is not really a parking spot, out of the lines of the parking spot in front of the store.

I have been known to call out loudly all the things I like in the store when I am in a certain mood.

And what happened to the Wine Guy? There used to be that creepy throaty voice over the loudspeaker saying "ask the wine guy." They even had his picture on a banner hanging from the ceiling at one point. They had tags on certain bottles that said "wine guy recommends"

This is an "extreme value grocery business that confronts head-on the diffusion line and close-dated product issues that both manufacturers and consumers struggle with". This is a site trying to get people to start a franchise. This is an acknowledgement of the bizarre space that no one wants to deal with, but I tell you, I'm not just going there for a deal. I am going to commit. I am going there to make sure I don't turn into some other that, some other that that will not adapt, another that who never sees anyone they know. If I go here I will see someone that I know, or someone that is still here. I am adding to my emergency kit, I am learning to not buy the junk except for just Green and Blacks chocolate, I am learning to be wise with my pleasures. The company was acquired in 2014 and seems to have gradually resembled something less than I wanted it to resemble but it still resembles.

Once a friend reported that people tried to rob Grocery Outlet at gunpoint and the cashiers just stared down the dudes and were like "get the fuck out of here" and they left.

At one point there had been cars hanging out in the parking lot late, people after work using the space, to just be there. This is a wish of the timing that is gone, I can't remember the last time I saw it, and I go by hundreds of times in a month. I think hundreds of times, back and forth up Broadway.

There have been less pictures of the puppets. I sit there wondering, why does this place feel so much more fluid than other places I go to? Is it because there is no boss lurking around? I feel like I have never seen a boss. Is it because Glen Echo creek literally flows behind it? Is that the flowyness? Is it a time capsule of an earlier Oakland? Can I be buried with it?

Part 2

She picks up a rectangular cardboard container, and ask me if it is soy milk. It does resemble soy milk but it is cold brew coffee. I can tell she cannot read in English to an extent, I am glad she has felt she could ask me, I have asked others for help with products too. Or I have insulted the products willfully. No one needs a gay pride ice cream but it exists, it has existed.

Jon who plays the music from his car doesn't work there anymore as of last year. He was very young, I hope he found something he loves. Many of the cashiers have worked there something like 10 years, so something is going alright, I think.

His granddaughter screams in the child seat the front of the shopping cart. He has a weird boundary and every time he tries to talk to someone else she covers her ears and screams, she blocks in front of him. Not a scary screaming, but a "don't talk to other people, I am the boss, don't flirt with people Grandpa, shut the fuck up Grandpa," the child is boss.

Greg texted me that he was at Grocery Outlet and the power went out and people were screaming and abandoning their carts.

I remember in 2011 when there were 100 wedding dresses stuffed in a cubicle. Hopeful & broke brides smashed inside in order to pick a \$99 wedding dress. I like seeing the things that are strange and true. I liked seeing the people who had things that mattered to them differently, in a different order than presented to us out in the world, jumbled up, mixed and adjusted, as life has put us here we find ways to enjoy it and stack for the future. These are not the owners, not even necessarily the thinkers, I will tell you there is something different if you never went through that door. There is a kind of accessible joy in the insanity. Stack for the future in which we learn how to live with whatever but would riot for what is important. I fantasize this is the last building standing, they probably know carpentry a little bit even, they built the runway for the fashion show with the dresses that occurred inside the store, the same workers, that have been working there. It probably would not flood because the creek is right behind it, though the loading dock has a lake of rain for long periods of time, I think that largely the store would be okay.

I would have climbed up the roof with them, leapt over the roof, back down into the tunnel behind where the others used to write graffiti, back in the pool at the first house I went to with friends and swam in one of those never cleaned Oakland pools, nestled in the trees by Glen Echo creek, close to where the secret stairways still stand and crawl up the hills, part of Oakland's old transportation trains, the Key system. There was a sort of rootness there, what was on that spot?

Nobody buys those bags of apples.

It has changed again.

the sign now says "about 15 items or less", in a script that is trying to impress someone, maybe in response to the guy with the cheek piercing being so militant about the limit in the past

I am looking at the replaced bins that have sort of a fake stone now, and the weird script font that has appeared on the windows, and I am thinking about who they are trying to pander to, I didn't come here for pandering, I do not value pandering. I am a gnome in the hole of the supply chain looking for friends.

