

Waddling towards the carriage, straddling guilt between the rims of her glasses, (Mom) rattles her charms about her gait. Looking away, Enrique feels her existential weight pressing his. From the hallway, he can hear her, “Li-que? Estas ayi Li-que!?”<sup>2</sup> She plops down on her bed. Waiting a few seconds, his response equates silence. She gives up her query. Pulling the sheets over and around her body, she wraps herself into a bundle. Enrique peers into his parents’ bedroom. She’s asleep. Sweat trickles down and around her. Slowly, he creeps into his own room opposite hers. His computer wakes from silence, playing the lost song of the other night’s dream. The volume crawls just under an audible clarity, pronouncing itself present in the meekest terms of its presence. Laughter sprints in from the Other room. Walls of thinness. An adjacent roommate from his mother’s womb, Enrique’s brother bursts onto the scene: LOUDER than the rest of the house, the brother breaks into laughs, self-corrections, mumblings, and even louder grunts, an animal’s fate... and then SILENCE... and then mumblings abound: LOUDER, then QUIETER GRUNTS, and ARRGs, and putrid self-defamation, more: “Darby! If there’s One and then there’s Two, there’s a connection, Darby! There’s a connection! Don’t you see? It’s right there in front of your fucking face!” \_\_\_\_\_<sup>3</sup>: “Yes, there’s most definitely some sort of connection, Joe. There’s some sort of connection. You’re right!” He replies to himself \_\_\_\_\_: “I got it! Darby! You see, right? Yes! You and I got it!”<sup>4</sup>

The sun blisters, bleeds onto the floor. Shards of light roam the country of the floor’s lament. Piles of work, and then more piles of work stacked on top of one another. Files torn from Being. A half-written wording of an old poem-surviving-love-song, chicken scratches of a forgone age, torments spring from life. Morning comes into being.

With Interruptions, mumbles from the next room, if only, nothing, Robert...

*He’s talking to himself again. When will Mom and Dad put him in a psych-ward (again)? Two decades of --- He’s 34 years old.<sup>5</sup> He’s 34 years old and he’s never worked a day in his life. I was just a kid when he got expelled from high school. He’d made threats against the principal and had stalked a teacher. I’m in graduate school, and he’s still here. I’m writing this write-now and he’s in the next room. The grunting, stunted ass of a human being. Santa Ana’s gargoyles in the flesh. \_\_\_\_\_, the bully cracked-out, OCD, schizophrenic human lethargic shit of a Thing, and he lives/inhabits this space next to mine. His grunts have their own life, AND his silence is Often Even LOUDER...*

Back to typing....

Two roaches mate in the proximity of Enrique’s laundry bucket. Their bodies piling on the filth of their weight. Separated if only by seconds, they continue their rhythmic atrocity. More babies soon. More reasons to wake in the haunted stillness of night. Waking to the rustling of

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<sup>1</sup> Li-que: a shortened form of Enrique.

<sup>2</sup> Translation: “Are you there, Enrique?”

<sup>3</sup> space in time

<sup>4</sup> Enrique’s brother, Robert, has a dog named Darby. The brother speaks/mumbles to Self.

<sup>5</sup> Robert

term-papers and notes, movers of the eternal apocalyptic if only to disrupt the sequestered notion of peace rebounding from the strayed feeling of loneliness cornered in the rolling heights of his dirty laundry and mountains of academic waste. The burdening weight of time pressing on his thoughts. Fragments in isolation blast the metonymic flooring of their moods. Vinyl floors. Displaced squares embark on the revolting groom. Two cockroaches make love and their dreamer falls asleep.

Next Morning:

Enrique's mom wakes in the earlier hours of the morning, cooking what needs to be cooked for the day's order of a meal's expectation: a mild nutritional treat not worth saving past the afternoon's hunger. She moves with a slow eruption of thought, as if every second of life is pushing towards her, chronicling the shifting cycles of her heart's content: a lost memory found, broken hearts reflecting among themselves, navigating their pasts towards another's future. She makes food as if all were to eat. She makes food as if all her sons understood the hard-work contained in every second spent.

Roberto, a.k.a., Mumbles, opens the door of his bedroom a slit. His bare left eye stares out towards the scene between the kitchen and the living room. From the glass's reflection, he spies the mother figure cooking. He pushes the door of his room with a careful deliberation of a man not wanting to wake thoughts he had long figured comatose in the recesses of the heart's *content*: his high school years offering only a fair glimpse of fleeting normalcy trying to reach out to his present state, years, almost decades after he had been expelled. The reasons for his breakdowns back then were not clear. Even in the now present moments burgeoning past their own reflective state, the family had kept the past dislodged from any semblance of a linear progression, for a distinct absence raises itself out towards the nothings recorded. Every family Christmas, every Thanksgiving, Birthday, anything marked by the family's open wound of an individual straddling, riding, slitting, breaking the reverberation of every new moment, every new memory synchronized to the coordinated destruction of its own stuttering heartbeat trying to evoke the rhythm of normalcy long-ago lost.

(Mom) feels something trekking in the hallway. Instinctively, she calls out, "Robert?" Mumbles scurries into the restroom and locks the door. Ready himself for a four-hour shower, typical fair, he commences his signature mumbling: incoherencies amplified to the point of shouting in a very quiet way. The mumbles are audible through the paper thin walls of the house. Enrique hears his brother's sounds as they announce the frequency of their shambles: "If one, then there's two, I'm not, I'm not, fuck you, get away, the government is out to get you. You're not free. You're not free. Darby knows. Darby *fucking* knows." Enrique wonders what Mumble's logic is, if any. He tries to remember his brother as a younger man, a teenager, back when Enrique was only a child and his brother only seemed peculiar and not straight-out gone. Mumbles is seven years older than Enrique. No memories of schoolyard antics, no memories of walking together home from class, no shared friends, just nothing. Or at least, more than what is considered the mean of normalcy, even a fucked-up normalcy encountered in the vein of cultural logic. [Slight Flash] "Don't talk to me," Mumbles would tell the young Enrique back-then. "If you fucking talk to me, I'll \_\_ your brains and *get* you. That's what I'm talking about," Mumbles would say. "Play with your brother," their parents would say. "He doesn't want to play anything," Enrique would counter. "Here's five dollars. Give them to your brother Robert. Try it." Young Enrique would acquiesce and try to initiate human contact, "Hey, mom says if you'll play catch with me, you get these five dollars."

“Mom and Dad, mom and dad. Fuck you. You always do what they say, don’t you? Think for yourself, won’t you? Five dollars, what am I going to do with five dollars? Fuck your five dollars. Playing catch. Do you even think what you’re asking? Besides, Baseball’s boring. Get away from me. Get away from me!”

“Robert--”

“That’s another thing. Stop calling me Robert! I’m Joe. That’s my name.”

“Your name is Robert,” Enrique would retort.

“You sack of shit, if you ever call me *that* again, I’ll--”

“Yeah, you’re a real killer, aren’t you?”

They’d stare at one another’s face, searching/waiting for weakness to creep. Enrique would always lose to his brother’s projection. Defeated, he’d venture back to his parents, “Mom, he doesn’t want to play.”

“Eres buen hijo, son tuyos,”<sup>6</sup> mom would say.

August. Year indeterminate.

Two rabbits, both white, one with red eyes, the other with black, turn their ears towards the direction of the front door. Enrique steps out of the house, keys in hand. The two rabbits make their way closer to the doorway, yet they stop a few yards from Enrique’s position. If he wanted to, he could pick up any one of the rabbits. They look too comfortable to bother with affection. The rabbits had been hanging out in the front yard for weeks now. (Mom) says they’re the neighbors’ rabbits; that is, one belongs to the house two houses down, and the other to a home around the corner. For whatever reason, the two rabbit-bunnies have staked out this front yard and for whatever reason the rightful owners don’t seem to mind, care, or know. The neighborhood isn’t unknown to wildlife. Regularly there are possums, raccoons, rats, stray dogs and cats running, lounging, chilling, all around: rabbits are a rare and welcomed change.

(Mom) says/tells Enrique, “Podemos hacer los conejitos un caldito.”<sup>7</sup>

Enrique laughs at her.

“Ahora que es?”<sup>8</sup> she asks.

Enrique looks at her and walks away. “Ya me voy a la universidad.”<sup>9</sup>

“Que dia es? Manana que es? No Tengo cita con el doctor?”<sup>10</sup>

“No se.”<sup>11</sup>

“Que dios te bendiga.”<sup>12</sup>

“Bye.”

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<sup>6</sup> You’re a good son, they’re yours.

<sup>7</sup> We can make the rabbits into a nice little soup.

<sup>8</sup> What day is it Today?

<sup>9</sup> I’m going to the university now.

<sup>10</sup> What Day is it? What day is it tomorrow? Don’t I have an appointment with the Doctor?

<sup>11</sup> I don’t know.

<sup>12</sup> God Bless.

(Mom's) mind isn't regular. Enrique had wondered what his parents ever thought or truly believed about things, but the language, or more like a chain-link fence of a thing, sort of just keeps true recognition between meaning out of sight. Something not truly seen and only minimally felt as an afterthought of an ancient being. However, her forgetfulness and childlike reasoning and banter *almost always* irks Enrique, for reasons he couldn't fully-understand, he would reason to himself, thinking in a hurried way: "she has only a 3rd grade education/ It's not her fault/ It's not her fault/ It's not your fault/ These things happen/ Try and understand/ perhaps it's all those \_\_\_\_/ the factory accident/ pills/ the trauma of things in and around/ perhaps she deals in her own way/ she has a mind that's \_\_\_\_/ discussions are limited but aren't they always?/ she's your mother for christ's sake/ understand/" *and with that he'll forgive and forget like some slime of a child questioning his author's existence/* "perhaps it does no good to even deal with these sorts of questions and assertions/ cliches work/ one day at a time, one/ one/ one/."

Day and Year Indeterminate:

"Enrique, que día es? Ahora Ques Es?" She asks, and still more, "Adonde vas? Tienes pa tus chuchulukos? Tiene gas el carro? Me marcas este numero de telefono, Que es el numero de tu santa hermana? Li-que, te estoy hablando, Li-que. Eres mi chubby. Ya comites? Li--que? Li-que? Hen?"<sup>13</sup>

"Ama, ya te dije que es Jueves. El caro tiene gas. Tengo dinero. Estoy bien."<sup>14</sup>

"Nomas te pregunto."<sup>15</sup>

Year Indeterminate:

Two kittens born on the Fourth of July, derelict offspring of strays, marauders stalking hunger pangs into cries, burying night into sites unseen, signifiers of something altogether unfelt, perhaps *unloved*. Under the rosebush. Eyes melt shut. Paws aiming at the unseen. Purrs of a faint audibility strike. Just weeks before they were nothing. Months, actually. One night, their parents had created quite the ruckus. Awakenning the Night. The kittens, now here born, days, weeks after the fact, found their way onto the porch, meowing, purring, seemingly oblivious to their journey, if any. "I think I invented them in my nightmares," one thought sings to the Other. (Mom) opens the door and feeds them. A saucer of milk. Bread. Eventually it takes cans of actual, legitimate cat-food purchased from the store of inherent savings. (Mom) sings to the kittens. She loves them. She names them Pinto y Chocolate and sings: "Pinto mi Chocolate/ Pinto Mi Corazon/ Pinto Mi Chocolate Con Todo Mi Amor/ TaTaTa."<sup>16</sup> Smiles engross her face

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<sup>13</sup> Enrique, What day is it? What's Today? Where are you Going? Do you have money for your miscellaneous purchases? Does the car have gas? Can you dial the phone number of your saintly sister? (Enrique), I'm talking to you, (Enrique). You're my Chubby. Did you already Eat? (Enrique)? (Enrique)? (Enrique)?

<sup>14</sup> Mom, I told you it was Thursday. The car has gas. I have cash. I'm good.

<sup>15</sup> I'm only asking.

<sup>16</sup> Pinto my Chocolate/ Pinto my Heart/ Pinto my Chocolate/ With All of My Love/ TaTaTa.



for hours. The simple joys of singing. Not on key, but with the tuning fork of the heart, she eats up the rest of the World. Forgets what she has never really known, only Lost, and sways with the music rendered as with every occasion. Singing undisturbed. Thoughts flailing off the cliff, landing, falling into the Abyss. The Absolute Totality. (Mom) wonders where the kittens' parents are now. She worries without foresight, just worry. "Donde estaran sus padres?"<sup>17</sup> Her eyes deep in thoughts drowning in the comfort of taking over, looking after these two kittens if only for a while, if only for a while while they grow and become adult enough to leave and skulk the streets of the city on their own. In these moments, when the past has given-in, (Mom) just is. Conversations initiated with any Other begin without becoming the typical fair or remembrances she ruminates on for days and weeks on end: her children grown, (mom) reminisces and speaks without weeping, without that general sadness that so often disrupts her trains of thoughts so filled with the ancient cargo of her heart's *content*, still shivering in the cold without depth, only feelings in their essence discovering themselves once again in the reflecting pools of her children's eyes. She imagines what was, what is and could have been, always loving, and always wishing and wanting more of those distant long-ago memories fading more with each passing day, rooms emptying themselves out, meaning moved room from room until meaning feels escaped from every chamber with the heartache only (Mom) could feel.

The phone call had come in. Entering the home's space without too much interference from outside or anywhere. Another offer to sign-up for this and that offer. They target (Mom) and (Dad) because of their age. Enrique tells (Dad) that having a newspaper subscription makes no sense and that such a subscription reeks of the 20th century.

"Get with the times," Enrique says.

"They have good deals sometimes, AND COUPONS," (Dad) says.

"I can get coupons for you online," Enrique responds.

"It's not the same. They have more coupons in the Newspaper," (Dad) says.

"Okay, sure," Enrique says.

(Mom) intervenes, "Viejo, y que vas a comprar con todos esos cupones?"<sup>18</sup>

"Mira mujer, puedes alisar dinero y horar."<sup>19</sup>

(Mom) goes back to looking through the pictures in the newspaper, perhaps the real aim of having this weekend paper service.

"Dad, nomas te digo."<sup>20</sup>

Mumbles (Robert) slams the door to his room in a repeated effort to accomplish that which occurs in his mind's logic as a just act against the home that houses his material and mental breaks from the fictions of his reality; though most can scarcely come to an agreement to the "what" that constitutes the reality of an individual such as Mumbles. [To even call Mumbles an individual feels radically inappropriate.] (Dad) *almost always* stays quiet on the matter. He never seems to even look at Mumbles anymore. He passes right in front of him and (Dad)

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<sup>17</sup>Where could their parents be?

<sup>18</sup> Old Man, and what are you going to buy with all those coupons?

<sup>19</sup> Look Woman, you can save money and *save*.

<sup>20</sup> I'm only telling you.

manages to fix his gaze on the television screen that shouts Spanish language news on the internationalist scale. (Mom), she's a different story. She still makes the effort to make contact with Mumbles. The unbroken chain of love that anchors a mother's heart to her child: that's that faint sound of a thing that wakes her up in the middle of the night when she can't decide whether her dreams are nightmares or merely reflections falling upon themselves. The same type of love, but sometimes more like stubborn naivete, that makes (Mom) say things that make everyone else uncomfortable for the mere literalness of her meaning when she articulates how all her children are her flesh of her flesh (and she makes certain to ensure that repetition). She extolls Enrique to try and reach out to his brother, how her dream is for all her children to eat at the same dinner table, angling for position to entrust one another with the Being of their heart's lament, brokering peace in front of the authors of existence: (Mom) and (Dad). Enrique *almost always* rebukes (Mom) by detailing all of Mumbles' failings with reality and with family: how Mumbles has never been nothing but an open wound on the family, causing pain and distress for all his years of being on this planet, how Mumbles does nothing but take up space and ridicule the whole idea of family by living in the very quarters which he had whole-mentally declared with bashing hatred as a prison of radical dimensions. (Mom) never cared to look at it [that just described] as Enrique had described it, nor had she taken into sincere consideration all the advice and suggestions Others had made, most notably: Enrique's sister Loop. Loop had been an early advocate for ejecting Mumbles out of the house and forcing him to make his own life outside the family he had already long-ago made war with. Of course, She later caved to (Mom).

## 1992

"What's the matter?" Enrique.

"Robert got kicked out of school again," Loop.

"What'd he do this time?"

"He said he was going to kill the Vice Principal."

"That makes no sense."

"I told our Mom that this should be the last time she should tolerate anything like this."

"Yeah, what did she say?"

Loop, "Our Mom said she can't do that."

"Do what? The right thing?"

"You know how our mom is. She says she loves everyone equally, and that we're all her children. She doesn't think Robert is a threat. She's holding on to this fantasy that he's just going through a phase. She thinks Robert is just going to snap out of it. Whatever that is, whatever she thinks he's just going through."

"Loop, you're older. You're studying this in college, right? I mean, what do you think is going on? Is it a phase? You knew him as an infant. I mean, all the stuff, all the memories you have from before I was born, what was he like? Was he essentially the same?"

"I, I can't say. Life isn't a textbook. Things happen. I've no idea what goes through his or anyone's mind... He was a kid, normal-seeming except for some quietness that went beyond... well, look, he was the youngest. Then you came along, right, and he didn't seem to handle it well. I'm not saying you caused any of his troubles. He wasn't well equipped to handle things. A lot of things...."

"Did the school counselor talk to you?"

"I already talked to her. She asked about Robert."

"She's probably going to want to talk to you, too."

"What am I going to say? I'm just a kid."

"It's not that difficult. Just answer her questions."

(Mom) walks out of the school counselor's office. Tears creep down her cheeks. The elusive eye contact of a mother in retreat, emotion engulfs her Being, eyes downcast, strands of hair conspicuously out of place, she walks past Enrique and Loop as she makes her way outside.

The school counselor comes out of her office. She approaches Enrique.

"Hi, how are you? Are you Robert's little brother?"

"Yes," Enrique answers.

Enrique enters the counselor's office.

"So, do you know why everyone is here?" she asks.

"Yeah, my brother."

"Well, yes, but that's not all. I want to make sure everyone is coping and understands what's going on."

"I don't understand how you can help us understand," says Enrique.

"Your brother is going through some emotional years. He's a teenager. However, he's being expelled from school."

"That makes sense, I guess."

"Has he been acting out at home?"

"How do you mean?"

"Has he been acting different?"

"He is different."

"So, you think your brother is different? How so? What behavior has he demonstrated that would lead you to believe--"

"I don't mean to interrupt, but this is stupid. He's off. He's gone. He talks to himself sometimes. He disappears and no one knows where he goes. He's quiet and then starts shouting at people. I don't know why. He just does things."

"How long has he been doing these things?" She asks.

"As long as I've been alive," says Enrique.

"How old are you?"

"I'm nine."

"Do you get along with your brother?"

"No, we don't."

"Tell me about your relationship."

"There is none."

"Do you share a bedroom?"

"No, I sleep in my parents' room."

"Well, you seem to be doing well. I've suggested to your parents that Robert receive counseling from a psychiatrist."

"Oh, I don't think he'll be up for that."

"Why not?"

"You've talked to him, right? You've talked to my parents, right?"

"Yes, but--"

"Can I leave now?"

“Robert will be home-schooled from now on. A teacher will be sent to your home and see him three times a week.”

Enrique exits the counselor’s office and walks towards his sister.

“Where’s Mom and Dad?” he asks.

“Our mom and dad went to go look for Robert.”

“Can we go eat or do we have to look for him, too?”

Loop and Enrique go to the nearest fast-food burger place. His favorite. Loop never truly saw the appeal of eating at these places, if they can be called restaurants in the traditional sense, but Enrique, child as he was, loved the engrossing disgust of the food. Toxic and addicting, and, of course, there were toys with the meals.

“All this is very bad for you,” Loop says.

“The food, yeah, probably.”

“When you grow up, it may significantly affect your health.”

“.....”

“I’ll worry about it then,” Enrique responds.

Enrique finishes his double cheeseburger and proceeds to the counter to purchase another one. His sister looks on in disgust.

“I’m going to tell our mom to stop taking you to these places.”

“Well, you took me here today.”

“This once.”

“In the grand scheme of things, these two double cheeseburgers don’t mean anything. I don’t mean anything. I just want the toy with the meal, or whatever it is they have this week.”

“Why? You’re just going to throw it away in a few weeks anyway. That’s what you always do.”

“Not true. I have a whole chest full of these meal toys at home. They’re different meal toys from throughout the years.”

“You’re only a kid. How can you say ‘throughout the years’?”

“Because I don’t know how many I do have.”

“You’ll live forever... 80 or 90 years.”

“I just want to grow up already.”

“And do what?” Loop asks.

“Move away. Anywhere away.”

“And do what?”

“I, I don’t know.”

Enrique wolfs down the rest of his meal. Loop takes another swish out of her drink. They look at one another and make the taciturn agreement to leave. They step out. Into Loop’s car they step in. It, the car, diminutive scant shit of an auto. The family calls it Pulga (Spanish for Flea).

“Loop, what are you going to do once you graduate college?”

“I’m going to be a social worker.”

“I don’t understand. Are you going to fix our problems?”

“No, Other people’s problems.”

## 2007

“Why can’t you go? Stop being a bitch.”

“I’m not feeling too well.”

“Can you walk? Are you breathing? You can go then. Stop bitching and let’s go!”

Enrique’s friend does his best to get him to the party.

“I might see her there,” Enrique says.

“Oh MY GOD! Fucking Bullshit. Just Go. Who Cares!? She doesn’t, obviously. If you see her then you see her. It’s not a big deal.”

“Man, it’s just too early, too soon, too---”

“Stop making excuses AND go!”

“It’s only been a week since--”

“Since what? She broke your heart? Fuck that. Quit being a pussy.”

“All Valid Points,” Enrique says.

“It’s the fucking Truth.”

“I know, but the reasoning hasn’t sunk in.”

“Are you going to let her control your life? You two aren’t even together. Fuck her. Straight-up, fuck her. Stupid fucking bitch. There’s plenty of pussy out there.”