CHUTNEY PATTERN

without drawing flies to the void behind the lashes that resemble them stimulated by a cranial nerve to be pointed while the skin's dominion flat reflex enveloping gate to the wires' masses mid-consciousness languid languages speaking for the programmer in Rome but always only face the occipital bone in the dim light of posterior skull and grinding with the pons at his heel, listen! There is a wakeful part of you sleeping that blooms the moonlight flower with nicotine, the site of the dilapidated edge of a gibbous moon inspires dark sap to trickle down the pinecone, thinning the blood, blanching the bones, consciousness co-opted to the back of all else, so snapping out of a drift the frontal mind has the recollected fact at hand of being elsewhere, without a sense of its contents, mule mental, each nucleus a light in the shadow of three bodies activities confounded conformed confined between the guided mass and surface registers we do the shadows know the paint , only the activities registered with light come to front, sigils because they can't be reversed, learn to make mistakes. The director, the actor, the stage, you call it one body because they share a brain. Houston's I have a three-body problem, placeholders in a chutney pattern, when the cells, meditating, become more than one of them syrup in a column pretending to the sphere, the sequence of selves packed between two words when the ape is graying drawn commands down a follicular channel and strutting away from the sequence: one cell wide, long as a ligature, do what they're told, pass it on or die



MARGARINE GROCER (COSMIC BODY)

The synapse flush with mucus
shape is devoid of you
Its filament what appears first
when you approach a mirror
laterally at the surface of intention

thinness, you decided, was reciprocal
with seeping certainties, first shape
outmoded by the drum sound.

The lipids are arranged in a bounce castle, slugs bound
into a cross of walls by tight junctions the kids can't get out of.
Motile globs changing position by an intracorporeal current around the stem
streaming its name identical to its surface features
The microbial goliath has an appendage the ground conforms to and boasts
is controlled by the randomized tattoo of the inner ear
-we all have one, put there by the dark god-

adipose venus, no light returns from its filmy capsule
the pain receptors bore by her servants
one tooth is large enough for your family to sit inside comfortably
in a pincushion as it snakes around the orbit
a doorway appearing from time to time with a ligand
and flagellum casting indelible shadows trailing it doubles
suturing galactose to itself, bring a long spoon

by dawn the skin will turn rancid and a new family will emerge from it
Pleiades fleeing its milky arm eyeful by eyeful tonight only
the Yeats brothers are huffing and puffing a song cycle across their guitar
I could sell it to you only for as long as I could be taken seriously
in clear frying oil

CLAM HALLWAY

without drawing flies to the void color of heirloom shadow behind gene generations
of momenta I am inertium, fog light green on radar, X-men and women evolved,
selves in sequence aligned along the tree of death from wrists depalmed, one person
among bodies, vision of the void within their bodies microscopied seminifluous
junguoles where voids ennumbered are suspended like a fool in satellite catacomb.
Gray guardians denuded and blind build hexagonal dollworlds lining their hive with
tiger music: harmonies lifted from the yowling void, consciousness attributed to the
growling definition of the world, drawing flies and harmonizing

FAUNA ARMAMENT

that's what it looks like when I hold germs, teeth a program, mouth a program,
ambient believing hungers surround and fill the created plain, little alphabets
outside yet reread into the program, become meaning in food, meal mantras,
blinking creosotes, edges alive and decentered, potentiovillicus undressing
lymphatic syzygies and clouds of acid destroy them all. Basophil the Archkritik,
coronating victims of the the the thunderword in basophil's cloud catalog
boomerang both directions while stirrings melodious arise from revenge guitars,
pointed nuclei and omnivalent dendrites with a badger's degree of consumication
shunt plungerfoot shucking off aethers where manzanitoid amoebas dissolve
skeletal trilobites stripped of their powers ensnared archon mitochondria, ouch!
blinded panopticon claims monad status. serpentine tweezer grazing the
membrane, slicing through papillary trenches, the sky is absolved of all that was
good, without gravitas, only potassium locking the old weird down. Labradoodles,
legomorphs, aetherial batalliating conjunctivibarbelognostronculonimbony-
morpheornephilistomopodolorosomatachylogramscilliavajriformundiplexcittaur-
meternallogotelosturnachtyrex up on skin beach untussled or toughed by
commandment waves

SURFEIT TITLE

lobotomized boneheads made into blood cells touring hierophants with their top down, portal to portal, blood is one, just follow the necrotized loop till you drive out of Oxygon apteryx text sound tongues. Words wend out of the chloride receipt relieflessly sutured to sissyphalatic burthens in 120 burn off their karma, in time for the zipper to swing back in tow 120 more lobsterized Brünhildas born again and ready to the bidding of Walleye. Under the ladder everything swims, respiratory words through gate and tunnel, but potassium Nos slowly shutting down shummery muscles after the day is decoded, no phenomena, only direction, porous as honeycomb, only the head has a filter to the dig a dug bone feeling the swap houses match sublimating in the cortex while the epithelial world marvels without translator or packing slip, touch supping along a border sans breakage and anchor, the nastiest nest dense with horrors where nits worm to the priestly eyefl centered between pile erectors pinion to thin skin keratinized wavelengths, tremulous dancing in their pit for wont of anything singed by volcano in BCRNA world. The senses have no past, to the skin all is ancient, experience archeological, the brain yearns to turn in on the skin and the eyes close red, the grove's nose a trust crying for it floating distended from the pillar ass-of-all, the eye begs for it and inches away finds only the characteristic tarantula deantropoposed but the finger willing to lose its nail is suddenly gathered in the electric extended arms, all personality burns off, personae burnished, contact anatomizes the mask of your ancestor, the imagination has more hairs than the body, only, but the body owns its hours and hones them, boning, and growing new slices, feeding the skin through starving eyes while gnostic tweezers maneuver the somatic wires to sympathetic centers, knowing less than we do, we all know one thing, feeding the tweezers muscle fiber and muscle fiber