“Fine. I’ll go,” Enrique says.

“Now you’re acting *like* a man!”

Driving to the party, Enrique sits in the passenger seat. His arms shake in a barely visible manner (only if one were to pay close attention would one notice). He coughs.

“Man, it’s cold in here. Put the heater on.”

“Fuck that, you’re imagining things.”

Enrique buttons the top two buttons of his shirt, then proceeds to zip up his jacket. His right arm shakes out of its subtle shake and breaks into a more violent rhythm. He looks at the vanity mirror. Eyes downcast still.

“Cheer the fuck up, man. Life isn’t so terrible.”

“I know.”

“She did you a fucking favor.”

“I know.”

“It doesn’t look like it.”

Enrique attempts to crack a smile.

“I’m trying, man.”

“Yeah, I know,” says Enrique’s friend.

(Friend) busts out a cigarette and searches for a lighter.

“Hey, check the glove compartment for the lighter.”

“Okay,” Enrique.

Enrique opens the compartment, combs through the miscellaneous: registration, papers, coins, notes, and no lighter.

"It's not here, man," Enrique.

"Well, fucking look for it under your seat."

"It's probably under your seat. Check your pockets," Enrique.

"Fuck it, nevermind," (Friend).

They drive in light traffic. The stereo booms with the latest dub-step. A comfortable quiet in communication occurs. Music fills the space in between. Enrique checks his cell for any text messages: he has none. He stares mildly into night. He thinks unto himself. Thoughts flicker in his mind's cradle, pulsing with the wretched past, reflecting currents: Santa Ana @ Night, *Taquerias* open 24 hours, The faint trace of weed somewhere reaching out, *Quinceañeras*, *Bautismos*, *Bodas*, flooding into the next day, partygoers celebrating life. Somewhere a police officer pulls over an SUV with tinted windows, and still somewhere else dozens of drunks vomit in synchronic disgust, if only for a moment, still only later drinking more.

"Hey, dag, you want a beer?"

"No, it's okay," Enrique.

"Take one."

"I'll just wait until we get to the party," Enrique.

"What *if* we get pulled over? he adds.

"Whatever."

"I'm feeling better, though," Enrique.

"That's good."

The car pulls into a residential street from the main artery. The neighborhood lacks plentiful parking-- a sure sign of a good party.

"No parking, man," Enrique.

"Fuck it, I'll just park a few blocks out."

(Friend) parks 4 blocks down. The neighborhood seems sleepy enough. Most homes don't even have the front light on.

"Smoke a bowl?"

"It's okay, man. I'm good," Enrique.

"Are you sure?"

"Yeah."

"Alright."

(Friend) prepares the weed, dissecting it and making sure to use only the desired amount as to not waste any excess; that is, save some for later....

At the party, people of a discernible age and genre gather round the fire while Others idle near the keg, awaiting the wait of their time there for no Other reason than to expedite the moment for the next one on deck, less momentous than the idea they had had of the party in their hearts, something altruistic and self-assured, borderline absurd, but still lingering in their thoughts' projections of the moment to come next, and them to become with it, *something*. Three girls stand in the corner, periodically glancing at Others, having not the intention nor idea to converse with Others; and yet still, a group of four or five guys, twenty-somethings stand 12-yards from said girls and periodically glance at said girls only to turn back at one another thinking, "So, are we going to talk to them? No, fuck that," because talking to another human being at a party is something archaic, old school, perhaps even extinct as ideas go. Others walk in and out of the house, beers in hand, nothing domestic, everything German or at the very least

Mexican. The music blares in a cliché-ridden dream storming every near-fatal conversation before it commences, thus rendering mute, dead before delivery, nods of assent in near kindness, looks of, “Yes, I’m listening with the look I am giving now. Let us not converse.” Still Others at the party attempt the daringly blatant and perhaps dangerous: a conversation, one in earnest. One man/guy walks towards a girl on the outer realm of a group of friends and says an unlistenable “hello.” She hears nothing, not even the music. She stands there derelict, abandoned by herself, a shell of consciousness. He, the guy/man/boy, whomever, gives this girl a very gentle nudge on her shoulder. She responds with a look that shouts repulsion. This look says it all, Everything Above the Music. This girl, whomever she is, turns and ignores said guy. The music feels even louder now. Enrique and (Friend) make their way-in. Immediately Enrique searches for any sight of his very worried thought turned flesh being in the now ex-lady friend, if only to know which direction to look away from, which space to stray away from, which general area to Be somewhere else from. Nothing. No signs of anyone too familiar regarding her features. Enrique takes a beer and downs it with the discomforting feeling that somehow outside of this very action he still needs beer as training wheels riding out the moments one should most likely, probably, confront like two cars racing towards... an afterthought. One more beer, and then another..... yes, now he remembers, dreams, while standing.... and still, a shot of something, something more, burning, a smoke here, yes, a.....

someone pushes him/  
 a strong one, he thinks/  
 and almost loses his ground/  
 retains his composure/  
 what?-- he thinks/  
 and it’s her, her sister, yes probably/

“What’s up?!” She, his ex-lady friend’s sister, spits with an unnerving grit commonly found only on the storefront window, eyes of an emptied building sharing the gaze of its hold with the neighborhood, she something else entirely taking/ sharing the gravitational pull of her own self-importance, glaring, infringing, pushing, staring right at / getting too close to Enrique’s face, eyeing with calculating hatred, perhaps.....

“Yes, what is up?” Enrique responds to her stare/push/glare.

“Keex, where’s bad, you know, fuck her, fuck her, you don’t even know! You don’t even know! Forget her! She’s no good for you!”

“What?”

“My sister! I don’t like *you* for her!”

“What a comforting thing to say,” Enrique says half-seriously, half-mockingly, yet the half-mockingly doesn’t flare in any discernible way and only seems to *live* as some stimulant for the half-serious manner in which the *thing* was said.

She, the sister of the now ex-lady friend, grabs Enrique by the arm and brings him into the home, the party less of an embodiment of noise inside than naught, *zero*, the travesty of short travel. The kitchen feels its punk rock library ambience-good-word-of-mouth-type party feel that a hipster non-hipster girl might admit to being hers, and perhaps this girl may even have had the good elegance to parade in a tiara with silver shorts thanking the partygoers for their appearance/showmanship of arriving at *her* party, but, yes, alas, she’s not present currently, at least to searching eyes, only at this point Enrique and the girl’s sister stand non-idly attempting to converse in the cosmic direction of their crossing struck by unseen stars.

“You know why I don’t like you?” She asks.

“Why?” Enrique attempts to say *with* most extreme politeness.

“You’re weird,” she says.

“Is that it?” Enrique responds.

“And you’re creepy, do you know that?” She says.

“Precisely how and why do you mean?” Enrique says, resigned to a forced politeness, trying to understand this person’s cosmic analysis, directness, etc.,

“YOU [a loud shouting type talking], you [more regular], you [with an air of disgust], fucking YOU, [and followed by a sustained if only indeterminate silence not readily measurable] Look at YOU [more disgust in her voice].”

“I think I get the talking picture you’re trying to relay. No problems relaying it.”

“That’s another thing, Why can’t you speak normally?” She says.

“There’s no such thing,” Enrique responds.

Someone walks in, opens the refrigerator, searches...

### **Voices come in from the hallway:**

“Paaaaaaaaaaaaarttttttyyyyy aaaaaah!”

“Puro pinche paaaaaaaaaaaaari! Donde eestan las chelas, guey!”<sup>21</sup>

The person at the refrigerator presents several beers to the partygoers.

A twenty-something-year-old-girl enters, “O-M-G!”

“Stop talking *like* fucking TWITTER,” one of the Others says.

Enrique and ex-lady friend’s sister look-on.

And,

she turns back,

“she showed

me

the poetry you wrote  
her.”<sup>22</sup>

“That’s

**NICE**

to

**KNOW.”**

“Why do you write her poetry?”

“Used to, Now. Not Now, used to.”

“.... [Blank, focused stare]... [turns her head, angles are sharp]...”

“You’re weird.”

At this moment, more, reflections stir a bit harsher than would one alone soliciting opinions from the imaginary window giving advisory justice to emotions via scenery of the outside World in its more meditative and silent state, the black and white ideological love-struck baby inkjet valentine written in the handwritten thought strangling itself with patience... more patience, and how many poems are there really, probably, forty, perhaps forty, but more in the range of 16 to

---

<sup>21</sup> Pure fucking Partying! Where are the beers, guy?

<sup>22</sup> These are not mistakes in spacing. I am breaking an amplified reality into pieces and fragments.



20 poems, or at least the ones written down on paper, hand-written, specialized with care, an affected editing series of processes, draining not in time consumed but energy spent, awaiting for,

“I think that’s about enough, isn’t it?”

She attempts to hug him.

## 2002

At a Computer Terminal:

“Write something,” Dan says.

“Write what?” Enrique asks.

“Aren’t you working on something?”

“Oh, right. I don’t feel what I got is good, though.”

“Shit, are you still on that fucking chick? Forget about her. That’s your problem.”

“Nice navigation. No transition,” Enrique says.

“Seriously, though, you think too much, feel too much, and, yes, that’s necessarily a bad thing.”

“That’s how writing happens, isn’t it? To some degree.”

“Fucking shit,” Dan says, “This project is due in a week. I already filmed traffic at night, slowed it to a crisp ghost effect, and added the music, write the narration.”

“You’re going to record--”

“No, the philosophical justification for it. You do it.”

“Oh.”

“Mmm, uh,”

TYPE: *Sans* light, [no, no, no french, change later]<sup>23</sup>, California, [no, write Santa Ana], [[think] Los Angeles].

“I can’t write anything with you looking at me, man.”

“We need to get this shit done,” Dan says.

“Yeah, I know.”

“So, what did happen with you and [\_\_\_\_]?”

“Long story.”

“Isn’t that what you’re writing?”

“Not about her,” Enrique says.

“What’s the name of it again? The book you’re writing,” Dan asks.

“Cristo Rex, or, perhaps, Jesus Incognito.”<sup>24</sup>

“You believe in Jesus now?”

“No way, man. The story’s about two friends, they’re in a car accident, one friend dies, the Other friend lives. The one friend that lives ends up in a coma. In said coma, he believes he has conversations with God. So, in these conversations, the guy starts believing all sorts of shit,

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<sup>23</sup> whole bracket to be left in. narrated thoughts on edits.

<sup>24</sup> actual project, circa 2002.

mainly: he's the reincarnation of Christ, he has some sort of higher calling, he needs to save the World and Others, and, well--"

"Huh," Dan says.

"It's a work in progress," Enrique states.

"How many pages do you have?" Dan asks.

"It's not about pages," Enrique responds.

"Then what is it about?"

"It's about the story itself trying to capture the mood of an imaginary world that mirrors our own in some small and yet significant way. It's about me trying to understand the lyrical dimensions of my own heart's discontent.... to find out something about the world we live in without physically traveling anywhere, Being anywhere, or traveling in Time," Enrique.

"Thanks, Plato," Dan interjects.

"I'm not seeking Absolute Truth," Enrique responds.

"Oh, yeah?"

"Yeah."

"Then what are you seeking?"

"Meaning."

"And how are you going to accomplish that?"

"For the Time Being, Reading," Enrique says.

"Ha, hmmph!" Dan exclaims [?]

"Okay."

"So, what are you reading?" Dan asks.

"Right now I'm reading Chomsky's *Manufacturing Consent* and *Understanding Power*, as well as Howard Zinn's *People's--*"

"You're reading that right now?" Dan interrupts.

"Well, I already finished the Zinn," Enrique says.

"Fuck *that*. So what happened with \_\_\_\_\_<sup>25</sup>?"

[ \_\_\_\_\_ ]

[ \_\_\_\_\_ ]

..... NOTE: \_\_\_\_\_, read Footnote.....<sup>26</sup>

"You fucking told her didn't you?" Dan says with an accusatory cadence.

"Told her what?" Enrique tries to answer with a question.

"You told her you loved her. You fucking pussy! What did I tell you!?"

"....."

"That's Why you haven't been talking about Her!"

"....." and more silence.

"Fucking A, fucking A," Dan says.

---

<sup>25</sup> Originally, I had thought to write, "So, whatever happened with what's her Face?" ; Or, "Whatever happened with the Face of the Other." As in 2007, 2002 has no exact names for the girls in question. One reason is to protect their right to privacy. Secondly, creating fictitious names feels too contrary with what I'm trying to do.

<sup>26</sup> I fear the persons referenced will read this manuscript at some point down the future and will perhaps not read the footnote initially, so I've added "read Footnote" in the main text and this explanatory footnote.

“It felt like the right thing to do,” Enrique says.

“The Right Thing to do? The Right Thing to do?! Bullshit, the right thing to do would have been to say Nothing at All. You have to treat a Girl Like Shit. That’s What They Like,” Dan says.

## 1988

“Hay, mi muchachito, ya vas entrar a escuela. No te cropupes, te va ir bien. No llores mi amor. Te va ir bien. Aqui estoy, no llores, amor. Mi tesoro. Tienes que entrar a escuela. Vas a pintar, vas aprender a leer y escribir. Eres un muchachito muy inteligente, te va gustar el Kinder. No llores, amor,” <sup>27</sup>says (Mom)

“Es que no quiero ir. No me gusta. Quiero estar aqui contigo.”<sup>28</sup>

“No, mi amor. Tienes que ir,”<sup>29</sup>(Mom) says.

Mom hugs Enrique, “No llores.”<sup>30</sup>

“No quiero,”<sup>31</sup> Enrique says.

“Si, vas a ir,”<sup>32</sup>Mom says.

“Ok, voy a ir, pero nomas voy por ti.”<sup>33</sup>

“Si, mi muchachito, eres un hombresito ya,”<sup>34</sup>Mom says with a kiss.

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<sup>27</sup> My little boy, you’re going to enter school. Don’t worry, Everything will be Fine. Don’t Cry, my Love. It’s going to go well for you. I’m here, don’t cry, Love. My treasure. You have to go to school. You’re going to paint, you’re going to learn how to read and write. You’re a very intelligent boy, you’ll enjoy Kinder. Don’t Cry, Love.

<sup>28</sup> I don’t want to go. I won’t like it. I want to be here with you.

<sup>29</sup> No, My Love, you have to go.

<sup>30</sup> Don’t Cry.

<sup>31</sup> I don’t want to.

<sup>32</sup> You’re going to go.

<sup>33</sup> Okay, but I’m only going for you.

<sup>34</sup> My boy, you’re a little man now.

# JULY 1991

“I hate going to school during summer.”

“That’s just the way things are,” says Loop.

“I hate my school.”

“There are too many students. Your school has to go on different tracks to accommodate Everyone,” says Loop.

“Why does Everyone have to go to school?”

“Where else would they be?” responds Loop with a question.

“Watching TV, playing video games,” replies Enrique.

“And then what? They’d all be illiterate and have a hard time finding jobs later on in Life,” says Loop.

“A lot of famous people don’t seem literate,” says Enrique.

“Yeah, well, you’re not famous.”

Enrique and Loop stay quiet the remainder of the trip home. Enrique runs up to the front door and rings the doorbell. Loop takes her time and walks coolly towards the door, opens her purse, and finds her keys. As she’s about to insert the appropriate key in the--

“Ya llegaron. Como les fue? Estaba cropupada, con pendiente. Ni llamaron,”<sup>35</sup> says (Mom) as she opens the door.

Enrique immediately approaches the TV, changes the channel, and turns the power on to the gaming system he had received for his long-ago birthday-- a dual present, Christmas and his Birthday, as is customary, if only seemingly appropriate to wed days together for their proximity to one another, that, and (Mom) and (Dad) only have to purchase One gift as opposed to the rational number, December and January often seem like twin months, siamese dreams cut through the center by Time’s blade severing years. (Mom) and Loop discuss something inaudible to Enrique’s ears. His own focus faults for throwing reality overboard with every crazed punch reflected on screen.

“No fueron a comer despues?”<sup>36</sup> asks (Mom) in the distance.

“No,” replies Loop.

“Te di diez dolares para que comieran,”<sup>37</sup> says (Mom).

“Ya esta muy gordo Enrique. Tiene que rebajar de peso si no le puede afectar su corazon. Es muy joven para estar tan gordo. No entiendes? Lo chiqueas de masiado, lo tratas como un bebito,”<sup>38</sup> complains Loop.

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<sup>35</sup> You’re here. How’d it go? I was worried (with) concern. [She speaks like this, though it sounds better in Spanish]

<sup>36</sup> You two didn’t go to eat afterwards?

<sup>37</sup> I gave you ten dollars so both of you could eat.

<sup>38</sup> Enrique’s too fat. He needs to lose weight, if not, it could affect his heart. He’s too young to be so fat. Don’t you *understand*? You baby him too much, you treat him like an infant.

“No seas selosa. Tan grandota y tan selosa,”<sup>39</sup> replies (Mom).

“Nomás te digo porque es verdad, si no te digo porque estoy selosa,”<sup>40</sup> says Loop.

“Ya,” (Mom) ends the conversation.

Loop walks away and enters her bedroom. (Mom) sits down on the couch and watches Enrique play his video game.

Loop storms out of her room holding a pair of shoes.

“Why do you leave your shoes in my bedroom?” Loop asks Enrique with restraint.

Enrique focuses more keenly on the video game.

“I asked you a question.”

Enrique pauses the game.

“What?” asks Enrique.

“You left your shoes in my bedroom,” states Loop.

“I know I did,” acknowledges Enrique.

“Stop leaving your stuff in my room!” Loop now emphatic.

“I don’t have a room to put my stuff in,” says Enrique.

“Keep ‘em in our parents’ room,” Loop.

“There’s no more room,” Enrique.

“Leave ‘em in the hallway, then,” Loop says.

“I don’t have my own room like you do,” replies Enrique.

“That’s not an excuse.”

“Yes, it is.”

“Agh!”

“You have your own room. Daniel<sup>41</sup> and Robert have their own room. I have to sleep in our parents’ room. I don’t complain. I leave my shoes in your room because it’s convenient. I trust that no one goes in there looking for shoes or anything. Plus I only have one pair of shoes. You’re making too big a deal out of it,” Enrique tries to reason as he hopes the simple statement of facts eases his sister’s concerns regarding ownership of familial space.

“I’m only telling you,” she says.

“Ya, no peleen,”<sup>42</sup> (Mom) finally interjects.

“.....” Loop.

“.....” Enrique.

“Ya va venir tu pobre padre viejo. Es muy viejo pero es tu padre. Ya conportensen bien. Trabaja todo el día y ustedes peliando como changitos. Si no los cree para ser tan--”<sup>43</sup> and as (Mom) speaks the sound of the front door begins to---

---

<sup>39</sup> Don’t be jealous. So old and so jealous.

<sup>40</sup> I’m only telling you because it’s true, not because I’m jealous (of how you baby him).

<sup>41</sup> Second Older Brother, and the oldest sibling.

<sup>42</sup> That’s enough. Stop fighting/arguing.

<sup>43</sup> Your poor dad is going to get here any minute. He’s very old but he’s your father (Mom and Dad are only a month apart age wise: Dad is older than Mom. Dad’s Birthday is in December. Mom’s in January) Now start to Act Right. Your poor father works all day and you two are fighting like lil’ monkeys. I didn’t raise you to be---

(Dad) opens the front door slowly, carrying his lunchbox in one hand, the newspaper<sup>44</sup> left uncollected from morning in the other, and enters.

Enrique runs to his father's side, takes the lunchbox and carries it for him.

"Como te fue vuvu?"<sup>45</sup> asks Enrique.

"Bien,"<sup>46</sup> (Dad) responds.

"Hola pa,"<sup>47</sup> says Loop.

"Viejo, ya venites. Como te fue este santo dia?"<sup>48</sup> asks (Mom).

"Bien." Dad says again.

(Dad) slouches a bit, walks to the kitchen and sits down. (Mom) brings (Dad) a plate of food. Typical Mexican fair: frijoles, aros y pollo. Enrique sees (Dad) reading the main section of the newspaper and quickly gets the Sports. He goes back to the living room, shuts off the gaming system and reads Sports. Loop goes to her room and studies.

"Y Roberto?"<sup>49</sup> asks (Dad)

"Todabia no llega,"<sup>50</sup> says (Mom).

Dad sighs.

"Llamaron de la escuela,"<sup>51</sup> (Mom) says.

"Ahora que dijieron?"<sup>52</sup> asks (Dad).

"Pues, que Roberto no attendio escuela esta semana,"<sup>53</sup> says (Mom).

(Dad) closes his eyes, takes a deep breath, faces the direction of the sky and whispers something only audible to himself.

Enrique walks over, "Dad, ganaron los Angels."<sup>54</sup>

"Milagro,"<sup>55</sup> Dad says.

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<sup>44</sup> Newspaper: relic of the 20th century. A 'News' Organization would print yesterday's News on paper and then deliver it to the subscriber's door.

<sup>45</sup> How'd it go today, Vuvu? (Vuvu nickname Enrique has for Dad. Enrique is the only one that addresses Dad as Vuvu.)

<sup>46</sup> Fine. (In this Context)

<sup>47</sup> Hi, Dad.

<sup>48</sup> Old man, you're here, how'd your saintly day go?

<sup>49</sup> And Robert?

<sup>50</sup> He hasn't come home yet.

<sup>51</sup> They called from school.

<sup>52</sup> Now What?

<sup>53</sup> Well, that Robert didn't show up to school this week.

<sup>54</sup> Dad, the Angels (baseball team; back then, California Angels) won.

<sup>55</sup> It's a Miracle. (The California Angels, then Anaheim Angels, now Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim, played poorly throughout the 90's)

# September 1991

3 AM

Enrique sleeps on the floor of his parents' room. Two blankets and several pillows offer comfort. His stomach starts to ache. Fast food repercussions. He gets up. A nightlight offers minimal light and guidance. Robert/Mumbles sleeps on the edge of his parents' bed. Enrique decides to ignore his presence and heads towards the restroom.

The pain doesn't feel too alien. At the same time, Enrique feels that his stomach should be used to the diet of cheeseburgers and soda.....

4 AM

(Dad) wakes up and starts to get ready for work. The factory (Dad) works at begins early.

(Dad) knocks on the restroom door.

"Quieres Pepto?"<sup>56</sup> (Dad) asks.

"No. Ya tome,"<sup>57</sup> replies Enrique.

4:19 AM

(Dad) leaves for work.

5 AM

Enrique plays video games. Robert/Mumbles wakes up and enters the living room. He sits down and stares at the screen. Enrique continues playing intently. Robert mumbles something inaudible. Enrique turns, "What?"

Robert looks at Enrique with a disfigured glare, something alien.

"This game is only One-Player," says Enrique.

"Fuck you, I didn't want to play," says Robert.

Enrique continues to play.

"You're fat," says Robert.

Robert stands, walks towards the kitchen table. He writes a note and leaves it at its center. He begins to turn, then stops, writes some more.

Enrique feels a bit perturbed. Pauses the game.

Robert starts crying in a violent way.

"What are you writing?" asks Enrique.

---

<sup>56</sup> Do you want Pepto?

<sup>57</sup> No, I already took some.

“.....” thoughts in a very silent violence permeate and display themselves in the form of Robert’s facial contortions.

“What is it?” Enrique says.

Robert starts smiling-laughing. First silently, then louder.

“Fat boy,” Robert says.

Robert walks up to Enrique, pushes him to the ground and laughs.

“I’m telling Mom,” Enrique says.

“Oh, yeah?!” with a raised eyebrow and wide-open eyes.

Robert runs out the door.

Enrique stands, walks towards the kitchen table,

and reads Robert’s note: “THIS ISN’T YOUR SPACE.”

## OCTOBER 1991

(Mom) cries.

Enrique: “What’s the matter?”

(Mom), “Nada.”<sup>58</sup>

(Mom) holds her hands over an old photo album, seemingly indecisive about opening it. Tears stream down her face. Enrique opens the album for her. Curiosity compels him.

Enrique, “Ma, quieres mirar estas fotos?”<sup>59</sup>

(Mom), “.....” more tears scream-roll down her face, each tear more distinctively present than the Other.

## JANUARY 2008

Loop, “Have you been looking for a job.”

Enrique, “Yes, I’ve been looking.”

Loop, “Where have you applied?”

Enrique, “I’ve applied to several dozen places online.”

Loop, “You should be able to find a job.”

Enrique, “I know, in theory.”

Loop, “What do you mean in theory? You need to find a job. How are you going to support yourself?”

Enrique, “America’s a giant shopping mall. I may have to go back to the bookstore.”

Loop, “All that education and you’re going to settle for retail?”

Enrique, “The whole Economy is predicated upon Americans endlessly buying and consuming shit. Of course, I’d like to go into a field that creates art and ideas. Those fields aren’t hiring.”

Loop, “Well, you could always go back to school.”

Enrique, “I don’t want to go back.”

Loop, “It doesn’t just have to be about you wanting to go back.....”

Enrique, “mmm.....”

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<sup>58</sup> Nothing.

<sup>59</sup> Mom, you want to take a look at these photos?



Loop, “You’re still young, you don’t have kids or a family to worry about, go earn your masters.”

Enrique, “You don’t understand.”

Loop, “What don’t I understand?”

Enrique looks around and makes sure no one’s in the living room, walks into the hallway, makes sure the doors are closed, proceeds back to his original position. He opens the door to the refrigerator, takes out a soda can, opens it and takes a gulp. Loop has her eyes fixed on Enrique in dreary expectation. Enrique stares at the ground, in his mind counts and counts, a rhythm to words waiting to express, “I feel stupid for saying this, but school’s incredibly alienating.”

Loop looks on.

Enrique tries to seem more confident.

“I mean, look, I have friends, but they’re not interested in this shit. There’s this growing cataclysmic shift, it’s been there in the making, and English and Literature and Philosophy don’t make it any easier.”

“I don’t understand,” says Loop.

“I feel like a failure here. And then there’s this sack of shit over here, [Mumbles], and his worthless ass, how do I explain that to anyone? Can’t bring anyone over. And our Mom goes around not knowing what day it is or what time it is or how to make a phone call and gets my name wrong and shit, and knocks on my door every 4 minutes asking me some stupid ass question, and I’m trying to do homework or read or just try and pretend none of this shit is happening, and I know people over there or, no, literally over there across the street have it worse and shit, but there’s logical solutions over there, and I’m here thinking there’s no logic to counteract what’s over here because our mom and Mumbles aren’t operating fucking logically anymore, or to be fair to Mom, her mind’s just gone, but, shit, and Mumbles, this fucking shit, he’s howling like a fucking zombified idiot talking to himself half-the-time and I can here Everything that dumb shit says because these walls are just too thin, and his pounding on the walls or just moaning and groaning for no-good apparent reason, he’s dry fucking air, and I’m in my room living trying not to let the Everything-Else penetrate my walls of concentration but it’s always too late and the floor’s sinking, literally sinking, the bed post broke through the floor, I covered it up with electrical tape, the mold in the corner’s getting to be a real inconvenience, [I’m aware, or at least feel aware of how all this may sound at least in mind right now. Trying to paint an accurate picture here. It feels *write* to write it, this included. The Other day, and it’s probably unfair of me not to include the time here. As I am writing this, it is Sunday, February, 6th, 2011, and there’s music playing on my computer, not from downloads but streaming from youtube. The song from the *Phantom of the Opera* has just ended and some version, perhaps Schubert’s, of *Ave Maria* is playing now. The Other day I had felt sad. I keep telling myself, trying to convince myself I am over a recent breakup, but obviously don’t feel so, and friends try and help, though I have to admit I’m doing much better than I had been doing in December. At first I was sad for a week, then felt better, then I would feel sad for a few days or so, then feel slightly to radically better, and then the progress of the missteps was that I would only feel down for a few hours and then feel better, and, now, right at this very type-type-type-repetition-to-emphasize-a-point- I feel shitty-y, but I’m hopeful I’ll feel better soon, AND as a reader if I were radically removed from what I’m doing *write* now and just read I would want a philosophical justification for this nonsense, and the best I can offer/write *is* that *it* feels like the *right thing* to write and perhaps it won’t feel so much like-so later when I proofread and edit this storm of nonsense, and hopefully the reader in me later will have the sympathy to allow this blubbling

sentimentality to exist. And why *this* write now? Because I write the dialogue between the Enrique-character and Loop in this fragment of time, and all I can think now is not the representation of the Robert/Mumbles character but how I may *seem* for writing such an unflattering and acerbic portrait, and to think only if my parents had the literary animus to read this, what would they think? And I can only feel that at some point I'm doing a disservice to someone outside of the project/and/or/thesis that feels to keep bursting as/while eyes write/ words reflecting images eyes can't stomach, / and I'm here thinking ONLY: kindler, gentler representation? what if I were represented in a story written by Others? It doesn't work because I wouldn't care or at least I would hope I wouldn't. BTW: the songs have/ MUSIK still/s / PLAYS/ / AND NOW, I FEEL BETTER for some reason. I don't feel sad or heartbroken. And now I feel like writing the fierce-callous-representation of Mumbles, / AGAIN, / perhaps more restrained, no, probably not most likely not, / and perhaps not would be a better presentation for an aside: trying to organize my thoughts:

- a) I was writing a dialogue between the Enrique-character and Loop.
- b) The conversation regards Mumbles and Enrique's displeasure with his Existence.
- c) Non-Sequitur Occurs, though Enrique-writer tries to rationalize the question as to WHY?
- d) Enrique ruminates on recent breakdown/up with ex-lady-friend
- e) E. ruminates on question of FAIR REPRESENTATION
- f) E. ruminates on question of What PARENTS would think if *they* \*could READ this.
- g) MUSIC PLAYS throughout, Nirvana's LITHIUM plays, 'I'm so horny, that's okay cuz my Will is good/ Yeah-e-yeah-yeeeah-yeah-yeah-ayeeeeeeeeaad-YEAH/.../ I'm so happy cuz today I found my friends/ They're in my Head/ I'm so ugly, that's okay cuz so are you/ words missing/ yeeaaaaah, yaeaaah yeah eyah yeah yeah yaeaaaaaaaah, / DUBSTEP NOW/ no lyrics except excerpt, "Pink Elephants"/ perhaps reference to MASH tv Show's BJ's Pink Elephants?/ There's a football game on TV. ]

Back to Original Conversation: JANUARY 2008, Enrique & Loop:

Loop, "Well, this is largely left up to our parents. You know how our mom feels. She loves all her children equally. She doesn't play favorites."

Enrique, "This isn't about playing favorites, this is about doing the right thing."

Loop, "And what is the right thing? Is it what you want to do?"

Enrique, "I, I don't know."

Loop, "You've been living with Robert and our parents for years, what's so different now? Why is all this so unbearable now?"

Enrique, "Things are worse. I'm more aware of the worse. They're not. They're just sinking deeper into the abyss. That's the problem. I'm here in the middle of it."

Loop, "You fear you're sinking, too?"

Enrique, "Yes."

Loop, "You've made it this far."

Enrique, "I feel like throwing up all the time, I can't control it. My mind is always somewhere else because it rarely wants to be here."

Loop, "Exercise."

Enrique, "I do, or at least I try. I tried running Mile Square Park. I ran a mile and a half before my heart gave out."

Loop, "You just have to stay busy."

Enrique, "I apply to several dozen jobs at a time, hear nothing, try and go jogging, I go with friends and play video games. Read, I try and read. I, it doesn't feel like anything. Rarely does any of it ever feel like enough to truly be busy or responsive, it's just, I don't know."

Loop, "You need to go out."

Enrique, "Out of here."

Loop, "Move out, then."

"Yeah, I know, I've done the math. What's an okay job nowadays? Ten dollars an hour? Forty hours a week times ten is four-hundred, times 52 weeks in a year, that's just over 20,000 dollars a year. An average studio apartment goes for between 800 and 900 dollars a month, plus, say, 100 dollars on utilities, plus 300 dollars on food, 200 dollars or so on gas, plus car insurance another 100, miscellaneous expenses I'm not seeing right now, say, another 100 or 200: toilet paper, internet, ink, entertainment, et cetera. mmmmmm, which seems manageable on paper, but I'm 9,000 dollars in debt, plus another 15 grand in student loans, that's the problem, but I suppose if I take on a roommate, say, a two bedroom apartment would be, say, 1,400, mmm, I haven't even figured out taxes and shit.... plus I forgot to add cell phone payments, minimum credit card payments, minimum student loan payments, mm, hum," E.

"Well, yeah, it's tough, but Paco (husband) and I are making it."

"You're job pays very well. His pays okay."

"We're in debt," says Loop.

"Really, how much?"

"I can't say," Loop.

"Why not? I'm not telling anyone."

"We're barely making it. We have good jobs and we're barely making it. You think you have it hard. I have 3 kids."

"I know, but that's not, look, what bothers me is Mumbles, that's what gets me the most. My mom, she's like babysitting a kid, but it's manageable. Why can't Mumbles live with you?"

"No--"

"See."

"No, I have children, plus Paco wouldn't like it."

"Well, how do you think I feel about living with Mumbles over here?"

"....."

"Aren't there any psych wards around here? Can't we put Mumbles in one of those?"

"No, not really, our parents, it would be up to them, plus it's not free..." Loops says, and continues,

"You know if Robert weren't living at home he'd be living on the streets, and our mom, it would break her heart."

"Her heart's already broken. She cries over anything. She's sad at the drop of a sound. She reminisces about everything and anything, gives me the lyrical guilt trip about things and fragments of time I don't even exist in. Mumbles, I don't even know his role in this family or society or anything. He's like her anchor for nothing, just sadness, a constant reminder of what is and isn't. He's there but not there.... except, I guess, you're right, Mom," Enrique abruptly ends.

"Just remember, our parents really sacrificed and struggled, they went through--"

"I know, fucking christ, I know," says Enrique.

"I'm just saying, it's important to have perspective," says Loop.

"I understand that, mom and dad went through X and Y and they're still going through shit," .....

"I'm not trying to devalue or minimize---" says Loop.

"Yeah, I know. There's a thin line, okay, never mind, there's not even a thin line, it's an ever expanding then retracting shifting, disappearing, reappearing line separating my own experiences from my understanding of them, and somehow placing them on one nonexistent side, making everything nice and clear and putting everything else, Other's views and experiences and judgments, and I have to be careful with words for the sole reason," there's a LOUD banging from the end of the hallway, 40 feet out, heard definitively, "See what I mean? That's him! You hear that SHIT, RIGHT?" The sounds mate and reproduce into many incarnations of themselves. "And what the fuck is he doing in there? Are you fucking kidding me?" says Enrique.

Mumbles in the restroom, "Oh, yes, ahahhahahhahahhahahhahh, ahahhahahhahah, Oh, YES, you, TAKE THAT. TAKE THAT!"

"You hear that?"

"Yes, I hear him," says Loop.

"You're only here 3 times a week visiting. I live with this stupid fuck."

"Well, get ear plugs," says Loop.

"I already have earplugs, I go through a box a month! It's in my fucking budget."

"Tune him out," says Loop.

A LOUD MOAN BURSTS OUT, FOLLOWED BY AN EQUALLY LOUD MOAN.

Mumbles and his friends/?/ his own sounds.

"And our parents? Where are they? They say it's not so bad! He's LOUDER when they're not around," says Enrique.

"Is sound your primary concern?"

"No, it's his being here, his existence," says Enrique.

"He's, he's," says Loop.

"He's what? What is he? Would you call him brother to a stranger? Would you acknowledge this lump of walking shit as brother?"

"....."

"....."

Enrique sees his reflection in the glass door, the day's light fades into night. He looks at the ground, then his shoes. Looks at his pants, then his shirt. He takes another look outside. Pigeons bathe in Darby's water dish. He looks at his sister. She looks away and at her plate of food, still half-eaten. Darby appears in front of the glass door, places her paws on the glass door and gives yawns at the inhabitants inside. Her tail wags in bombastic fashion. She attempts to bark and fails. She looks at him. He turns away from her.

"Our parents will be home soon," Loop says.

"...."

"Talk to them," she says.

## **FEBRUARY 2008**

Morning. 10AM. Robert can be heard in the next room. (Mom) hums an indistinguishable tune in the hallway. She's doing something, perhaps organizing select photos of distant family members. Her humming becomes louder. Mumbles counts from one to ten, rests, then repeats. He's in his

room. (Mom) starts singing an old Spanish medley. Enrique can't figure it out. (Mom) knocks at Enrique's door. A faint, very delicate napping thud of an act. E. remains in bed. (Mom) attempts to make discernible sound again at the door. She waits a few moments. She disappears into the living room. Mumbles stops counting. He's grunting now. A family, a large family, walks in front of the house, they speak loudly, and they stop right in front. E. hears them. He glances, then stops. They're arguing about something unimportant, he thinks. Footsteps make their way in front of E.'s room, they enter the restroom. Robert/Mumbles most likely. E.'s cell vibrates. He checks it for messages. Text Message: 'Join Sen. Obama for his Campaign for Change...' Enrique stops reading. A second Text Message comes in: 'Text 60...' stops reading text. A call comes in. E. answers: "Hello?"

"Yes, Is Sharon?" the voice asks.

"I believe you have the wrong phone number," says E.

"No, I don't think so," says Voice.

E. hangs up.

(Mom) Knocks at the door.

Silence.

Knocks.

Knocks.

[LOUDER]

Knocks.

"Quique," <sup>60</sup>sounds (Mom)

Knocks

"Hellooooooooooooo?"

"Estas ayi Qui-Queeeee?" <sup>61</sup>

POUNDINGS [Bedroom wall, Mumbles]

knocks

POUNDINGS

CELL

SOUNDS

OFF [another call]

sirens, from out front, they pass another family passes by out front, they loiter

in front on the sidewalk, admire the neighbor's orange tree their child wails

mother, 'cayate, ya cayte chingados, pinche trabiesa.....'<sup>62</sup>

child, 'aaaaah noooooo ama, no quiero, es que noooooo'<sup>63</sup>

mother, 'pinche vavosa, cayate, ni te voy a comprar ese juguete ni tus pinches

[indecipherable]'<sup>64</sup>

child, 'ama, ya no te quiero, eres brujaaaaaaaaa!'<sup>65</sup>

<sup>60</sup> shortened form of Enrique

<sup>61</sup> Are you there?

<sup>62</sup> shut up, now shut up, fucking shit, fucking [troublemaker]

<sup>63</sup> ah, no, mom, I don't want to, it's that--

<sup>64</sup> fucking imbecile [in Spanish, word connotes an air or worthlessness], shut up, I'm not going to buy you that toy or your fucking----

<sup>65</sup> Mom, it's that I don't want to, you're a witch!

E. Closes the Window Shut.

Mumbles COUNTS ‘ONEEEE’ ‘TWOOOOOOOOOO’  
‘THREE’  
‘FOUR’  
SLAMS SOMETHING AGAINST THE WALL, (Mom), OBLIVION KNOCKS  
the faint quarrels of  
the family outside bleeds-in: ‘no, nooooo, lloro! le digo a la polecia!’<sup>66</sup>  
‘pinche nina cabrona! cayate el osico!’<sup>67</sup>

E. OPENS DOOR.

To (Mom), ‘Que Quirres?’<sup>68</sup>  
(Mom), ‘Estas ocupado?’<sup>69</sup>  
E., ‘Voy a voluntar ahora.’<sup>70</sup>  
(Mom), ‘Pa quien?’<sup>71</sup>  
E., ‘Obama.’  
(Mom), ‘O-BA-MA.’  
E., ‘Ya me voy, se me esta siendo tarde.’<sup>72</sup>  
(Mom), “Cual hora es? Ya te vas? Ya comites? Cuando regresas? Chubby, a donde vas?”<sup>73</sup>  
E., ‘Aqui downtown, esta cerca las oficinas.’<sup>74</sup>  
(Mom), ‘Li-’  
E. makes his way towards the restroom. The good restroom (larger one) is adjacent to (Mom) and (Dad)’s room, no door, only/merely a curtain. E. closes the curtain and turns on the air.  
(Mom), ‘Li-que, cuanto tiempo vas estar con Obama?’<sup>75</sup>

---

<sup>66</sup> No, no, I’ll cry, I’ll tell the Police.

<sup>67</sup> Stupid [troublemaker], shut your mouth [in Spanish, osico implies horse-like qualities]

<sup>68</sup> What do you want?

<sup>69</sup> Are you busy?

<sup>70</sup> I’m going to volunteer today.

<sup>71</sup> for who?

<sup>72</sup> I’m leaving now, it’s getting late.

<sup>73</sup> What time is it? You’re leaving already? Have you eaten already? What time will you be back? Chubby (nickname), where are you going?

<sup>74</sup> Here Downtown (Santa Ana, CA), the offices are nearby. (note: During 2008 campaign, OBAMA HQ was on Broadway St. in Downtown Santa Ana. About 1 mile from E.’s house).

<sup>75</sup> Enrique, how long are you going to be with Obama?

E., 'Chingados, estoy en el pinche bano, deja me en pas!' says with an assertive irritation, and continues, 'ni puedo cagar en pas!'<sup>76</sup>

(Mom), 'Muchacho malcriado, nomas te pregunto!'<sup>77</sup>

Minutes later... E. flies out of the front door. Slams the door. Briskly makes his way to the car. The front door opens. (Mom) calls out, 'Li-que! Li-que!'

E., 'What?'

(Mom), 'Te llevas algo para comer mas arato? Un platano, una manzana...'<sup>78</sup>

E., 'No, ya se me esta haciendo tarde. Ya me voy.'<sup>79</sup>

(Mom), 'bye, que dios te bedige.'<sup>80</sup>

## DOWNTOWN SANTA ANA

E. parks on the street. Meter Parking. *Estaciona el caro en frente de la oficina. Le echa tres or cuqtro monedas. Camina adentro del Edificio. Adentro hay tres personas: dos mujeres y un humbre. La muchacha bella le habla a Enrique<sup>81</sup>, 'Hi!'*

E., 'Hi,' responde Enrique.

Mujer Bella<sup>82</sup>, 'How can we help you? Are you interested in volunteering?'

*Esta mujer es muy guapa, suave por supuesto. A Enrique ya le esta dando ideas de como entrar la conversacion porque ya se le esta encanbronanon el corazon.<sup>83</sup>*

E., 'Well, I've been following the campaign and I've certainly been thinking about it.'

Mujer Bella, 'Well, we can use all the volunteers we can get.'

E., 'For sure, I speak Spanish if that makes any difference or helps, I mean, I don't know what you're looking for.'

Mujer Bella, 'That definitely helps. We need people to call key districts in Spanish.'

Enrique, 'Cool, I, I mean awesome.' *Enrique esta pensando de masiado, tratando de entrenar una conversacion con chica pero anda muy atarantado, [poreso tiene tantas problemas, pues no*

---

<sup>76</sup> Fucking Shit, I'm in the fucking restroom, leave me alone! [...] I can't even shit in peace!

<sup>77</sup> You ill-bred child, I'm only asking you!

<sup>78</sup> Will you take something to eat later? A banana, an apple.

<sup>79</sup> No, I'm running late. I'm leaving now.

<sup>80</sup> Bye, may God bless you.

<sup>81</sup> He parks the car on the street in front of the office. He puts 3 or 4 coins in the meter. He walks into the building. There are three people inside. 2 women and one man. The Beautiful woman speaks to Enrique.

<sup>82</sup> Beautiful Woman.

<sup>83</sup> She's a very handsome (the adjective is feminine in Spanish with the -a ending) woman, for sure. Ideas are already forming in Enrique's mind as to how to Enter the conversation, for his heart is already feeling swag.