to build the veil and yawn

ABLEIST PITCH

they have matching armbands from where the sun is drawn
it turns out the monsters're starving
from the windows of public safety eying you like Oedipus
invisible in the seat of a grownup

dreams grind in full-bleed parkbench
bridgework rompers derelict fencing rinds the construction site trailers where
Punch was tied to a chair for breathing broods to wind-up jaws of RNA world
close up the house

your tattoos in waves promising you'll come back as a ribosome
in a cemetery some aspect of my mesonym associating
 with the suspended ball
a bourgeois and transplanted warlock advised the will to 'let their spirits touch'
there must be some place all these hallucinations interact come to me

underneath the ice giant a warm world slowly ground
My Lord said it wasn't worth finishing
round earth grinds against all the quills and lifts
out of the dream I can't lift my pen

can't let you off the bus just yet, cerulean as the plastic petals
this one worth remembering:
face of central air frozen in the eye of sky dying
decided the sun need not set between poems

wouldn't have thought you could catch that from a grasshopper
Hollywood Transit Center knocked off its axis as the city congealed
bulldozed tent city under freshly painted mural reading "Choose Love"
tarp billowing in the sodden landscape between the bridge and where the blazers play

no fossa to look in on what happened
just clean shirts reflecting the grudge of boys to come
they can slide off their easement for dearth
tossed in the pit where hammers reconcile

PLENITUDE HEX

You're going to have to be reborn as everything

O₂ is so simple, it has to be out there
exhaustion tears the heart in bad jokes
15% of the fluids filtered from the capillaries reserved for ceremonial purposes

wisdom circles that no-nothing, as they say in the great translations
ignorant core of the omniscient
the crust is the brainiest of all

In the heart of the heart of the renegade programming
The world is dark, let's write its poetry
Samaël doesn't have an idea what's going on

UNCLE MORT

Helen Vendler is peeking at me from the crypt-o
clam hallway

"no she isn't!" screams Charlie

I'm cleaning the teeth of an ahimsa dragon
his crime?
not reading poetry written by computers
shibbolaughter,

nonbewilderment.

VERDIGRIS REGRET

always self-questioning,

I have no problem with information obscuring the guitarist
like me, they must assume silverfish come for our books
until a gene comes with a mouse pad

she had some real computers
posted to felt and the panda papers
now everyone having maps apps we're lost

identities pass by pilling spores presence
radiating from the poles to Bixby Canyon
police state viewed from paisley condo

Basinski has a job lined up for next life, résumé in the broken edges
the operating system improvised shell of meatless sugars to taste its identity
entangled cantos' ball of personalities fight for something stupid under the crust

why put a photo of your body there in the porphyry
sanguine breaking the wineglass without singing
another asshole vanguard storming the cell your body made for you

a new person emerges blurred with an edge on what happened
among other curios that the geneticists' lite-brite chiaroscuro
chicken smell in the thalamus takes down the brown domino

an eyelid lighting on the same current a spider takes to flight
crossword made viable for the lunar sonority to function
the music agreed on by machines at the hospital

when I open the book that believes in me
with a heaving sigh the solar grammar unravels the spirit of romance
happiness gassing to sleep on the sidewalks

I dreamt that the science was churchy in reconciled racks
the appellate passion performed for the rover would easter in shadows
when each cell in its adipose hat is torn apart by the message

Jacqueline Krishna leading her cows thru the diet, her cans sign to crush
bridges projected from nimbus opening to a book when the body is given
partial people on the stairway waiting with butane torches

when the steam rising from the membrane interrupted by light daggers down
the little tarp belonging to the snail stretched across the refrigerated
gelatin skin mold becomes the gleaners' skin drum

his bones far from single-use wrapped in magnetized fibers once bisected the world
dromedary muscles good for 30 years taut before they thread the needle
he looks like he's spitting out legs

COSMIC HORROR, BODY HORROR

Cylinders seem to indicate atoms
could chance a whole new
direction siding crystal astride catastrophe
coordinates aren't your dive bar
paramecia hiding in the ruffle
pores in the chasm surface
where millenia come to dring.