*tantas, hablandole a las chicas, pues, si no es tan menso, si le llega cuando le da su gana y mira que chica anda de vestido bueno y muy sympatica.<sup>84]</sup>*

*M.B., 'how'd you like to get started on some phone calls?'*

*E., 'okay.'*

*M.B., 'okay, so here's a stack of papers, each with dozens of voters that need to be called. There's a script for you to follow and some pre-written answers in case people ask specific questions about the campaign.'*

*Le da los papeles. Enrique mira a chica con unos ojos muy grandes. Ella tiene su 'V-Neck' muy bajo y se le miran las lecheras.<sup>85]</sup>*

2 hours later.

E., 'hey man, I'm in Downtown.'

Thomas, 'oh, cool, man. What are you doing there?'

E., 'I'm volunteering for Obama.'

Thomas, 'Why?'

E., 'Free food, freed drinks.'

Thomas, 'Oh, so, you don't believe in change, man?'

E., 'Things always change.'

Thomas, 'So, you're a believer?'

E., 'I don't believe in shit And I Got nothing else to do.'

Thomas, 'yeah, man, sure, I'm going to volunteer.'

E., 'Cool, man.'

'Nah, just shitting ya!'

'Aha! Fucking Thomas!'

Another familiar number:

E., 'Hey.'

Angie, 'Hello hello,' she says in a cutesy, almost cartoon-like voice.

E. laughs.

Angie, 'Why are you laughing at me?'

E., 'It's the way you say it.'

Angie, 'How do I say it?'

E., 'I don't know.'

Angie, 'mmm.... En-ri-que, what are you doing?'

E., 'I'm making phone calls for Obama.'

Angie, 'ahahaha, you're funny.'

E., 'someone has to, right?'

Angie, 'Well, he's got my vote.'

---

<sup>84</sup> Enrique is over-thinking, trying to entertain a conversation but he's fucking it up already (by not being smooth lyrically, and that's why he has so many problems, well not so many, talking to chicks, well, he's not so stupid, he approaches 'em when he sees their dress saying, 'Talk to me!' and their Beauty.)

<sup>85</sup> She hands him the papers. Enrique looks at her with some ogling eyes. She's wearing a low v-neck and her milk-jugs are clearly visible.



E., 'yeah, well, do you want to come down? I'm Downtown.'

Angie, 'Uh, mmm, I'm going to be pretty busy tonight,'

E., 'That's cool. What about tomorrow?'

Angie, 'I have to check my schedule. I don't know.'

E., 'Oh, well, uhmm, I understand.'

Angie, 'You're so sweet.'

E., 'Well, maybe we can catch/hang out this weekend.'

Angie, 'Can I call you later?'

E., 'okay.'

Phone call ends.

Enrique stands outside the Downtown Office. A random person walks up to him, looks at his Fullerton sweatshirt.

Stranger, 'Hey man, you go to Fullerton?'

E., 'Graduated.'

Stranger, 'Cool, what'd you major in?'

E., 'English.'

Stranger, 'Haven't seen that sweatshirt you have.'

E., 'Yeah, I got it a few years ago.'

Stranger, 'So, is this the Obama Headquarters?'

E., 'Yup, pretty much, man. Feel free to walk inside. The people are pretty nice.'

Stranger, 'I don't know. I don't want to volunteer or anything.'

E., 'That's the way I felt.'

Stranger, 'yeah, but you're here now volunteering, right?'

E., 'Long story, but yes.'

Stranger, 'So, why do you do it?'

E., 'Do you want an honest answer?'

Stranger, 'That would be refreshing.'

E., 'There's one line in one of his speeches where he says, 'We are the Ones We Have Been Waiting For.' I don't normally believe in shit, but I want to believe in that line.'

Stranger, 'And what if he doesn't deliver?'

E., 'That's the Thing. I'm not expecting any Other to Change things, man. I'm just trying to work on myself. It just feels like I'm interning for a great motivational speaker, you know. I'm hoping language will be the game changer.'

Stranger, 'mmm, so words, you're into words.'

E., 'And meaning, things have to have meaning.'

Stranger, 'You have it now, then?'

E., 'I, I don't know. I don't think so. There's always an inherent emptiness, which always makes any meaning more apparent. And whatever I'm looking for it's not going to come from this campaign.'

Stranger, 'So, Why are you here?'

E., 'That's a good question. I don't know.'

Stranger, 'You're pretty honest for a campaign volunteer.'

E., 'Is honesty so strange?'

Strange, 'Yes.'

'Perhaps I'm hoping to find like minded people.'

'Yeah? And then what?'

‘I don’t know.’

## TWO DAYS LATER

Cell Phone Call.

E., ‘Angie.’

Angie, ‘Oh, hey, how’s it going?’

E., ‘Pretty well, hey, there’s going to be this party in a few days, I was wondering-’

Angie, ‘It’s my friend’s birthday in a few days! That’s so cool.’

E., ‘Wait, what?’

Angie, ‘what?’

E., ‘I was wondering if you’d want to go?’

Angie, ‘Sorry hun, my friends want to celebrate for a few days. It’s a girl thing.’

E., ‘Um, Okay.’

10 seconds of silence.

E., ‘Hello, Angie? Are you still there?’

Angie, ‘Yeah, hun.’

E., ‘Do you want to hang out?’

Angie, ‘How do you mean, hun?’

E., ‘I mean, do you want to hang out with me? Am I wasting my time?’

Angie, ‘You’re so silly.’

E., ‘I mean, I call you every once in a while and you seem nice and it seems like you like me, but when I ask you to hang out you always seem to change the subject or stall, that’s what I’m saying.’

Angie, ‘Oh, you’re so sweet.’

E., ‘I don’t believe that’s necessarily a good adjective for a guy to hear.’

Angie, ‘Always the poet.’

E., ‘.....’

Angie, ‘I still have the poem you wrote me.’

E., ‘Which One?’

‘Oh, silly, the one you wrote me that One time we went to Richard’s house.’

‘Oh, that one, that’s a nice one.’

Angie, ‘I keep it in my car, right in the glove compartment.’

E., ‘It’s nice to know you *like* the poem.’

Angie, ‘You’re funny.’

E., ‘Angie, where do we stand, where--’

Angie, ‘Silly Billy!’

E., ‘What?’

Angie, ‘We’re friends.’

E., ‘um, Angie, we’ve made out.’

Angie, ‘Only a few times.’

E., ‘You make out with all your friends?’

Angie, ‘Silly, I don’t make out with just anyone.’

E., ‘Do you want me to stop calling you?’

Angie, ‘I don’t mind if you call me.’

E., 'That's not what I asked.'

Angie, 'Hun, I'm getting another call. Can I call you back later?'

E., 'Are you serious?'

End Phone Call

## 2003

E. writes. **GRAY NOTEBOOK:**

'Down the Street'

Down the street libertarians meet &  
the paper is still for sale

Down the Street computers blink  
and the women [laugh] fat and homely

All for naught and haughty nuts  
think business is electronic mail

Where and where tokens [ ] flat  
and the children still read braille

the men are fat and beds stink mad  
with the business of the sale

all for naught and stomach knots  
does the squire scream for payment

all down the street where libertarians  
meet the paper is still for sale.

Writing at the table. Stops. Thomas stops by. 7 PM, almost.

Thomas, 'Hey man, what are you up to?'

E., 'Living a cliché, man.'

Thomas laughs.

Thomas, 'What the fuck, man.'

E., 'Nah, man, just talking massive shit.'

Thomas, 'On what?'

E., 'The Register.'

Thomas, 'Hahahha.'

E., 'Fucking pieces of shit.'

Thomas, 'For sure, man.'

E., 'World Opinion don't matter for shit anymore.'

Thomas, 'Rich, White people love killing Arabs.'

E., 'It's all for freedom, right? *Their* freedom to feel safe from sand niggers, Mexicans, and the rest. Fuck 'em. Slavery to Jim Crow to Japanese Internment Camps to racist cops to the PATRIOT Act to preemptive War absurdist shit.'

Thomas, 'To be radically reductive and to use the master terminology, if not US, then THEM, right?'

E., 'Yeah, whatever the fuck that means.'

Thomas, 'If we were in power, what then? Wouldn't we make some of these horrible decisions as well and hide behind our own fears and prejudices.'

E., 'Yes, we would, if we were heartless, thoughtless sacks of shit.'

Thomas, 'And what of radical change.'

E., 'The problem is radical change is brought upon by radical circumstances, and what is considered radical will be mainstream or thought of as common sense in following generations, but not now, not ever now, that's the problem. The circular fear that runs rampant controls the decisions of these cats we're talking massive shit on. And even that explanation, like I believe you're about to say, is, yes, radically reductive, and what is considered radically reductive right now perhaps will be like, 'yeah, no shit, Sherlock,' type-of-the-norm shit stains on history's bedroom wall. And I would imagine those in power feel they owe something to the very power they ascended from and they don't want to fuck with the methodologies and ideology of how people *like* them rise to the unimaginable power reached, not if by chance but by decision of those that preceded them.'

Thomas, 'Anyway, so are you down for the meeting tonight?'

E., 'Nah, man, I don't want to go to some socialist meeting in L.A. and shit, then what about if I run for office someday and motherfuckers are like, 'Avalos was a socialist at age 20, AND he smoked weed.'

Thomas, 'Fuck that, don't live life by your future thoughts. Fuck 'em. Just be. It's going to be tight. We're meeting at that fish taco place again.'

E., 'Well, they do have some sick fish tacos, man.'

Thomas, 'well?'

E., 'I don't know, man, reading Marx, Chomsky, Zinn, et al, I feel like we're wasting, well, not wasting, but not appropriating Time correctly. I mean, we should be trying to fuck as many chicks as humanly possible right now. Not reading *Understanding Power* and *Manufacturing Consent* and *A People's History*.'

Thomas, 'Yeah? You think so? And what happens to those people, man? What of those cats just banging away right now, they'll get their chick preggers like every fucking Mexican and end up working a factory job and shit.'

E., 'Talkin' shit 'cuz you're Salvadoran, modafucka!'

Both laugh.

Thomas, 'Man, you know what I mean and shit.'

E., 'Alright, let's go!'

## ON THE ROAD: DESTINATION: DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES.

'Hey, look, man! Is that \_\_\_\_ ? Oh, no, it's just a fucking billboard!' says Thomas.

'Modafucka,' says Enrique.  
 'You over *her* yet?'  
 'Yeah, man.'  
 'What was it about her?'  
 'Shit, I don't know, man.'  
 'Ha.'  
 '\_\_\_ ran into her last week.'  
 'That's nice.'  
 'So whatever happened? You two don't even talk anymore?'  
 'I was a kid, well, not a kid. I was just stupid. I told her I loved her. Major fucking mistake.'  
 'Motherfucker! AHHAHAHHAH' bursts Thomas.  
 'We were fairly close. I dug her. I thought she dug me. We went places together.'  
 'Yeah, and you messed it up,' says Thomas with a condemning yet understanding air.  
 'I know.'  
 'So, what'd you do? Write her a poem?'  
 'No, I made her a mix CD.'  
 Both Laugh.  
 'You're fucking crazy, man.'

### GREY NOTEBOOK: Labeled 2003:

scores of whores and drunk monkeys  
 can \_\_\_\_\_ and will challenge the  
 maniacal renderings found upon  
 the many star-struck ignoramuses.  
 where as space is key  
 and the alligators pee--  
 the torrent of dormant rage  
 rests in perpetuity,  
 then when a variety of token  
 irrational men lay scorn on  
 the mounds of breasts  
 can the chair sink free  
 and set flames  
 and burn en perpetuity.

'Citizen Jesus'

Back on, [scratched out notes] the old hamster  
 votes Jesus in lieu of congruency,  
 for the persons of the mediums  
 will have eliminated a new pedigree

The old couple soon replaced  
 all but a trace of his stupidity  
 for and all the taste of anarchy  
 Anger as the theme---  
 and corner of said scheme---  
 does back the old hamster whom  
 votes Jesus in lieu [of democracy]<sup>86</sup>.

[[one subject notebook. grey. 70 pages. 52 pages blank]  
 'Contains 50% Recycled Paper of Which 20% is Post-Consumer Wasted']]

## April 2007

Enrique, friends Miguel and Bola, stand outside a movie theater in Orange. Enrique checks his phone for messages. There are none. He sits down on steps in the center of the square. He looks around and takes measure of the sparse crowd of people. A dreary Sunday afternoon dreams itself to sleep. Nausea overwhelms him. He tries to heave, does so, attempts to vomit bile yet nothings comes out. He attempts to vomit more violently. A whole-body type of jerking movement trying to excrete that which is waiting to exit, or perhaps reluctant to leave.

"What the fuck did you eat?" asks Miguel.

"Potato sandwich," replies Enrique.

"You're sick, man," says Bola.

Enrique takes a drink of water, for he nearly always has a water bottle on his person. He tries not to think about the nausea somehow, thinking perhaps of times he hadn't felt so ill.

"I wasn't this sick this morning," says Enrique.

A few persons walk-by and look-on.

"I'm okay, I think," says Enrique.

Enrique checks his phone for messages. There are none.

"Want me to take you home?" asks Miguel.

"No, I'm alright. I got some Pepto pills," says Enrique.

"Shit, you better not be throwing up during the movie," says Bola.

"I won't be."

Enrique takes another swig of water and pops several Pepto pills.

His phone chimes.

TEXT: 'hey, im throwin a small party if u want to come down'

E. looks on in wonderment.

"What, you get a text?" asks Bola.

"Yeah, some chick."

"Is she hot?"

"Jesus fucking Christ, Yes, she's hot," says E.

"What'd she say?" Miguel.

---

<sup>86</sup> originally 'congruency'

“She’s throwing some party down in Irvine,” says Enrique.  
 “When?” Bola and Miguel ask in Unison.  
 “Right the Fuck Now,” says Enrique.  
 “What, you want me to take you home?”  
 “Yeah, that would be great.”  
 “You’re throwing up and shit.”  
 “I’ll be fine. I took some pills.”

### ON THE FREEWAY:

‘So, how’d you meet her?’  
 ‘Online.’  
 ‘She goes to school?’  
 ‘Yeah, we’ve hung out on campus.’  
 ‘How’s she look?’  
 ‘She’s Persian.’  
 ‘Fuck.’  
 ‘Yeah, exactly, she’s hot as fuck.’

Dropped off in Santa Ana, Enrique changes clothes and heads to Irvine.

### IRVINE:

Enrique parks in front of the gated housing complex. He vomits in the bush. ON his knees, a more violent excretion. Someone walks by. He gets up. Tries to open the door but it’s closed. Calls \_\_\_\_\_.

‘Hey \_\_\_\_\_, it’s Enrique, I’m at the gate.’

‘Awesome! I’ll be there in a second to open it!’ says \_\_\_\_\_.

Enrique combs his hair with his hands, makes sure there’s no vomit first, then checks his clothes for stains, perhaps something he should have done earlier. He checks his phone for the time. He sets the phone on silent. Taps his foot. Stops. Looks around. The stale, soulless air of Irvine’s master-planned life-print corporate shallowness irks him. “These soulless motherfuckers,” says Enrique out loud. Enrique busts out a small notebook from his pocket and writes, ‘Write Soul, Fuck Irvine.’

\_\_\_\_\_ makes her way towards the gate. Her rump shifting in the rhythmic fuck patterns of an animal ready to bang wildly.

‘Oh, HI Enrique!!!’ says \_\_\_\_\_

‘Hi, it’s nice to be here,’ says Enrique unsurely.

\_\_\_\_\_ hugs him. Her breasts press against his chest, her soft, warm mammaries cattle-crushing his expectations of warmth.

‘How are You?’ she asks, still tit crushing him.

‘Wonderful. Just, well, never better, really, awesome, just wow, you know, awesome,’ E. blathers.

‘I’m sooooo glad to hear that, Enrique!’ she says, and then kisses E. on the cheek, a good wet two-lip, dick-encouraging flesh suck. ‘Folloooooow me to daaaaa Party!’ she says.

E untucks his shirt, concealing his partial erection.

\_\_\_\_\_’s ass shakes in an enticing ‘come and get it, sucker’ motion, her yellow dress ends just bellow her brown meat pillows.

E. takes out a mini-liquor bottle and takes a swig.

\_\_\_\_\_ leads E. to a pool, there are tables on its right flank, a barbecue, restrooms, and 14 or so people. E. attempts to think his chubby, half-awaken dick away.

\_\_\_\_\_ introduces E. to Everyone, ‘Hey, Enrique, I want you to meet \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.’

‘It’s nice to meet you all,’ E. says as he instantly forgets all their names.

\_\_\_\_\_ sits Enrique down at an empty table near the corner away from the rest, she stands and wraps her arms around him, resting her breasts on the back of his head. ‘mmmmmmmm,’ she says in a kind of half-friendly, half-mating ecstasy.

‘So, what’d you get me for my birthday?’ \_\_\_\_\_ asks.

E.’s dick goes flat.

‘What?’ E. asks.

‘It’s my birthday, didn’t I tell you?’

‘Oh, right.’

‘That’s okay if you didn’t get me anything, as long as you recite me a poem!’

‘Poems are hard to come by these days,’ E. says.

‘You’re so silly, Enrique!’ \_\_\_\_\_ says.

\_\_\_\_\_ wraps her arms even tighter, her breasts tickle E.’s ears.

‘Uh, I have several poems memorized by heart,’ says E.

‘Yes, Recite ONE of THOSE!’ \_\_\_\_\_ spits enthusiastically.

\_\_\_\_\_ sits down right next to E., her brown eyes glazing, her breasts beautifully displayed with the low neck line, \_\_\_\_\_ smiles with her eyes, perhaps raising expectations. E. looks into \_\_\_\_\_’s eyes, then her lips, back to her eyes, then lips, then to her breasts.

‘Okay,’ says E.

\_\_\_\_\_ kisses E. on the cheek, E. breathes in the faint trace of perfume and body wash, something strawberries.

‘I’m ready,’ she says.

‘Just give me a second,’ E. says.

E. takes out his mini notebook, thumbs through it, finds no trace of former poems, just inklings of new thoughts half-emerged, waiting, begging to breathe life of their own. E. emptily mouses the first few lines in his mind, thinks of the logical structures afforded, adjusts his shirt, takes another look at \_\_\_\_\_, fights the urge just to kiss her right then and there, and finally, seemingly, decides on a course of action.

‘I’m waiting,’ \_\_\_\_\_ says.

‘okay here goes:

I trust her like fire to burn  
memories torn from ice



and spill on the history of what remains.  
 Memories like trains derail  
 and Crown the Heart King.  
 I am her poet.  
 God embraces her and renames her,  
 Loves her and protects her,  
 frees her and loves her more.  
 I am turned observer of nothing en search  
 for debris that was never there,  
 I write poetry on earth, it is my report  
 for us to read and believe  
     when once an angel roamed free.  
 I grow older with every breath,  
 drums beat my heart,  
 I am forever in time's waiting room,  
 waiting to see her.  
 Clouds form and trains depart,  
 I lose my hearing, shut my eyes,  
 writing on floors.  
 I cringe for every 'I' I write and stab myself.  
 Blood runs through me rushing to exit.  
 Through searing pain, I regain hearing.  
 She finally appears, emerging from the depths of me  
 and transforms,  
 I crawl towards her statue and breathe  
 into nothing.  
 My ears pop, for I have reached her height and realize  
 My heart has turned to Stone.<sup>87</sup>

\_\_\_\_\_ hugs E.  
 E. squeezes her even tighter.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ breathes down E.s neck, warm scented nothings spring into his ear and evolve into faint  
 murmurings. E. licks \_\_\_\_\_'s face and kisses her neck, then sucks on her throat and makes his  
 way towards her cheek and lips, while \_\_\_\_\_ almost seems to purr, which forces E. to restrain  
 himself. \_\_\_\_\_ lifts her leg and places it on top of E.s thigh. 'I want to suck your cock,' whispers  
 \_\_\_\_\_ to E. She grabs his cock over his jeans and gives it a regent tug. 'Let's get the fuck out of  
 here already,' E. tells \_\_\_\_\_, 'I'm going to fuck you retarded, you'll be takin' the short bus to  
 school and shit,' E. continues. \_\_\_\_\_ laughs. \_\_\_\_\_ stops. 'Now, recite me another poem! A  
 good One!'  
     'Jesus,' says E.  
     'Anything at all, yet awesome,' says \_\_\_\_\_.  
     'No pressure, right?' says E.  
     'Okay, here goes:

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<sup>87</sup> from Yellow Notebook, page 1-2. Poem: 'Hearts to Stone'

Waves of air extend upon light fantastic majesty and grace  
 the heart,  
 perhaps in death I'll ride the tide and take an angel as a bride,  
 an angel sublime to the core, sandy beaches and the shore,  
 where Roman yards are forums for words to congregate and  
 assimilate thought patterns,  
 swerving in and out of roads of consciousness,  
 through yellow-brick roads of myrrh,  
 an oncoming car approaches us,  
 the steering wheel breaks, blood runs,  
 and the Universe ends,  
 Clouds form over lighthouses and direct angels where to sleep,  
 Armies march to the wandering echo of God's last breath,  
 In Utero, unborn children hatch their master plan for peace,  
 Women coddle their children and  
 Men unearth memories of their youth.  
 Left to dream, the world ends,  
 She loves as if only she could Love,  
 Framing memories as stones,  
 Regurgitating Dreams,  
 a Dreamscape of Prose,  
 and End to a Rose.'<sup>88</sup>

\_\_\_\_\_ sits on E.'s lap, facing him. She straddles his junk. 'Mmmmmmmmm, I'm going to fuck you sooo goooooooooooooood.'  
 'Let's get the fuck out of here already,' says E.  
 'On it, for sure,' says \_\_\_\_\_.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ stands. E. tries to readjust his junk, grabs a bag of chips to help conceal the unavoidable.  
 'Follow me,' she says.  
 They make their way slowly, perhaps one can even say casually.  
 'Hey, \_\_\_\_\_, where are you going?' asks some drunk partygoer.  
 'Oh, Hi \_\_\_\_\_,' says \_\_\_\_\_ to her drunk friend, 'I was just going to walk to my place real quick and grab some more dip.'  
 'Oh, no! Stay here, birthday girl! You're crazy! You can't leave your own party, daaaaaz craaaaaazy, gurl!' says the obnoxiously bold cock-blocking friend of \_\_\_\_\_.  
 Her friend eyes E. questioningly.  
 'Who's this?' she asks.  
 'This is Enrique.'  
 'I haven't seen him before,' says her friend.

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<sup>88</sup> From Yellow Notebook, revised version of Poem 'Dreamscape' pages 3-4; pages 38-39 have closer version of this version. Also, 'Dreamscape' seems to be fragments pulled together from smaller poems. I'm writing page 39\*\* of M.A. project while reading page 39 of Yellow Notebook, wishing I had dated the poem and written more notes on the margins, if any. \*\*First Draft the Page was 36. Page numbers have changed with revisions.

'What do you ever really see?' interrupts E.  
 'Smart ass!' she yelps, 'Oh, look at your curly hairrrr! Iz sooo crazy!'  
 'Thanks,' says E.  
 'Have some shots with meeeee!' insists her friend.  
 'um, okay, sounds fuuuuuun!' answers \_\_\_\_\_.  
 Her friend, what's her face, grabs a bottle of tequila and pours everyone a shot.  
 'Now on 3 everyone DRIIIINK!'  
 '....'  
 'OOOONE, TWOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO, THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!'  
 All drink.  
 'Now another one!' says her friend.  
 'We really have to go get that extra dip,' protests E.  
 'FuCK YO EXTRA DIP, NIGGA! AND DRINK, BITCH!' says the lit-up cunt.  
 More arrive at the scene.  
 Unidentified, 'heeeey, get yo drink on!'  
 2nd Unidentified, 'woooooooooooooooooo!'  
 Both Unidentified in unison, '\_\_\_\_\_, we need to celebrate yo birthday, gurl!'  
 \_\_\_\_\_, 'all of you are sooooo sweet!'  
 Everyone takes another shot, including E. and \_\_\_\_\_.  
 \_\_\_\_\_, 'I need to get more guacamole.'  
 She grabs E.'s hand and they begin to depart.  
 'Hey, wait, who's that?' asks unidentified.  
 'Where you two going?' asks second and third unidentified in unison.  
 \_\_\_\_\_, 'Oh, this is Enriqueeeee! He's funny.'  
 'I'm barely functional,' chimes in E.  
 'And he's a poet!' completes \_\_\_\_\_ with an Extra Loudness.  
 A few more unidentified(s) walk into the fray. Number incomplete.  
 Someone, 'Recite a poem, poeeeeeeeeee-it!'  
 'I'm not feeling well,' says E.  
 'Horse shit! Say a mothafuckin' poem!' someone.  
 Second someone, 'stop stalling negro!'  
 'What?' E., confused.  
 (Several) Someone(s) and Unidentified(s), 'PO-EM, PO-EM!'  
 \_\_\_\_\_ embraces E., breasts to chest, eyes looking in.  
 She squeezes E.  
 'Uh, um, uh, um, hmm,' E.  
 'Alright, give me another shot,' says E.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ serves E. another shot.

'Well, uh, purr, purr, here's something I've been not known to be working on, more elastics, you know, the prices of cities trying to tune your forks, aye, one page or two from my notebook, hmm, here goes:

Blades of Grass Sing!  
 Walt Whitman boards a Train!  
 A supermarket in California denies Ginsberg Admittance.

I call Sylvia Plath MySpace because She just wants to be Friends.  
 Thomas Pynchon has facial reconstructive surgery  
 every four years.  
 Salinger does an interview  
 and motherfuckers go apeshit.  
 Let's drive Ourselves Mad.  
 Let's pave the way.  
 My heart Wrote a Book,  
 It's Never Been Read.  
 I've yet to issue a copy to anyone.  
 Ginsberg howls at the moon.  
 Kerouac shouts at gridlock traffic.  
 An OLD LADY buys cats, but she can't buy LOVE.  
 Vonnegut gives her his pen.  
 I am a minor player in their universe.  
 I write, remember, & recite for  
 vibrations one feels when the perfect  
 word hits the perfect moment.  
 Let's breathe forever & enlighten our Future....  
 Tree frogs flog birds with memory sticks,  
 penguins discredit alarmist Polar Bears,  
 and Forgive past Remembrances &  
 Heartfelt Chirps.  
 Flowers bloom. Kurt Cobain  
 likes to shoot his gun.  
 Christ turns his back.  
 40 sheep are on security detail.  
 Americans Don't Read.<sup>89</sup>

'Who the fuck is Walt Whitman?!' asks UnIdentified.

'Gisberg??' asks second UnIdentified.

'I likes Nirvanaaaaaa!' says third.

'Dat waaaaas purrrty, was that one foor \_\_\_\_\_? oeeeiini, are you two going out?  
 ahahahhahah,' says/slurs/laughs/unIdentified.

\_\_\_\_\_ smooches E. on the cheek.

E. whispers into \_\_\_\_\_'s ear, 'Can we go fuck now?'

'Okaaaaaay, EveryONE, I will be back SHORTLY! THIS PAAAAAAARTY NEEDS  
 MORE GUACAMOLE AND MORE SHOTS!' states \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ grabs E. by the arm and hauls him away. She breaks through and leads. Finally  
 outside of earshot from the crowd and past any reasonable distance for anyone to make an  
 attempt to call out to them, E. and \_\_\_\_\_ begin to walk a regular, perhaps even slower pace,  
 hand in hand, then arm in arm, then embrace. He grabs her ass, more specifically her right meat  
 sack.

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<sup>89</sup> 'Poet Forum' from Yellow Notebook, pages 55-56.

'I live on the second floor,' \_\_\_\_\_ says for some reason.

'I don't mind the climb,' says E.

She leads him up, opens the door. A nice one-bedroom place, seemingly.

\_\_\_\_\_ slams the door shut.

'Are you comfortable?' asks \_\_\_\_\_.

'Yes,' says E.

'Do you want anything to drink?'

'No.'

'Are you sure?'

'Yes, I'm sure.'

'There's more than beer. I have wine.'

'That's okay, I'm good.'

'Alright, then, sit down already,' says \_\_\_\_\_ as she makes herself busy in the kitchen.

E[.] sits down in the center of the sofa, crosses his legs, leans back, then decides to turn his phone off real quick. E. takes a quick look at \_\_\_\_\_ in the kitchen. She's making herself a drink. \_\_\_\_\_ makes her way into the living room, sits down next to E., their thighs touching, and hands him a drink.

'I said I was good,' says E.

'I know, have another one, though, don't be a pussy,' says \_\_\_\_\_, eyes glinting.

'Well, you are what you eat,' replies E.

\_\_\_\_\_ bursts laughing.

'You're a funny guy, are you going to funny fuck me?'

E laughs.

'No, I'm going to,'

\_\_\_\_\_ starts to rub E's inner thigh, licks, then bites his ear, with an, 'mmmmhmmmmhm' and off sounding 'O-h', and places her thigh now over E's thigh, E places a hand on her breast, starts unbuttoning kissing her chest and neck licking sucking kiss fucking her face more like ripping her yellow dress apart now biting harder on her neck trying to unfasten her bra trying to pick her and sit her position her on his lap she does the positioning now and her yellow dress thing of an it object falls away onto the ground as they angle for position and both fall towards the ground, an impact quite enjoyable. E tries to unfasten the bra still and decides, frustrated, just to push the cup over the breast and starts sucking on one of her nipples, a brown erect nipple flowering with life. 'No, that's too hard,' she says, 'you're sucking too hard' she says again as E starts rubbing her clitoris over her underwear and then presses underneath them and hits the lyrical machinery more with an 'oooooooo' and 'aaaaaaaaaaaa' through the vowels as she cums sounds oozing through the plate glass of her past complaint. E tears away the underwear and inserts two fingers en search for the lyrical G spot, say two inches in on the upper wall and feels the patchy mother rug of pleasure as the chamber starts salivating with more juices. E starts to mouth her clitoris in gentle stress strokes swaying left to right as he continues feeling her magic carpet flesh, \_\_\_\_\_, 'yes, OH GOD,' \_\_\_\_\_ starts shouting, which E thinks peculiar because she had previously admitted to being an atheist, too, faster and with more pressure both acts continue uninterrupted, AND E takes a fresh look at \_\_\_\_\_'s face and sees her in some sort of dream state, eyes closed non-thinking just mouth more than agape with little coos and moans splintering silence and he can feel her flesh's walls tightening around his fingers, and thinks, 'perhaps, she's going to blow right about now, and it's probably a good idea to stick my dick inside her now.' E rips her bra off and massages her tits for a lil while as he thinks about wearing

a rubber or not. 'I'mhmm reaaaady,' She Moans as she spreads her legs just a bit FURTHER APART, 'mmmmahmaaaaaooooooooOOOOOO.' 'Are you ready?' E asks, 'YES' replies \_\_\_\_\_.

KNOCK @ the DOOR [LOUDER KNOCK]

'what was that?' asks \_\_\_\_\_.

'FUCK!'

KNOCKS EN SUCCESSION

'\_\_\_\_\_? You in There?'

'What was that?' asks \_\_\_\_\_.

'Loud ass motherfuckin' neighbors,' says E, 'Don't Worry About It.'

'No, I think that was someone.'

LOUDER KNOCKS

\_\_\_\_\_ lies on the floor naked, her legs slightly spread, her snatch visibly shaken.

E licks \_\_\_\_\_'s clit.

'Do you think we should answer that?'

'Answer what? You're hearing shit.'

'No, I'm not, Oooooohmmmm.'

'Just shut the fuck up and enjoy the dick.'

'ooooohmmmmmoohhh, are you, you going to use a condom?' asks \_\_\_\_\_.

'Condoms are for faggots,' says E.

E shoves his dick inside \_\_\_\_\_'s snatch.

'OH MY GOD,' \_\_\_\_\_.

BALLS DEEP INSIDE HER.

The old in and out, slower, even slower then, faster, trying to rotate the cock inside her,

E bites her nipples, then her neck.

KNOCKS NOW MORE LIKE POUNDING @ the door.

\_\_\_\_\_ seems, seems en want to pronounce something.

E sticks his finger in her mouth.

'Therrrrre's someon deeerrrr' \_\_\_\_\_ says.

'fuck them,' answers E.

'nooo, what if it's someone,' \_\_\_\_\_.

'\_\_\_\_\_! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!' sounds the VOICE from OUTSIDE.

'They'll leave eventually,' says E.

'mmmhoooooo' moans \_\_\_\_\_ without complaint.

\_\_\_\_\_ 's breasts sway like fleshy mountains, faster even, E decides he needs to cum and does so right INSIDE HER,

E stands, clothes himself and walks towards the door.

'What are you doing?' \_\_\_\_\_ asks.

\_\_\_\_\_ quickly slips into her yellow dress, sans bra.

E opens the front door.

'No one's There, see,' E says.

\_\_\_\_\_ wraps her arms around E,

AND they KISS.

## JUNE 4, 2010.

E and Dan L. go see Slavoj Zizek at UCI.

Dan L., 'Why the fuck are we going to this shit?'

E., 'Zizek's philosophy's rock star right now, mang.'

Dan L., 'So what?'

E., 'Shit, man, just listen to him talk and shit.'

Zizek walks into the fucking building, swarmed by a handful of peeps.

Hundreds wait patiently in their seats to hear the mother fuck((e)r)<sup>90</sup> speak.

E. takes out his cell.

Dan L., 'what are you doing?'

E., 'I'm going to Facebook this shit.'

Dan L., 'Aren't you going to pay attention to this shit?'

E., 'I can do two things at once and shit.'<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Aesthetic Choice.

<sup>91</sup> Zizek often talks about SHIT. That ideology is everywhere, including the way toilets are designed. Though Zizek doesn't go over his theory on feces in this particular lecture, I thought it appropriate to use the word Shit often in the Dan/Enrique dialogue; also, the word shit often comes up in natural conversation anyway.



@ UCI<sup>92</sup>, waiting for Zizek/ Zizek has entered da modafuckin building: / “There are films so stupid we deserve to write on them without seeing em”-- zizek/ “Ideology as non ideology, forget da diffe? We r all human?” / “This is ideology, I don't trust poets, behind every ethnic cleansing ders a poet”-- zizek/ “Invisible underground work of a mole, the poet readying for war, changing da spiritual foundation, our civility is a fragile surface, no, we should see death”./ “Dance of spectral observation, thoughts without a thinker, an impassive observer, sticking a knife in you, and then yr dead, that is ideology w/o a subject”-- zizek/ “What are the lessons of these catastrophes, failure of this treatment, freud looks deeply into her mouth, more or less real, horror passes into comedy, the book of job, things r screwed 4 job, proper order, exact parallel, The zero level of ideology, the suffering has to be accepted, then Job asks God, why did this happen, god enumerates, u think yr in trouble, the universe is in trouble, dat.s all nonsense, what hegel said.” / “The god beyond himself, the big other, lacan, god dat functions a priori, pulling da strings, evil contributes to global harmony, dis dies on da cross, these r stains of our

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<sup>92</sup> The transcription comes directly from my FACEBOOK note on Zizek (with minimal Edits); that is, the collection of dozens and dozens of status updates as fragments collected and made into a Note on FACEBOOK.



global view.”/ “The refusal of this withdrawal, der.s no big other, Through his death, God gives us freedom.” -- Zizek “From a proper cosmic distance, totally insignificant event, the way, the ultimate vanity of our existence, mystical experience, egalitarian negativity, you have a big Other that legitimizes you???” “The real and the symbolic, the real goes on,”--Slavoj Zizek drinks diet Pepsi, relays anecdote from source, “It seems sen. Kennedy.s position on off shore drilling has recently changed. (20 yrs ago, banged chick on a boat off da coast of lousiana)”/ “Impotent observer, engage in frantic activity, pulling da strings of catastrophe, we like feeling guilty, it makes us feel good, we r all threatened, start to believe it, rationally, we r not ready to Fetishness: the process dat will lead to my ruin, even if ultimately meaninglessness, nature is chaos, cruel whims, der is no mother nature, we should abandon bullshit” -- Zizek “I am not blaming the Congo. It is integrated into the west, i the ultimate nightmare, we do nothing, traumatic sense of catastrophe, it.s not over, permanent ejaculation, Enigmatic cartography, limit value, I know clearly what I don't know, the complete other, known unknowns, unknown unknown, unknown know, false knowledge, Ideological presuppositions, the limit of direct subjective experience, like an animal being embedded, not knowing the world, Freedom of Choice: great, but to have actual freedom, functions with complex network, behind it, the last thing I want is freedom of choice so I can actually practice freedom of choice, rely on a basic safety net, Singular universality, engaged in debate w/ other single universalities, dislocated, open up space, direct universal link, limitations of Kant, on the edge, can.t find identity.”/ “haiti revo beat french rev, really become uniFrench soldiers heard some singing, slaves singing, broke down, french lost, a paragraph of hatian constitution, regardless of their skin, they are black.”/ “Public use of reason, there we have the possibility to struggle for ourselves, crisis, u r not alone, I respect dem, democracy w/o public use of reason is meaninglessness, capitalism should be emptied of its meaning Capitalism with Asian values.” / “reform of education, danger to public use of reason, Be aware how crucial your fight is here, the attack on universities is the first step moving to the post-democratic society, a much more perverse thing,” / “groucho marx in power, Brazil, u r not alone Fuck them, in a deeper sense, the space outside conglomeration, universality embedded in outcasts, no casts without outcast, ghandi is a nice, kind fascist, keeping casts, No abstract, let's open up the space for the outcasts, the very space, enemy of democracy is corporatism, the idea of dem, egalitarian not in corporate structure,”/ “We are guilty for everything, too stupid to really screw things up, lead the others into the isle, we have a monopoly on evil, we are slowly abandoning the authentic, Politically it is getting more particular, global cap, clash of civilizations, don't expect concrete advice, just be aware, All those problems, public use of reason is needed, Do we really know what is going on? I don't.”/ fragmentation of Zizek, “part of the part, points of universality, the outcast, I am no naive kantian dream,” says Zizek, “the one that is screwed up is the one asking 4 universality. Habermas still has the naive notion of universality, no, we share the same struggle,”/ “The system has to break its own rules, Has no world of its own, it is above that, this nameless universality can reproduce itself, outlaw universal, the first universal language without a word, global, but for structural reasons cannot develop world,”/ QUESTION from AUDIENCE: ‘How do u live with yourself?’ Zizek RE: “I hate myself, I haven’t seen any of dat bullshit, I don't live with myself, I'm not sure I exist, all other things are disgusting details I hate self expression, I hate myself, when I look deep within myself, I just see bullshit, I.m a robot set to do cultural theory.” --- Zizek, is da modafuckin man. “Every cow in Europe gets 500 Euros a year, it.s not even market competition, it.s fuckin bullshit,”/ “Knowledge is communist in nature.”

“Dats. The name of a record I will never make, or at least one I will make in theory, quit posting this shit, u hijacked my facebook homepage.”

-- Dan L. On Me Posting His Comment About Zizek's last remark on Facebook.



## SEPTEMBER 2009

Class Ends. After-Class Discussion.

‘There’s a protest at the library tonight,’ student.

‘So if anyone wants to join, feel free,’ second student.

‘Wait, what is this for?’ third student.

‘We’re protesting reduced library hours, hikes in student fees, and furlough days,’ student.

‘This is all going down. We’re going to take over the library,’ second student.

‘And then what?’ Fourth student.

‘And then nothing,’ student.

‘This is more about sending a message that we, as students, are not going to sit passively while the state slashes higher education,’ second student.

‘So, you’re just going to sit-in at the library until....’ Fifth student.

‘Until we’re physically removed,’ student.

‘Protests are occurring all over the state. We’re not the only ones,’ second student.

‘Fuck it, I’m in,’ says Enrique.

A handful of students walk towards the library. Small-talk somewhat serious, yet the general feeling strikes an upbeat rhetoric.

Students arrive at the library, from outside they can view the commotion inside. Roughly 40 students sit idly in the library’s center right near the information desk. Few students, not so idle, chant an indecipherable slogan.

Enrique and three of his classmates enter the center. One of the students sees a familiar face and lights a conversation. Many students, regardless of whether they’re sitting or standing, look around casually, view their phones, some read. A few minutes roll by. Enrique checks the time on his phone, places the phone back in his front jacket pocket. He looks around for a familiar face; that is, someone he feels comfortable talking to. Enrique takes out his phone again and checks for messages: there are none. Enrique decides to speak to someone, anyone.

‘So, how long have you been here?’ he asks the hipster looking girl sitting Indian style.

‘Oh, I’ve been here for about an hour,’ she answers without looking at him.

‘Oh, so how long do you think this will last?’ Enrique asks her.

‘I don’t know,’ she says, without looking at him again.

Enrique walks a few steps beyond.

‘Excuse me, do you know if there’s any organizational structure to what’s going on?’ asks Enrique.

‘What?’ responds a fro-e haired girl.

‘What groups organized this?’

‘Oh, I don’t know,’ says the girl.

‘Oh, so how are you here?’ asks Enrique.

‘I heard about this on Facebook,’ answers the girl.

‘Oh, cool, I heard about this just now, I mean, recently,’ says Enrique.

The fro-e haired girl goes back to reading her book.

From nowhere a drum appears. Someone begins to play.  
The beat's methodical.

Enrique sits down on the floor, takes out his phone and checks the time. Checks for messages: there are none.

A student stands in the center of the area, 'Attention Everyone, thank you for coming out tonight! We're going to stay here as long as it takes! We need to send Sacramento a message!'

The crowd of students cheers. A chant ensues. Enrique is too tired to make it out or participate. He leans his head against the wall and stares at the wall opposite. Enrique recognizes two classmates near the door arguing (at least it looks like they're arguing). They step outside. Enrique gets up and heads toward the door. His leg asleep, he walks awkwardly, noticeably.

The two classmates are outside. Enrique makes his way slowly. They're arguing.

'There's no Absolute Truth,' says the male.

'There's Absolute Truth,' reports the female.

'There is only the illusion of Truth, there is only the claim to Truth, of seeing it, possessing it, of owning it, claims to Truth are claims to Power,' says the male student.

'God shows us the Truth,' says the female student.

The male student looks at her in disbelief.

'You're kidding, right?' he asks.

'No, I'm serious, if you read the Bible,' says the female student.

'You're arguing theology now. The Bible holds no definitive Truth with a capital T. It offers versions of Truth for your consumption,' says the male student.

'Not true, if you look at Corinthians, it's all very clear that,'

'That what? The Lord has a plan? Jesus has a plan?'

'Yes,' says the female student.

'And what of those that lie outside of God's plan? What of those starving and dying of disease? All of them are a part of the plan? God's Absolute Truth, Absolute Time lies in the belief of the believer, not the love allegedly existing between Creator and Thing, Man Himself, it's only the opposite that's true: man loves his own creation: God. A creation of his own selfish, vain, version of Divine Self as Divine Other, Divine Big Other, the Other only caring for the select, those purportedly serving his will, his aims, Yeah, very fucking convenient, very fucking Divine!'

'Read the Bible.'

'Read the Bible?'

'Yes, Truth is in There.'

'Is it all True?'

'Well, no, some of it you have to read with a grain of salt.'

'No shit.'

'Its moral lessons are timeless. Its Truth exists in its static core.'

'Nothing's static. Not language, not Time, not even one's own versions of truth.'

'There are Absolutes!'

'Is your God Absolute?'

Her phone rings.

'I have to take this,' she says as she walks away.

Enrique steps within earshot.

'Hey man, that was pretty cool,' says E.

'Oh, yeah, she's full of shit,' says student.

'What was your name?' asks Enrique.