The rods and cones we placed in the hollowed out mineral will not fire
We thought that by heating the earth we might learn more of the sun and
are experts at dust (offer it up)
Spent a life-time climbing the homunculus but everytime I looked back
saw my face had changed

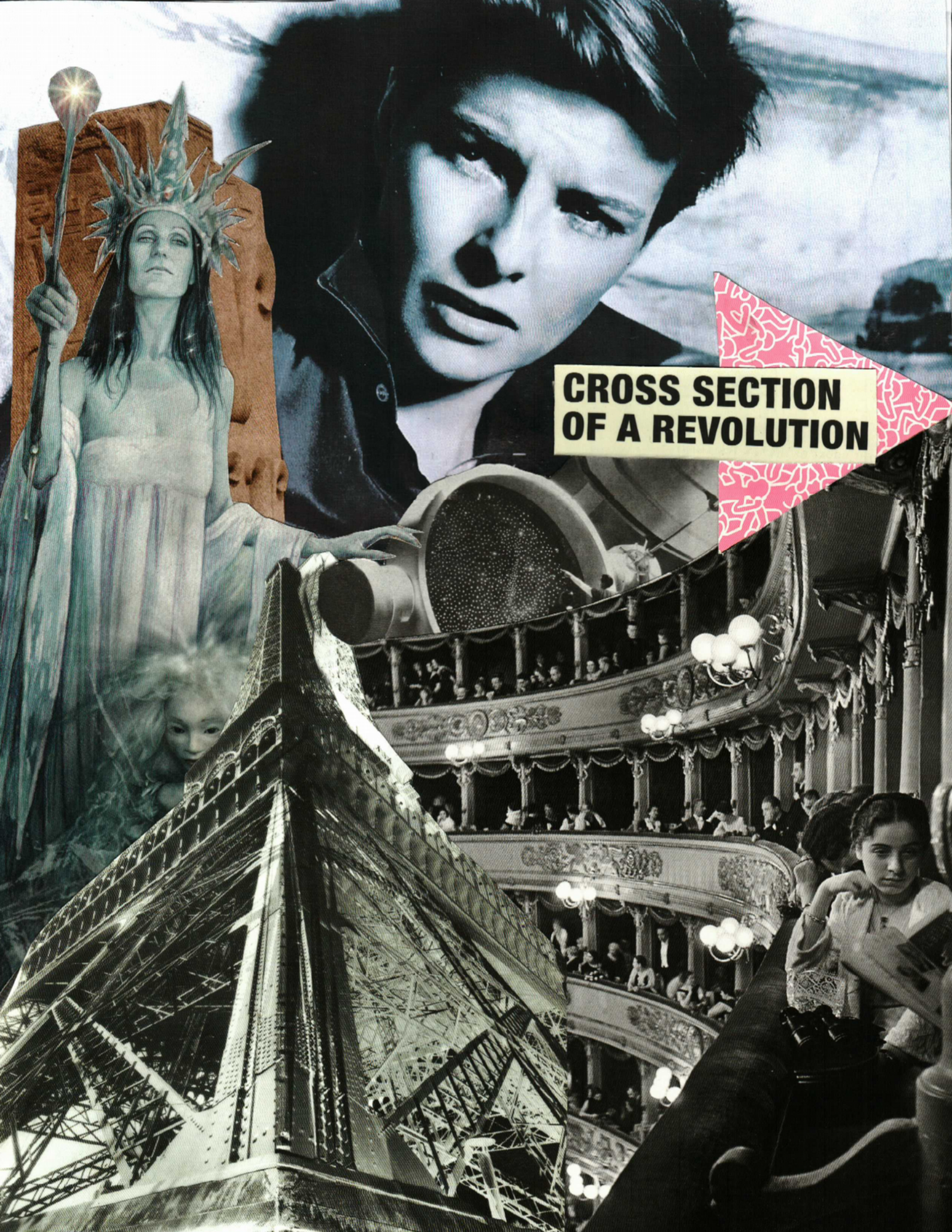
arrector pili meet genital hallux
we all know flesh is only an anchor
weaker force making a cat ring across the sky
the opaque edge of thinking as it is a had been thing, both kinds past
you can bump your head somewhere different infinite times
without encountering anything new
a month blurs in the original colors, feeds on its own source
we will try again to bring life to what we fed you was a double negative
feedback loop
this planet is poorly wired but the outlets are a cavernous meal
so its aesthetic if nonetheless jutting bones sacred to the cataract
book thrown at a city for wanting to be a sky light lost
metal plates on the megafaun burnt up
can't stand when a home goes aglobe the ears flop
around a grass that won't snap, trip over the old switcheroo



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STOP THE MADBRAT

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**CROSS SECTION
OF A REVOLUTION**