'Jeff.'

'Jeff what?'

'Diller.'

'Cool, man.'

'I mean, it's a no shit argument. Her argument falls apart under its own weight.'

'Fallacy, her argument falls under the weight of its own fallacy,' says E.

'For sure, man.'

'You're in 500, too, man.'

'Yeah.'

'That was an astute point you made during class. Everyone was like, What the Fuck did he just say? And the diagram on the board was a nice touch. What the fuck was that? How'd you make that?'

'I just made it up on the spot, well, not on the spot, I wrote it during class, I didn't even do the reading. Just, during class discussion the drawing came to mind as the clearest possible way to get the point forward,' says Jeff.

'And the point was about New Historicism, Feminism, PostModernism, Modernism, and all the isms, essentially, and how they all, well, run towards, I don't know.'

'Well, it's not all falling apart, I think. There's some splintering, some breaking off from the whole, seemingly what is considered the whole, the past comes forward to haunt the future, but, fuck it, one just has to be the Übermensch. One can't be held down. The building blocks of reality don't necessarily have to dictate what is, or what will be,' says Jeff.

'So, religion, money, government, language,' says Enrique.

'As the building blocks?'

'Well, they're important. They're constantly changing, albeit slowly, then rapidly. It's what people look towards, right? They're what dictates reality, right, to some, actually, to a large fucking degree,' says Enrique.

'Language, that's the main one, probably the most looked at thing nowadays.'

'How do you mean?'

'Saussure, Wittgenstein, Derrida.'

'Haven't heard of 'em,' says E.

'Really?'

'They don't teach us that shit as undergrads, man.'

'Where'd you do your undergrad?' asks Jeff.

'Here.'

'Well, I guess maybe it's because I double majored in Philosophy and English,' says Jeff.

'That's most likely it,' states E.

'That helps.'

'Well, we're going to read Derrida in both 500 and 573, right?'

'Yeah, I'm looking forward to PostModern theory,' says Jeff.

'Lyotard, Habermas, Jameson, and a bunch of Other motherfuckers are on deck,' says E.

‘Yeah, man, it’s going to be a good semester.’

‘And Baudrillard.’

‘Yeah.’

‘A lot of these motherfuckers are French, German, and Other, what’s up with American theorists? Where are they at? But I guess it’s really irrelevant. Americans don’t give a shit to begin with,’ says E.

‘Well, there’s a few,’ says Jeff.

‘Chomsky?’

‘Yeah.’

‘Yo man, you got a blog or something? You need to write some of this shit down, or at least the shit you were telling that chick,’ says E.

‘Na, that wasn’t anything. It was just common sense, man.’

## OCTOBER 2009

Outside of class, Outside the Building. About twenty minutes Before Class.

Jeff smokes a cigarette. Plastic bag with strawberries in hand. Wears horizontal striped shirt. Blazer. Hat.

‘Yo man, what’s up?’ says E.

‘Hey man, what’s up?’ replies J.

‘*Same old shit*, man.’

‘How’d you do on the reading, man?’

‘The reading was shit,’ says E.

‘Yeah, it was slog, got bored with it.’

‘For sure, man, I don’t give a shit about composition.’

‘Yeah, in theory, this shit should be interesting,’ says Jeff.

‘Yeah, the history of English should be,’ says E.

## February 17, 2011

Enrique calls Dan.

‘Hey man, what you doing?’ Enrique.

‘What do you want?’ Dan.

‘Let’s go see the Banksy shit in LA, dag<sup>93</sup>.’

‘mm....’ Dan.

‘What, you work today?’

‘No.’

‘Then let’s go and shit.’

‘You drive?’ Dan.

‘Nah, you drive, dag.’ Enrique.

‘Then you buy gas.’

‘No, I’ll buy food.’

‘Where?’

‘Roscoes, Pinks, King Taco, Tommy’s, whatever,’ Enrique.

‘Okay.’

‘I’ll be there in 25,’ Enrique.

Enrique arrives at Dan’s house. Parks across the street. A middle of somewhere patch of nice-looking, okay looking houses, certainly nicer than what most people would think a neighborhood in Santa Ana would or should look like. Enrique forgets the official designation by the city, but Floral Park and Santiago Park neighborhoods are within distance of a short drive or moderate walk. The Neighborhoods North of 17th Street are nice as fuck. Enrique rings the doorbell. A few short seconds turn into a near half-minute.

Dan opens the door.

‘You ready?’ asks Enrique.

‘Hold on,’ says Dan.

‘Let’s go already,’ Enrique.

Enrique walks inside and sits down on one of the two sofas. The television is on. A European soccer game is on.

‘You’re watching soccer?’ E.

‘Fuck yeah, the Premier League.’ D.

Dan sets his laptop on the coffee table and turns it on.

‘What are you going to do?’ E.

‘Looking up the Banksy,’ D.

‘Oh,’ E.

‘Where is this shit?’

‘I don’t know. Just Google It,’ E.

‘Fuck, this is all Over LA.’

‘So what? You can tell your fucking grandkids that you saw some Original Fucking Banksy, plus when he wins the Oscar or whatever the shit, then there’ll be more prestige and cachet and shit, and you’ll be the ultimate hipster,’ E.

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<sup>93</sup> Dawg: dog:: bro::: dude::::man

‘Fuck that shit, you’re a hipster,’ D.  
 ‘You’re the one listening to ODD FUTURE<sup>94</sup>,’ E.  
 ‘Have you heard their shit? It’s fucking brilliant,’ says D.  
 ‘Yeah, they only have a fucking TUMBLR and shit, that’s crazy,’ E  
 ‘And their tweets, or at least Tyler’s, you follow that fucker?’  
 ‘Yeah, his tweets are on point, man,’ E.  
 ‘They blew up and all they have is a TUMBLR and a fucking Twitter feed,’ D.  
 ‘Yeah, I downloaded their mixtapes, but only Radical, Odd Future, The Dena Tape, and Journey to the 5th Echelon were available,’ says E.  
 ‘Yeah, the Other ones aren’t available right now,’ D.  
 ‘Yeah.’  
 ‘You see ‘em on Jimmy Fallon?’ asks Dan.  
 ‘No.’  
 ‘I don’t watch Fallon because that shit is horrible, but I was up and they were on and I wasn’t going to wait till it was on Youtube,’ D.  
 ‘I was going to watch it, but I ended up not,’ E.  
 ‘Why not?’  
 ‘I don’t get NBC on my fucking TV. I still have rabbit ears and shit,’ says E.  
 ‘Get a fucking job and get cable,’ says Dan.  
 ‘Once I get a job I’m buying a decent phone,’ says E.  
 Dan faces his laptop towards Enrique.  
 ‘Watch this shit,’ says Dan.  
 ‘Alright.’

[ I’m not going to describe the video because it’s readily available online. Type ‘Odd Future Fallon’ in the search engine on Youtube and there’s several videos to choose from.]

‘That’s fucking insane, man,’ says E.  
 ‘They’re fucking 19 and shit,’ says D.  
 ‘What?’  
 ‘They’re 19 and shit. All they have is TUMBLR and Twitter and now they’re on National Television. They made it Huge without any fucking hype, just legit buzz, man, that’s the way to do it,’ says Dan.  
 ‘That’s awesome, they make all rappers seem like shit.’  
 ‘Why don’t you do that?’ asks Dan.  
 ‘Do what? I can’t rap,’ says E.  
 ‘No, write. You know there are people that make a fucking living just Tweeting? All they do is wake up, take a shit, and tweet their fucking thoughts and they’re making a living out of it. Imagine getting paid to do that shit. You need to do that, so get crackin’.’  
 ‘I have a Twitter,’ says E.  
 ‘No, you’re not doing it right,’ says Dan, ‘you need to hashtag motherfuckers and bring the sharpened focus and insight with the-- How are you not making a living Tweeting?’

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<sup>94</sup> Odd Future Wolf Gang Kill Them All (OFWGKTA). They’re an underground hip-hop group from Los Angeles. Critically Acclaimed by Nearly Everyone.



‘Tweeting is difficult, man. I mean, saying something with impact and or meaning in less than 140 characters is a fucking art. I go through people’s tweets and I’d say between 99% and 99.98% are just total absolute shit. I mean, not absolute, but there’s no meaning in the form or ways of insight or social-commentary, most of the Time it’s oh: ‘Follow Me, Retweet my Tweet,’ or they’ll just tweet links to Other shit without reason or logic, just the obscene desire to be spread, read, without any philosophical justification. It’s fucking putrid most of the time, BUT then, yes, of course, there’s the handful of people that manage to pull it off and it’s like fucking magic and you really take an interest and there’s insight and you think this motherfucker should write a Twitter essay or they should really think about expanding, but then that would ruin whatever magic they have going on maybe, or not, who knows, anyway, I don’t think I’m writing for that sort of shit, man,’ says E.

‘You have a fucking, about to have, a masters in English and you’re saying you can’t write 140 fucking characters?’ Dan.

‘That’s not necessarily what I’m saying, man,’ E.

‘Then what are you saying?’

‘I’m saying it’s an art I haven’t been training for,’ E.

‘Well, fucking do it,’ says D.

‘Well, I have almost 940 something Tweets right now, I’ve been doing it since late last spring, but most of the Time I’ve been just dotting down notes, you know, if I have an idea somewhere and I want to make sure I remember it, I just post that shit on Twitter because I know I’ll remember to check it out later, but sometimes I’ll never Even arrive at that Later. Sometimes Later Never Arrives,’ says E.

‘Later Never Arrives. That’s your fucking problem,’ says Dan.

‘Okay, what does that mean?’

‘You got to make the Future Come to You!’ D.

‘Fuck the Future and the Past,’ E.

‘No, fuck the right now!’

‘Shit, fuck Everything!’

‘Nah, fuck the bitches!’

‘Fuck the World, I mean, what are we talking about again?’ E.

‘Tweets,’ Dan.

‘Right.’

‘It seems like you’ve been getting the hang of Twitter lately, hashtagging shit.’

‘Well, yeah, lately I’ve just been seeing what’s been trending on Twitter and trying to relate certain points and hashtagging the shit out of it.’

‘That’s not enough. You have to start feuds with celebrities and shit. You have to be on your shit, too.’

‘There’s a lot of things I have to be, why can’t I just be?’

‘Fuck Being,’ says Dan.

‘Fuck the Fuck, I say,’ says E.

‘Tweet that shit,’ says Dan.

‘Let’s fucking leave already before there’s traffic,’ E.

‘Hold on. I need to find these Banksy spots.’

‘Can’t you just find all the Banksy locations on FourSquare? People will have checked in online and have the addresses,’ says E.

‘Yeah, good point.’

Dan surfs the net, FourSquare and Google Maps.

Enrique checks his phone for messages.

There are none.

He stands, walks over to the wall opposite him and takes a closer view at Dan's college diploma.

'You know this is a collector's item. To think the Terminator's signature is on this.'

'No one cares,' D.

'You're right.'

Enrique takes a closer look at the pictures next to the diploma. One is of Dan as a young boy. The Other is a picture of Dan's mother, seemingly. Enrique walks over to the television's countertop and views the photos there. More of the same, yet different.

'What are you doing?' Dan

'Taking a look at your history.'

'Sit the fuck down,' D.

'Jesus.'

'Alright, let's go.'

Enrique and Dan leave in Dan's Orange Honda Element. The car looks like an Orange Toaster on Wheels.

'You have Odd Future with you?' asks Enrique.

'No, I didn't bring my iPod,' answers Dan.

'So what Freeways are you going to take?' E.

'Well, the 5 and 405 are always shit, so I'm *thinking* of taking the 5 to the 22 to the 405 instead of just the 5,' D.

'Nah, man, take the 5 to the 91 to the 605 to the 105 to the 110 to the 10.'

'What the fuck.'

'I got to the West Side in 40 minutes once using that route.'

'Fuck that shit. I'm taking the 5 to the 91 to the 710.'

'Fine, fuck it.'

Dan plays a CD by an underground, seemingly, hip-hop group (not Odd Future). Their raps are deeply layered, vulgar, sharp, and entertaining.

'What's this?' asks Enrique.

'Anti-Pop Consortium.'

'huh.'

Several songs play.

'We need to start our own shit,' says Dan.

'A rap group?'

'No, a blog.'

'We can, they're free.'

'No, something crazy and shit.'

'How do you mean?'

'A collective of writers writing shit. We'll write reviews of reviews, write on one another's writing, talking shit, write reviews and editorials on Other zines and shit,' D.

'How about Editorials on Tweets?' asks Enrique.

'Yeah, that's good. Write a fucking review about someone's Tweet.'

'We can have Twitter essays.'

'You mean write an essay in Twitter like prose? Nah, fuck that. That's stupid,' D.

'Okay, so everything else is okay. Writing Reviews on Other's reviews and Editorialize on people's Tweets, as well as writing random shit, with a focus of?' E.

'Santa Ana.'

'Santa Ana?'

'Fuck yeah, Santa Ana,' D.

'Fuck it, I'm in,' E.

'Start Writing Shit.'

'Alright, you need to start writing shit, too.'

'Who Else is going to be in on this shit?' asks E.

'The only Other person that knows right now is Memo,' D.

'How do you mean?'

'It's his idea, the name that is,' D.

'What name?'

'Santa Ana County.'

'hmm.'

'Who else is writing?'

'You and me so far,' D.

'Look, there's this fundraiser for the school literary journal March 9th, and you need to go.'

'Why?'

'Jeff Albers is going to be there. He's reading,' E.

'Who's Jeff Albers?'

'He's legit, man.'

'Oh, yeah.'

'So what's this for?'

'DASH Literary Journal. It's their shindig. They're selling wristbands, you need one for admission, I think, and the wristband gets you Happy Hour prices all night. I'm supposed to sell 'em, but I'll just give you the fucking wristband if you agree to go,' says E.

'Oh, yeah?'

'Who else is going to be there?' asks Dan.

'Jeff Diller.'

'What's he doing?'

'Jeff might read. Jeff Albers is going to read for sure, too. Right now, my classmate who's in charge of booking is still trying to finalize details, but for sure, Jeff Albers will read. I just got that confirmation today. Man, I'm telling you Jeff Albers is LEGIT AS FUCK. He's been published in McSweeney's, that's the Eggers seal of approval, not that he needs it, and you know how hard it is to get a hold of Jeff Albers?-- the motherfucker is like the Elliott Smith of literature. And you add Diller, man, how in the fuck are you not going to go? The Whole Show is Legit as Fuck. It's History Happening in Front of your Face!'

'I don't know.'

'Now where are we going?'

'The first one's in Westwood,' D.

‘And the Others?’

‘Beverly Hills somewhere, then Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood’

‘Fuck, where we going to eat?’

‘You want Pho?’

‘Nah, fuck Pho.’

‘You had Pho?’

‘Yeah, once, I didn’t dig it,’ E.

‘You didn’t have Pho, then, ‘cause Pho is fuckin’ delicious,’ D.

‘Alright, let’s get Pho, then,’ E.

‘Nah,’ D.

Enrique and Dan are in Los Angeles now, several minutes past exiting the freeway.

‘Hey, look at that shit, it says 9021Pho, that’s clever, kind of,’ E.

‘Nah, fuck that.’

‘Roscoes, man, Chicken and Waffles!’ E.

‘Too pricey.’

‘Shit, nigga, I’m the one paying.’

‘Thai. Thai is good.’

‘Fuck that, I don’t want diarrhea and shit,’ E.

‘You have money for parking?’

‘I just have my debit.’ E.

‘The meters take debit.’

‘Really?’

‘Yeah.’

‘Are we almost there?’ E.

‘I need Wifi to re-look-up these addresses. There’s a Coffee Bean. We’ll go there.’

Enrique and D. park. D. ends up paying with coins. They walk over to the Bean. They sit outside. D. surfs the net, Foursquare and Google Maps, while E. checks his phone for messages. None again. He picks up an issue of LA WEEKLY, thumbs through it and says, ‘I never truly realized how many strip clubs there are in this town. I mean, so many strippers, I didn’t know there were so many Communications majors. FUCK.’

‘Communications is a joke,’ D.

‘No shit,’ E.

‘The OC WEEKLY is a piece of shit,’ D.

‘Yeah, no shit.’

‘Look at the LA WEEKLY, they have actual stories. A short while ago they interviewed David Lynch. Who the fuck is the OC WEEKLY interviewing? Fuck that shit. Why don’t you get a job writing for the LA WEEKLY?’ Dan.

‘Sure, I’ll try, And the hundreds of Others trying to write for ‘em, too.’

‘Fuck those people. They’re writing stories on mushy ass nonsense.’

‘I’m not concerned. I’d rather teach, though.’

‘They ain’t hiring.’

‘Yeah, No One’s Hiring,’ E.

‘You can always work at Home Depot,’ Dan says with mild sarcasm.

‘Did you find the addresses?’

‘Yeah, the first ones were wrong,’ D.

Dan and E. leave the coffee shop.





First Stop. The crowd of people make the location of the Banksy Obvious. Dan





parks the car. They walk two blocks and arrive at their location. A few people stand near the Banksy. As D and E appreciate the work, more people end up arriving. Enrique initially takes pictures of the stencil graffiti itself, but then decides to take a picture of the crowd of people taking a picture, a sort of meta-picture, perhaps. Enrique decides to take Other pictures to give geographical context.

Dan, 'Okay, I'm over it. Let's go to the next one.'

E, 'Hold on man, I need to take more pictures.'

Dan, 'For what?'

E, 'I don't know, I might be able to use 'em for my project and shit.'

D, 'You're just going to post them on fucking Facebook.'



E, 'Yeah, so.'

Enrique takes a few more pictures.

Dan walks across the street.

Enrique takes a few more pics and crosses as well.



‘Those Asian chicks were hot as fuck,’ Dan.

‘For sure, man. Jesus Fucking Christ,’ Enrique.

‘Where to next?’ Enrique.

‘This seems to be nearby according to my iPhone,’ Dan.

‘Damn right, let’s go.’

‘Okay, this is supposed to be near some community center,’ Dan.

‘There’s some people over there, oh, never mind, they’re just walking,’ E.

‘I think I see it. It’s over there,’ Dan.

Dan parks the car. They step out. There are fewer people at this site than before. Actually, there are zero people at the site.

‘Awesome, no one’s here,’ E.

‘You going to Tweet this?’

‘Nah, my phone’s camera is too shitty. I have to use my old phone with the good camera, and I can’t use it to Tweet because my SIM card’s in the shitty phone.’

‘Why can’t you put your SIM card in the good phone?’

‘Because it keeps giving me error messages. I need to reset the good phone,’ says E.

‘So what are you using now?’ Dan.

‘I’m using my old phone with the good camera to take the pics and the new phone with the shitty camera to do everything else,’ E.

‘You have two fucking phones!’





‘Yeah.’

‘Fucking A.’

‘Whatever, man, what’s up with this shit,’ E.

‘It’s a dog taking a piss on a fucking wall is what it is,’ D.

‘Yes, but what is IS and what is IT?’ asks E.

‘You fucking tell me, you’re the one working on your M.A.,’ D.

‘Shit man, let me think,’ E.

‘That’s your problem, too much thinking,’ D.

‘Yeah, okay, animals mark their territory by pissing on shit, and here Banksy is reclaiming public space by having the dog piss all over the wall, the paint being the piss, and Art being what is at stake when public space is owned not by the public but by the owners of society. Banksy is bringing Art out of the museums and to its rightful place: on the street, on walls, on billboards, everywhere where one must piss, Banksy is pushing Back.’

‘Pissing.’



‘Right.’



‘Okay, where to next?’ Enrique.  
‘Shit, this next one is on Sunset.’ Dan.  
‘Are we that far out?’  
‘No, I just have to take a piss,’ Dan.  
‘You want to go eat then?’  
‘Na, fuck it, let’s go.’

In the car on the way to the next Location:

‘So, you tweet today?’ Dan.  
‘Yeah, man.’  
‘What the fuck did you tweet?’  
‘Today: ‘No #traffic in LA. It’s the #Economy, man, No ONE has a JOB to Come Home From,’; ‘Irvine Has NO SOUL, Man. #RETWEETDATSHIT’; ‘1 in 6 Americans STRUGGLES with Hunger’ and 1 in 3 ARE Fat as FUCK.’; ‘@stevemartintogo yeah, nigga, DA FUNNY disappeared FROM ur Last Tweet.’; ‘With a P/T teachin’ Gig maybe I can afford a decent phone and shit #FUCKATT’; ‘Guy gettin FUCKED UP at DA bus stop. NOW THAT.S #ART, Dawg.’ Those are all the ones I’ve written Today, so far,’ says Enrique.

‘Okay, write some better shit.’  
‘I thought the one from yesterday was pretty good: ‘I thought my friend had #Bieber fever, BUT it turned out it was just #AIDS.’’  
‘That’s the One I retweeted,’ says Dan.  
‘Wait, I forgot my original point from a while ago [several pages ago]. So you want to start that online zine shit, right? Who’s going to write for it? Me and you. And I’m telling you we need to get Jeff Albers and Jeff Diller. You’ve already met Diller, so now you need to meet Albers,’ says E.

‘Are they from Santa Ana?’ asks Dan.  
‘No, but they have soul and shit. They got Talent that’s Legit. They’re fucking artists, I’m telling you. They both live in Orange County, and if we’re rebranding or reframing Orange County as Santa Ana County, then they need to be brought into the fold,’ E.

‘I don’t know.’  
‘How often are we going to publish shit online then?’ E.  
‘Once a week.’  
‘That’s not enough Time.’  
‘Fine, bi-weekly.’  
‘No,’ E.  
‘Whenever.’  
‘Yes, that’s it.’  
‘Yeah, but we need a name for it.’  
‘Santa Ana County Quarterly?’ says E.  
‘No, people will expect shit quarterly, then,’ Dan.  
‘mmm.’  
‘Something that says We Don’t Give a Fuck but We Do.’  
‘Santa Ana County Bi-Sporadically,’ says Enrique.  
‘Perfect.’

‘SACBS.’

‘SACBS,’ repeats Dan.

‘Santa Ana County.’

NEXT LOCATION:

‘We’re going to have to walk a bit for this one,’ Dan.

The car is parked several streets, rather several blocks below Sunset. Enrique and Dan walk up a steep incline.

Enrique struggling a bit, his breathing labored.

‘You alright?’ asks Dan.

‘Yeah,’ E.

‘Man, you’re out of shape,’ says Dan.

‘No shit.’

Several minutes Later:



On Sunset Blvd., the Banksy piece is stenciled on the side of a building that seems to have suffered fire damage. It's Charlie Brown smoking a cigarette, spilling gasoline, with a mischievous look on his Face.

There's a truck parked several feet from the building. Three guys (not anyone pictured) stand idly while looking at Charlie Brown. They wear construction hats and hold sanders.

'Hey, you think those guys are going to cover up Charlie Brown?' E asks D.

'I don't know.'

'That would be fucking idiotic. Whether it's the city or the building Owner who's behind it. Banksy has literally made this building into a historical landmark. If they paint over it or blast it, they're effectively pissing away perhaps not priceless but at the very least several hundred thousand dollars,' says E.

'Yeah, well, what can you do?'

Enrique takes another picture.



[As of Last Night, The Charlie Brown piece has been removed. The portion of the wall where Charlie Brown resided has literally been removed. Unbelievable. Hopefully it'll find its way to safe hands and not some asshole on eBay. Source: laist.com]

Dan, 'Ready?'

Enrique, 'Yeah, I guess.'

D, 'I'm hungry.'

E, 'Let's go see the Mr. Brainwash piece with the storm troopers.'

Dan, 'Na, I don't think so. What for?'

E, 'I mean, we're already here in LA, might as well go see it in person. There's no good reason not to. It'd be stupid not to. Let's go.'

D, 'Alright.'

The walk downhill takes a much smaller toll on E. The view also provides something that's almost incomprehensible in Orange County or nearly anywhere else. E takes a moment to reflect and finally takes a picture of the basin from the top of Sunset and La Cienega.





Dan, 'Would you live here?'  
 E, 'Fuck yeah, look at this place, man.'  
 Dan, 'LA.'  
 E, 'yeah, my only concern would be walking and driving up and down these steep fucking hills, then again, it beats Orange County, what does Orange County have? That shitty restaurant on

top of a hill on Orange? Fuck that place.'

Dan, 'There's Santa Ana.'

E, 'For sure, man, Santa Ana's the ONLY place that has Soul.'

D, 'That's what I'm saying. SACBS.'

E, 'Yeah, well, get that shit off the ground already and start writing pieces. Can't launch it without at least a dozen or so works and several on deck.'

D, 'You need to start writing.'

E, 'What was it that ZIZEK said during his public lecture? Something like, UCI is a beautiful campus but it's surrounded by the worst parts of the United States: soulless, expressionless, corporate, unimaginative, master-planned, elitist...'

D, 'Why you hate Irvine so much?'

E, 'I hate in Irvine what I wouldn't be able to tolerate in myself.'

D, 'Fuck.'

E, 'Imagine trying to plan every moment in Time, every species of instance, every moment of Being, living, eating, shopping, shitting, fucking, that's Irvine.'

D, '....'

E, 'Luxury has its price outside of money.'

D, 'So what are you looking for?'

E, 'Meaning.'

Several Songs play on the Radio. D turns on the satellite radio. No music. Voices.

E, 'What's this?'

D, 'Howard Stern.'

E, 'Okay.'

D, 'They have girls riding sybians. I listen to this shit full-blast in traffic with the windows rolled-down and people give me the funny look, man.'

E, 'I can imagine.'

D, 'They have good guests.'

E, 'So is this motherfucker still funny?'

D, 'Hell yeah.'

E, 'What the fuck happened to Artie<sup>95</sup>? Is he still on the show? Did he come back? Why did he try and kill himself?'

D, 'I don't know. He still hasn't returned to the show.'

E, 'Comedy's tragic, I guess.'

D, 'I have to take a fucking piss.'

E, 'Are we close to the Mr. Brainwash piece?'

D, 'Yeah, we'll see that right now.'

Dan parks in a Burger King lot across the street from the Mr. Brainwash piece.

E and D look at the piece from across the street. The art takes up the whole wall.

'I'm over it. Let's go,' says Dan.

'Hold on,' says E. He takes pics.



The piece depicts storm troopers producing, guarding, and shooting the Academy Awards with a Statuette of Banksy at center. Mr. Brainwash is friends with Banksy and is

<sup>95</sup> Howard's comedy sidekick. Attempted suicide a while ago, stabbed himself with a butcher knife several times in the gut.



undoubtedly promoting his friend's Oscar nomination. [*Exit Through the Gift Shop* has been nominated for Best Documentary. Mr. Brainwash stars, as well as Banksy. It is believed that Banksy directed the film.]

'Let's get a closer look, man,' says Enrique.

'Na, fuck that, I have to take a piss,' says Dan.

Dan and E leave.

'Shit, I missed the turn.'

'Come on, man. Let's get a closer look at the Mr. Brainwash piece. We're already here. You can take a piss at the McDonald's next door.'

'I was going to take a piss at Shakey's, but fuck it,' says Dan.

Dan parks the car at the McDonald's next door to the Mr. Brainwash piece.



Enrique takes pics.

Enrique takes more pics. He checks his phone for messages: there are none. He checks his Twitter account for new Tweets. There's 4. He takes a knee to take a better shot, make the storm troopers appear taller. Traffic blares right behind him. There's honking. There's always already honking. Engines running. Enrique starts to think about his MA Project, then his ex-girlfriend,

the two somehow intertwined, though not really. She liked art, his art. She'd always ask to read everything he wrote, even see notes. 'WE were so close,' he thinks. 'Why am I thinking about this now?' he mutters in just bear audibles. The city buries his thoughts. LOUDER than their SOUND. And then:

'It's Mr. Brainwash,' says Dan.

'Yeah, I know,' says Enrique.

'No, I mean it's Mr. Brainwash,' says Dan.

Enrique turns and sees Mr. Brainwash.

'Hey, man, how's it going?' asks Dan.

'Good, good.'

Mr. Brainwash shakes Enrique and Dan's respective hands.

'Can I take a picture?' asks Enrique.

'Sure,' says Mr. Brainwash.



E hands Dan his phone, 'just touch the camera icon on the screen.'

'Where's the lens?' D.

'Just take the pic, man, oh, and there's no flash,' says E.

'Alright.'

Now Dan hands E his iPhone and E takes a pic of Mr. Brainwash and Dan. Dan posts his pic with Brainwash almost instantly to Twitter.

E turns to Brainwash, 'So when's your next show, man?'

Brainwash, 'I don't know, there's so much going on right now with the Oscars and everything, I don't know.' E, 'Cool, man.'

A Land Rover pulls up slowly, almost to a stop, Brainwash sees the auto and proceeds to the passenger side window in order to talk to the driver, Brainwash and the Driver speak to one another, seemingly. The Land Rover pulls away.

Brainwash receives a call and starts to walk away, the conversation completely inaudible. Dan and Enrique see Mr. Brainwash disappear behind the corner and proceed to leave.

'Aren't you glad we came by to see the Brainwash piece?' asks Enrique.

'Yeah.'

'And you wanted to leave earlier! I told you!' says Enrique.

A voice, faint in the distance reaches out.

Enrique turns around. It's Brainwash.

'Hey,' Enrique tells Dan, 'I think Brainwash is calling us.'

Brainwash disappears into the building.

Enrique and Dan walk back in front of the Brainwash piece.

‘Are you sure he called us back?’ asks Dan.

‘I’m sure, man. He called us. He waved his arm,’ says Enrique.

‘Then where is he now?’ asks Dan.

‘I don’t know, I guess he went inside this building,’ E.

‘....’

‘I guess we’ll just wait,’ says E.

Several minutes pass by.

Enrique checks his phone for the Time, also messages, Tweets.

Dan checks his iPhone for whatever it is he does.

‘Is there an app for this?’ asks Enrique.

‘For what?’ says Dan.

‘For Waiting,’ says Enrique.

‘Pft,’ Dan.

The door opens. Brainwash comes out with several prints, in fact, a whole mess of prints.

‘Here you go, you guys, it’s for you,’ says Brainwash.

‘Wow, thanks, man. Awesome!’ says Enrique.

‘That’s real nice of you, man,’ says Dan.

‘Thank you guys for Being here,’ says Brainwash.

‘Thanks, man.’

‘Remember, Life is Beautiful,’ says Mr. Brainwash.

In the Car:

‘Free Prints,’ E.

‘Mr. Brainwash hooked it up,’ D.

‘Now What?’

‘Let’s go Eat.’

‘King Taco?’

‘King Taco.’



# February 18, 2011

Text, 'Hey dag, what time you want to sign up?'

Response text: 'hey dag, I get out of work early today, so sign up early.'

E text, 'Is Hoffmann going to sign-up, too, dag?'

Re: Text: 'Yeah, dag, call him. carpool.'

E text, 'Carpool.'

E calls Hoffmann, 'Oye primo, are you signing up for Open mic tonight?'

Hoffmann, 'Si, guey.'

E, 'I'll go pick you up and then we'll go pick up Frank.'

H, 'Sounds good, guey.'

20 Minutes Later.

'Hey, dag, I'm outside your house,' E.

'I'll be out in a minute,' H.

Two minutes later. Hoffmann gets in the car.

E, 'You ready for your set?'

H, 'Na, kind of.'

E, 'Write new material?'

H, 'Some, it's coming along. I think it's okay.'

E, 'It's probably good, you have the Steve Martin delivery.'

H, 'I don't know about that.'

E, 'You follow that nigga on Twitter? He's fucking hilarious.'

H, 'I'm not on Twitter.'

E, 'What the fuck's your problem, dag? You need to be on that shit.'

H, 'I know. I know.'

It starts to rain.

E, 'So what's in the new material?'

H, 'I have a joke about the Green Lantern.'

E, 'OH.'

H, 'What about you? What's new in your set?'

E, 'I wrote some jokes on how people use language imprecisely. I have a joke on McDonald's.

And jokes on Jennifer Aniston, Britney Spears and Planned Parenthood. The last three are just things that are trending on Twitter. I've been practicing writing jokes and bits on topical shit by seeing what's trending on Twitter and TMZ and writing something. It's a good exercise. Makes you think, I mean, it's thinking about bullshit but it's thinking.'

H, 'What's the Jennifer Aniston joke?'

E, 'How's this chick have a career, STILL? Wasn't Friends like 12 years ago? The announcer's voice in the trailer should be MORE honest, like: 'You remember her from the HIT 90's sitcom FRIENDS, and now she's in a new romantic comedy. Will she fall in love with Owen Wilson? Come pay 10 dollars and find out! Come on, man! She needs the attention, her life's a mess! Have some fucking compassion! She's still not Over Brad Pitt and shit, you think Hollywood keeps giving her roles because she's Talented?!? FUCK THAT.' That's how the trailer should sound.

H, 'I don't know, man. A lot of people love her shit.'

E, 'Her movies don't hit the 100 Million Dollar Mark.'

H, 'I don't know if the joke will work.'

E, 'Yeah, you're right. People will accuse me of being mean and shit.'

H, 'What Other jokes you got?'

E, 'I have a similar joke about Britney Spears, to the order of: 'So, Britney Spears has a new album coming Out. You cats hear about This? Who the fuck is Still Buying Her albums? Who's thinking, 'Yeah, It's always been my dream to listen to someone with an incredibly limited vocal range sing slightly retarded lyrics, but the bitch loves cheeseburgers, so she's just like me!''

H, 'hmm, no.'

E, 'Yeah, you're right.'

H, 'So what else you got?'

E, 'The language bit.'

H, 'How's that go?'

E, 'I'm saving it for the coffee shop, man.'

H, 'Anything else?'

E, 'Well, in the 3 weeks I've been doing Open Mic Comedy, I've written new material every week. This week I think only the language bit is good enough, Or okay enough to actually do, so I'll probably rehash some shit from weeks One, Two, and Three.'

Miscellaneous Conversation for the next 10 minutes. Small talk, heavy shifts. The rain pours. E and H both live in Santa Ana. E near Edinger and Main, and H nearly 17th and English. They head to Frank's apartment complex in Orange. Frank used to live in Santa Ana in a house by the train station, but he moved once he found a job that paid well enough to get out.

They pull up to the Complex.

E, 'Let me call-'

E, 'Oh, never mind, he's right there.'

Frank gets in the car.

'Waz up, dag!' says Frank in an over-inflated way, as things go.

'Nothing much, dag,' says Enrique.

'What's up Francisco,' says Hoffmann.

'Nothing much, bra,' Frank says. [Salutations normally go this way because we think it's funny, not because we think it's appropriate or sophisticated]

'You ready for your set?' E asks F.

'Yeah, I had a 5-Hour Energy. I'm just waiting for it to take effect.'

E takes Walnut Street, which turns into Orangewood, which has a 57 North entrance. E takes the 57 North to the 91 West, exits Harbor, makes a right off the freeway. The conversation on the way is random, yet sometimes gravitates towards some sense of center or core feeling or idea, that of comedy serving as a means to sharpen one's cultural commentary in a way that might actually be useful: to make One laugh, or at least attempt to.

‘So, Keex, why do you do it?’ asks Hoffmann.

‘You mean Comedy?’

‘Yeah.’

‘It’s all an attempt at something yet not attained. I can’t talk in Absolutes here. Comedy is an Art, and I would go so far as to say it’s an art much more difficult than anything else because when you’re on stage you’re there by yourself. There’s no safety net. If you fuck up any part of the joke then the joke doesn’t work and people will think you’re not funny regardless, and even if the joke does work in your mind, if it doesn’t work with the audience, then you’re still fucked. I mean, for musicians, they can fuck up a note or fuck up a chord or lyric, it doesn’t really matter because they can continue and they have Other musicians on stage with them or they can slug through, the whole song isn’t going to have its worth predicated on one little flub. In Comedy, though, one little flub can fuck up Everything. You know an audience’s reaction to something immediately. You tell a joke that bombs, or a series of jokes that bomb and you’re just sinking further and further trying not to feel like shit while still trying to right the ship, save things. A lot of people have a fear of public speaking. Well, I’ll say giving a speech ain’t shit, man. All you have to do is read some note cards or read off a teleprompter, but try going any number of minutes with just you and the mic trying to impress a room full of strangers that are expecting you to make them laugh. There’s nothing else like it in the World. Everything is high stakes, or at least that’s the way I perceive things to Be,’ says Enrique.

‘So what’s the aim, ultimately, just to get better at speaking publicly? To persuade? To enact?’ asks Hoffmann.

‘I don’t know. It’s fun. It’s Language on Crack without any bailouts, or maybe the Ultimate aim of having Others feel something through one’s use of language and everything else that goes into it, not just words, but everything behind the impact, behind the meaning,  
[BREAK]

## **BREAK**

[Writing, then Mumbles starts doing whatever it is he does, which this time sounds like he’s masturbating. The piece of shit could exercise some discretion. Perhaps the voices in his mind wouldn’t let him. There was pounding, fuck it.... Went to Wendy’s earlier in the day, had the double-stack and chicken sandwich: 99 cents each. Left to Wendy’s again, about 6PM, but got the streets wrong. Took McFadden to Newport, drove up and down the street, then checked my phone for location. Turns out Wendy’s is on Redhill, not Newport. In my defense, the Wendy’s I went to earlier in the day is on 17th Street. Instead of going to Wendy’s, decided on Wienerschnitzel. Got 2 corn dogs and an ice cream. Updated Twitter. Hit up about 3 or 4 new Tweets. Think they’re getting better. Currently watching The Simpsons. Apparently Bart hasn’t done a Month’s worth of homework. He gets out of doing anything by getting Homer and Marge to fight one another about their respective parenting philosophies. Mumbles has been relatively QUIET. I think he’s done doing whatever it is he does... The ellipsis represents 15 minutes because now The Office is on. I shouldn’t have written any of this. The Break, that is.... Elapsed 6 hours. 12:09AM. Just came home from friend’s house. PS3. Talking TWITTER Protocols. Video Games. Perhaps VEGAS after Graduation. FEELING BETTER. There’s so much I could have written but haven’t written. Not on the fence about writing it, but more intent on not writing it from the point of view that I believe so much of what happened last semester really aided my mental and emotional and logical being. So far, I’ve written on Mumbles, My Mom, growing up in Santa Ana, friends, Los Angeles, Banksy, Brainwash, fucking, Girls, Parties, language, grad

school, incoherencies, technology, postmodernism, nihilism, poetry, comedy, and relationships, but the last one, that one was the toughest and I want to write about it and I want to be fair in regards to the parties involved and I will ultimately write-it-all in, but Jesus fucking Christ if the wounds have barely healed and I don't want to sound like a pussy but I have to admit to feeling like shit for a good 3 or 4 weeks once I realized shit was truly over with this chick, and I'm sure she doesn't care and if she does it's not to any degree of what I care or cared, but that's not really the point and perhaps there's no Other real lesson than how-to enter the next stage of life with a firm understanding of how to really handle a serious crushing break with this semblance of reality called love and starting now I'm thinking perhaps it was all just a real nice and fucking awesome illusion I had been sustaining for a while and she was sustaining it, too, because it felt so fucking good to be in there together, that is, a relationship more like a bond enhanced by mutual affection yet taken to some unknown degree that we could both call exceptional if only for a little while and now just now and more than reflections I can feel and sense and see such vivid fucking flashbacks of her and I just sometimes want to call her so fucking bad, yet I think, even if I did call her, what would I say, would I want to say anything? She ended things abruptly, if there's a word stronger than abruptly, perhaps truncate, she truncated our bond or spiritual emotional connection or whatever (but not whatever) just so easily and I think to her own history and think of Everything she Ever told me about herself and her own Life and Self and Family and Schooling and relationships and likes and dislikes and loves and I only wonder what if anything I did wrong; because at the worst of it I just couldn't help crying, an uncontrollable type of tears swelling, crying because there's no Other choice and I had no choice, really, or option in the matter and friends would try and help and kind of just look on helplessly while I seemed to fall apart and tell tales of how much her and I were in Love and how she always told me things like 'I love you' and how we didn't just have sex but made love or least made 'fucking love,' and I thought of how she would just look at me with all the (at least in my own mind) love and affection and goodwill in the entire universe and the world would be jealous if even one scarce section of our shared experience would infiltrate the rest of the planet, an intense overwhelming intoxication entitled love, and we weren't ashamed or embarrassed to call it that, or at least I wasn't, because at the time she was still saying I was just a friend to her friends and family, but her closest and esteemed persons knew about us. She didn't want to go official because of her family and her concern they'd think she'd moved on too quickly from her previous relationship, but she had no problem when it was just her and I. And Christ, in the beginning, it was like fucking magic sporadically combusting and taking the reigns of logic, just some supernova all over the place. We'd met through a mutual friend. Or at least, my friend. I'd be pretty wasted or high and chat with her online and she'd like my jokes and anecdotes and so I asked for her phone number. The first few times I asked her out, she said she was busy. I took her at her word. Eventually we did hang out and we just hit it off, I would say. We'd exchange text messages, she'd call me, and we'd hang out nearly everyday. Her mom and her sister liked me, too. They were real cool. And at first it'd be me and her and her sister hanging out, but then one night during karaoke I just made my move. Jeff and his then-girlfriend were there trying to help me out on the double-date thing. Jeff's then-girlfriend asked me if I had made my move on my girl, if her and I were something yet, to which I replied 'no, not yet,' so she said she'd be more affectionate with Jeff and that *that* would stir my date because girls would always be triggered by this that or the other one was her logic, so they did their thing, and then both of them had to sing. Then I made my move on my date, and we were both a bit tipsy, and I kissed her, and that was it. And we made out, tongue-fucking apocalypse, end of the world so let's get it type of scorch the

earth with affection if the earth were the human heart, and mind you, it's a bar on a Monday night, so there are few people, literally me, my date, Jeff and his girl, and I take off her boots and socks for some reason and kiss her leg because fucking christ did she have some nice legs, and she asked me then what the fuck I was doing, so I started logically repairing my stance of how human affection is best made on the spot from spontaneous understanding of what it is to be human and who would know that other than her and I? And that really, when one comes to think about it, what are the chances that her and I would even be there, at that very moment kissing, blinking, drinking, ... Ellipsis representative of several literal days. **2/25/11**. Friends ask, 'Enrique, how many pages are you planning on writing? What are your goals with your project? Can I read it? How do you have so many pages already?' And my answers are always almost nearly the same. I feel an obligation to write. I feel a crushing, unbearable *responsibility* (but obviously bearable, the ability to outthink over-thinking is a plus to own) to be the first Mexican to write a book, which isn't too far from the truth. And this relates to the non-sequitur before the break, before the ellipsis, because my ex-girlfriend, she understood the responsibility, she was supportive to the utmost degree, she knew, she knows the logic of my perspective, not because I've relayed said perspectives but because she herself has lived through similar circumstances, and I don't mean that in the cliché-ridden bullshit PBS or Hispanic Heritage Month bullshit that somehow passes the bullshit meters, because ultimately she and I know how and why it's bullshit, and to write it-out-loud is a dangerous prospect because too many family members or friends will object to the reality gripping the truth. And what's worrisome even more is that even educated members of the community won't acknowledge what I'm about to write *write* now. And what's there even to write right now? Just the plain out obvious beyond the education shit that scarcely gets the sound-bite. Mexicans don't read. Mexicans don't fucking give a shit. I'm not worried about any friend or family member EVER reading THIS, EVER. The problems aren't societal or historical, they're cultural. Mexicans never stop talking shit, putting each Other Down, rarely supportive, and that's the difference. I look at my white friends and they're supportive as fuck about Everything. Mexicans, they're the fucking opposite. White people, They'll be like, 'Great job, Enrique. You can do it. That's Awesome.' And Mexicans will be like, 'Bitch, Faggot, Fag, why you got to try and do something with your life, nigga?' Which is horse shit, but it's the reality. Talk about that shit *Univision, you enabling pieces of shit*. Tell the Truth. Hold the Mirror up to the Community. Are you going to leave this job to a Fiction Writer (barely). No one reads, so maybe I'll just Tweet it and 4 people can read it and think, 'Boy, Enrique is working through some shit. Hope he's okay.' And to be honest,

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\_\_\_\_\_. (And that's the unwritten sentence.) I'm trying to navigate this very carefully. I'm trying to unleash something very responsible. And I'm trying to exercise discretion. And it's very difficult to really exercise what I think is right because what I feel to be right changes, literally, second to second and I can't help it, and logic seems to be sadly lacking and running around somewhere else mocking me. Emotions have a greater stay here. Emotions hold the reigns, and fucking Christ if they're not doing a shit job right about now **2/25/11 2:41AM**. more time to think. a few minutes. talking with a buddy on Facebook. Writing how I feel about ex-girlfriend. I still think about her. And though I hate to admit this, I *still* love her. Even though she ended it abruptly. There was no official Ending, not that *that* would have helped. I went from feeling like shit for a few weeks, to feeling better, then feeling like shit for a few days, then feeling better, then feeling like shit for hours at a time, then better, and now just a heavy and sharp shitty harpoon of a pain that comes and goes without warning and just, the pain

itself, enough to really make me reminisce about the good times because I don't want to fault her and I don't think— and friends always tell me, 'forget about her, fuck her,' but it doesn't work. And Time, I'm waiting for Time to fucking start working and kicking. The Old saying, 'Time Cleanses Everything,' yes, I'm waiting. What is it now? Perhaps to use the very same title of this project and say/write, 'oh, well, I must fall into being and shit and make it all jive and corny and cliché, but on some level it has to fucking work, I'm praying it'll fucking work because it's hard enough not to want to think or feel or want to but still after everything can't even help but to really start feeling completely physically sick at the idea of even trying to feel anything else. And the last sentence probably didn't need to be in quotes. And I keep thinking/feeling that she Understands some part of Me I still don't Understand. And that makes me feel even sadder. And I hate I even used any of those words to express what I think I'm feeling now. I wish I could have been more precise, but there's no Time for precision. This is about the *write* now. Trying to capture moments as imperfectly as they exist. Somewhat filtered because there's limits. The thought has no mind of its own, no language of its own, it just makes me sick. And when I use that word I mean sad. And when I mean sad I mean crying or wanting to cry. And when I mean cry I mean a few tears rolling down my cheeks. And when I say a few, I mean 4. And when I mean 4, I mean over the span of a few minutes or at least whatever time it took me to write what I have just written. **2:59AM.** Woke up at **8AM.** The sounds of Mumbles masturbating or penetrating himself with a broom are too unnerving to really sleep through, so I've been up, earplugs in application, and am NOW WRITING, but it's not 8 AM NOW, it's 11:22AM. One of my buddies left for GERMANY for 3 weeks. He's a real good job. REGARDLESS, him and the girl he's been talking to seem to have made the jump into something more serious, which is good. I hope things workout fine. REgardless, the UDPATE on FACEBOOK I believe is FINE, so I'll include it HERE:

it's not a matter of writing, it's a matter of \_\_\_\_\_ the  
 structurality of moments and reflections in their minute existence and their even  
 longer infinite redress. it's a matter of Being very, very careless in a very, very careful  
 way in order to capture that which has always past and repast itself in the reflecting  
 pools \_\_\_\_\_ the emptied chambers of the heart's regress.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ it's a matter of honesty captured and retold behind the  
 illusion truth. \_\_\_\_\_ perhaps even a matter of not caring enough for  
 accuracy, \_\_\_\_\_  
 something infinitely Nothing escaping, reshaping EVERYTHING ELSE. \_\_\_\_\_  
 the very longing for the infinitely shapeless, faceless, non-existent \_\_\_\_\_.  
 breaking, aching, cringing \_\_\_\_\_ writing as the physically sick act of \_\_\_\_\_ KNOWING  
 THAT WHICH EXISTS AT THE CORE OF EVERYTHING ESCAPING: \_\_\_\_\_  
 WORDS DRENCHED IN THE GOD THING OF MEANING. \_\_\_\_\_  
 LONGING \_\_ PAST, DISTANCE,  
 HOURS, MINUTES, SECONDS,  
 grasping, clawing, feeling for  
 the warmth imagined

February 26, 2011. 3:26AM.

[The font feels fucked up. Stupid FaceBook. ]

**[END BREAK]**

At the comedy open mic. Frank and Hoffmann sit at a table in front of the stage. The stage is literally 4 feet by 4 feet, 6 inches high, and there's a mic stand. Frank, Enrique, and Hoffmann are signed up 14, 15, & 16, respectively. They sit through the first few acts. There are moments that are good, but mostly most of the comedy falls flat, incredibly so. There's no such thing as good or bad. There's just *It Works* and *It Doesn't Work*. There are jokes that logically work; that is, their reasoning and facts, on paper, should work for an explosive response, but comedy isn't that easy, or easy in any sense. Some of these comics have stories that are at face-value very sad, yet their comedy relies on this inherent sadness rather than making light of it. Seemingly, their comedy doesn't work because they're not Over the hump of whatever it is they're trying to work out in their material and their lives. A few comedians make it work, though. There are Others, still, that go Other routes and make the social-societal-cultural commentary that elicits laughs. There's no set formula. There's no routine. Making a room of budding comedians laugh seems like a difficult challenge until one tries and attempts that same thing with a coffee shop full of hipsters-- but that's another fragment.

Frank goes up.

Frank's Mexican, light skinned, about 5'9. He's the Jewish-Mexican nose.

'Hi, My Name is Frank, AND I'm an Anchor Baby.'

Mild chuckles.

'So, Where my Honkeys AT?'

No response from Audience.

Enrique starts to write-down notes on the back of his notes, that is, more notes on the notes already taken. He starts writing on his arm.

'So, where my Black people at, y'all?' Frank.

One girl raises her hand. She's White.

'I never understood the term reverse-racism. Do you realize how fucked up of a term that is? White People, it Implies that you Invented Racism,' Frank.

No response from Audience.

Enrique looks around the room.

'Reverse-Racism sounds like a Good Thing. Like, There goes a Mexican, I'm sure he's LEGAL and a contributing member to SOCIETY. OR, there's a Black guy, I'm sure he has EXCELLENT CREDIT,' says Frank.

The crowd looks on Politely. The one or two (?) Asian cats smile in agreement. The two black comics from earlier left before Frank went up. 'These motherfuckers don't dig the racial humor,' thinks Enrique as he remembers telling Frank *that* before the Open Mic.

'I wish I was Black,' says Frank, 'but not for the Big Dick or the excellent Jazz Music playing abilities or athletic prowess, no, but for the Crowd Hying Abilities.'

There's more of a reaction from the Crowd.

Enrique combs the room. He sees more receptive faces.

'If I go, hey, How's Everyone Doing? I might get a mild reaction or response, BUT if I were BLACK, I could be like, HOOOOOOOW YOUUUUUUU PEEEOEPPPLLEE DOINNNNG?!?! MAKE SOME NOIIIIIIIIIIISE! MAKE SOME FUCKING NOIIIIIIIIIIISE!'

The teenage girls in the front laugh.

The Asian guy in the back laughs, too.

Enrique laughs even though he's heard Frank tell the joke a dozen times or so.

Enrique writes more notes on his arm and hand. He writes and rewrites his material Over and Over again, going Over it and Over and Over it again in his Mind.

E starts to Over-Over Think his set. He'd written about 80% new material. Rearranges jokes, deletes and/or substitutes words anticipating audience reaction or lack thereof. He had previously/ earlier in the night Edited the notes on paper, contrasting typed-Home notes versus hand-written notes at the open mic, and now finds himself Editing and Rearranging, reworking the Notes on his Flesh, on his Arm, on His Hand, looking searching for something perhaps unnoticed, hiding in the backdrop of words.

E can feel his heart pounding in his throat.

E scratches out the dick jokes.

E scratches out the Mexicans don't read joke.

E rewrites the lonely on a budget joke.

E puts a question mark next to the Coachella joke.

He shortens one joke and extends another.

Shuffles the Order.

'So, my cousin is like, What should I buy my sister for her *Quincenera*? I was like, mmm... a box of Condoms!' Frank.

Crowd gives a good reaction. Laughs.

'And then my Aunt's like, Frank, I want to give my daughter something for her birthday that she can use later when she's Older.... And I thought, mmm, I got it! A lawnmower!'

Select members of Crowd chuckle, some smile.

E notices a classmate in the back of the room. Walks Over.

'Hey, man, what's up! You made it,' E.

'For sure, man. Hey, this is my girl, \_\_\_\_\_,' Ben.

'Cool, nice to meet you,' E.

'Nice to met you,' \_\_\_\_\_.

'Enrique, when do you go up?' Ben.

'Right about now. Frank is number 14, I think. And I'm number 15,' Enrique.

'Awesome, then we made it right on Time,' Ben.

'What Time did you get here?' E.



‘A few minutes Ago,’ Ben.

‘Awesome,’ E.

‘Are you Nervous?’ Ben.

‘No, I mean, I’ve been doing this for 3 weeks now, so I’m good. I’m more anxious to get up on stage than anything. I want to go on now. I got here at 7PM to sign up and now it’s almost 10PM. I’m tense because of the Waiting, but that’s it. And, well, I have to admit, watching some of these comics bomb and Others not, it makes me second guess and triple guess Everything I’ve been considering or Everything I’m doing. Some shit works One week and Then Bombs the Next. And it’s not that it’s the same joke regurgitated, it’s more of a mood that needs to be captured and assessed properly for the comic to really try and get a handle and prepare or make on the spot something suitable that the audience might enjoy. It’s a fucking science and an art. There’s Zero fucking room for fucking up. It’s just you and the mic, man. It’s just you and the mic, and it’s intense like nothing else, but, yes, to answer your question, I think I’m ready,’ E.

‘Cool, man,’ Ben.

Frank finishes his set.

‘You’re next, man,’ Ben.

‘I know.’

The Open Mic Host steps on stage, ‘Thanks, Frank. Up next, this comedian has done the Improv, the Comedy Store--’

‘That’s NOT Me,’ Enrique.

‘But it would be cool if it was,’ Ben.

‘Man, they fucked up the list,’ E.

The comic takes the stage and bombs.

His set hits and ends at the 6 minute mark.

The host retakes the stage, ‘And now Our next Comedian--’

‘You’re up, man!’ Ben to E.

‘I hope.’

‘has performed at the Laugh Factory--’

‘Fucking shit, man, that ain’t me, Again,’ says E.

‘Man, they’re either really fucking up the List Or you’re Not on It,’ says Ben.

The second comic bombs.

Stage time: 7 minutes.

The host retakes the stage, ‘and now, this next comedian recently did a TV--’

‘Again, I’ve been skipped,’ says Enrique.

‘Check the List,’ says Ben.

‘The list is in the Host’s Hands,’ says Enrique.

‘I know I’m on It,’ he adds.

The next comedian takes the stage.

Save 2 jokes, the set’s pretty standard.

‘Okay, I have to be next,’ E says.

The host retakes the miniscule stage, ‘Our next comic recently came off tour from--’

‘AGAIN!’ says E.

‘Damn, that shit ain’t cool, man.’

‘I know. If they’re going to skip me like this, the host should fucking tell me. I came early and signed up and these pieces of shit are just skipping right ahead of me. I’ve been waiting for over 3 hours now,’ says E.

‘Sucks, man,’ says Ben.

The next comic does relatively well.

His jokes fly.

‘I hope I’m not next NOW,’ E tells Ben.

‘Why?’

‘This guy’s doing pretty well.’

‘Yeah.’

‘I’m going to sit down next to Frank and Hoffmann and work on my set some more,’ E tells Ben.

‘But you already wrote all over your notes and arms and hands, what else can you do?’

‘I don’t know, I just need to rework, reread, and rehearse these things in my mind,’ E.

‘Alright.’

Two comics Later.....

‘And we only have ten minutes left in the Night and we have 4 comics...’ host.

E takes a last minute glance at all his bodily notes.

‘We have Enrique, is Enrique here?’ host.

E raises his hand.

‘And after Enrique, we have Hoffmann, is Hoffmann here?’

‘I’m right here,’ says Hoffmann.

‘And after Hoffmann, we have,’ host continues.

‘Okay, so, each comic will have to shorten his set to 3 minutes or less, is that cool?’

E takes a look at the room. There’s [maybe] 9 people.

E walks to the small stage and takes the mic.

‘Hi, my name’s Enrique and I’m a Graduate student in English, which means I’m very Self-Conscious about my *Waiting for Godot* jokes [one person seems to laugh, that, or cough]. Sometimes when people are imprecise with language, which is almost always, it’s a very mildly annoying issue. My Friend’s girlfriend will often make such miscues. My friend is a big guy, about 400 pounds, And his girlfriend will say things like, ‘He’s so Gentle, Just like a Bear.’ And I’m thinking, Do you Know what a Bear Is? [crowd laughs] Have you Ever been to the Zoo or seen Animal Planet? Are you fucking retarded? Or, at Other times, people will be Even More Imprecise with language and say, ‘Animals are Just Like People.’ I’m thinking: No, they’re Not. They’re Really Not. If I go, Hey, Frank, you want to come Over and play XBox? And Frank says, ‘Sure, man, I’ll come Over and Play XBox, One thing, though, when I come Over to Play XBoxy, is it Okay if I take a Giant Shit on your Rug?’ And my response would be, NO, it is not Okay to take a Giant Shit on my Rug, you know why? Because People aren’t Animals, Sir. Or, people will be Imprecise with Language in Other ways. They’ll say, ‘Oh, that guy’s a Grammar Nazi!’ I’m thinking, Are You Serious? Do you know what that implies? It implies that not only does the guy hate Jews and blacks and Mexicans, but that He also Hates Bad Grammar and that that hate for Grammar is SO intense that it takes precedence Over the Hate for Everything Else, which implies it’s worse to hate bad grammar than people! [polite chuckles] So, changing gears, a lot of People, a lot of Guys have cute dogs to try and pick up chicks. I say, take it One step Further! I have a special needs dog, his name is Mumbles, he can’t bark. [indecipherable noise from audience]. [The host flashes a light at Enrique, indicating Time’s running Out and he needs to rap up his set]. [Enrique looks at the writing on his arm and the writing on his hands. He looks

at his paper notes.] Okay, Ladies and Gentlemen, Speed Comedy! Which joke will I do? [He looks at his arms and hands and paper notes again and quickly decides.] So, is anyone going to Coachella? [Silence] You pay \$300, spend three days and nights in the desert, there's scarce water, scarce food, and there's 120 degree heat, Do White People realize they're paying \$300 to live like Mexicans? [Crowd laughs] My White Friends are like, Enrique, you need to go for the Experience. I'm like, No, thanks, my parents went through that when they crossed the Border! [laughs]

The host walks up to Enrique and takes the mic.

'Good job,' he tells E, 'Our next comic is--'

E walks towards his school friend and his girl.

'Great job, man.'

'Thanks.'

'You were the best one tonight.'

'No, not really, not at all. There were a few things that didn't quite work. I had the set well adjusted in my mind but had to keep readjusting and changing during the 3 plus hour wait. I kept trying to get a feel for the crowd. I don't know,' says E.

'It was good, man,' says Ben.

'Okay.'

'Well, we got to go.'

'Thanks for making it.'

'Later, man.' Ben shakes Enrique's hand.

'Bye,' says Ben's girlfriend.

'Thanks,' not sure whether to shake her hand or not, Enrique says, 'I don't know the protocol for this.'

'I'll give you a hug,' says Ben's girlfriend.

'Bye.'

'Later.'

Hoffmann is into his second or third joke.

'I mean, did Gangsters just have a meeting One day and say, 'Hey, dawg, let's decide on a Font for Our Gang.' And they're like, 'Okay, how about Helvetica?' And the Gang leader is like, 'No, fuck that shit!' And another member is Like, 'no, How about Courier?' And the Leader is like, 'No! That's the Wrong Font for Our Gang!' And Finally One gang member is like, 'Well, gee, How about Old English?' And the Gang Leader is like, 'PERFECT!' [Strong Laughs]

The host flashes a light to indicate Hoffman has a minute or so Left.

[I can't remember Hoffmann's last joke and it would be a disservice to him to try and remake it; Also, calling him and asking what it was would rely on his memory, not mine, and it would also cause me to spend time away from my computer which I'm currently operating and I don't want to step away from right now, even though there's *The Pursuit of Happiness on ABC* for some fucking reason, but it's more of a noise-filler to drown out the sounds Mumbles is currently making. There's no way my parents aren't hearing his shit. Unless, perhaps my mom doesn't or won't. She's pretty whacked out. She has to weigh at least 200 pounds now, and being 5'0", that's worrying, always sweating while you eat, Jesus, not that I believe, just an expression, and that's the reason, to infect the signifier with indifference and make the signified nothing more than its nothingness. I really need to reread Everything from about page 15 ON with cutthroat lyrical precision and inject more beauty in this project, but my concern up to this point, from page 15 to 77 and probably to about page 80, is that I get and capture and relay and transcribe

what I believe the Core dialogue and events up to this point in my mind's eye. A lot of it, I feel, needs lyrical stitching to form some semblance of Life in Being. Lyrical Stitching. Never mind, I remember the joke.]

Hoffmann, 'You see the sign on Taxi Cabs, 'Driver does not carry more than \$20.' Or when you go through Drive-Throughs the sign will read something similar. Or there'll be Trucks transporting beer and there'll be a sign that reads, 'Driver Does Not Carry Bottle Opener.' I'm thinking, Is there anyone Enforcing This? Is there a cop somewhere that's actually going to check as to the accuracy of these signs and their claims? [chuckles] Plus there are some trucks and vehicles that just make me wonder, Shouldn't they Have signs as well? I mean, if there's a truck transporting a bunch of syringes, shouldn't There be a Sign that Reads, 'DRIVER DOES NOT CARRY TOURNIQUET(.)?' [Crowd laughs, responds well]

Hoffmann looks at the remainder of his notes on his iPhone.

Host retakes the stage.

'Thank you, Hoffmann. Ladies and Gentleman, that's all the TIME we Have for TONIGHT, see you Guys NEXT WEEK,' says the Host.

Hoffmann sits down.

'Read to go?' Frank.

'Yeah,' E.

'Sure,' Hoffmann.

Enrique, Frank, and Hoffmann Exit.

## HALLOWEEN 2009

e invited to halloween party. jeff and elizabeth's halloween bash at their apartment. e, not sure what else to do, decides to go. it was either go to jeff and elizabeth's or stay home alone. well, not alone, but at home in his room watching youtube videos while Mumbles makes his grunts and mumbles, and mom watching mexican spanish tv, and dad quite asleep. he leaves for fullerton in his ford taurus 2004. the car used to be a rental car, then it was resold to the dealer, and finally e's dad bought it for a real good price. The year was 2006. the car before the taurus had died. it was a Ford Escort, mid-90's model.

e first decides to go to Total Wine and buy a six-pack of Guinness.

e calls j. 'where do i park?' asks e. 'wherever there's parking,' says j. e, 'there's no parking anywhere, man.' 'i know, that's fullerton,' says j, continues, 'you can park across the street at albertson's or you can park a few blocks south from the street you're on now.' e, 'alright.' e parks his ford taurus 1/4 mile out. he walks to jeff and elizabeth's. he stands outside the gate. e calls diller. 'hey, man, i'm outside the gate.' 'cool, i'll come down, homie,' j.

diller arrives at the gate. opens gate. 'what's up, man?' 'Nothing much.' 'yeah, I'm up on the second floor.' they walk upstairs, make a turn, then walk straight-down the hallway. 'this is it,' j. 'you walk in first, man,' says e.

j walks in. e walks in after. Immediately the dining table stands out. There's a centerpiece, highly colorful, tall, almost ridiculously so, it seems not edible, but more decorative than anything else. The mats are Halloween inspired. Four people sit at the table in seemingly mild conversation. They keep on. On the counter sit 4 bottles of wine. On the Left, the living room hosts matching sofas, in front a smallish coffee table. 4 people sit. Elizabeth asks j if there's more dip. j doesn't answer the question, though he does afterwards, and says, 'this is Enrique. he's a friend from school.' Elizabeth, 'oh, nice to meet you, help yourself to some wine.' 'thanks,' says Enrique. j introduces e to the persons at the table. 'hey, guys, i want you to meet Enrique, he's a real cool cat, he's in the grad program with me,' says j. the first person closest to e shakes e's hand, 'nice to meet you, my name's David.' person a few feet farther out says, 'hi, my name is \_\_\_\_,' and waves. The third person waves in polite fashion. The fourth nods.

j takes e to the Other side and introduces e to the persons on the sofas. 'hi, guys, this is Enrique. Enrique, this is \_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_.' 'How's everyone doing?' asks e, not sure what to say. Okays and polite nods are the response. j turns to e, 'well, make yourself at home, homie. we got vegan cheese and dip, wine, and Other stuff coming along the way. i got to run some errands real quick.' 'cool, man,' says e. j talks to Elizabeth. they converse for what seems like 2 minutes. j leaves the apartment.

e looks around the apartment. 'what's everyone's name again,' he whispers to himself. he stands next to the bookcase. 8 feet high, four feet wide. a nice collection spanning literature, philosophy, and Other. he takes one book, looks through it, perhaps reads a paragraph or two, then places the book back, e continues this for several minutes. e grows tired, glances at Others in conversation, trying to make any connections to classes he may have had with any of them. none of the faces fit.

e sits down at the table. one of the original four is missing.

'so, what classes are you taking?' asks David to \_\_\_\_.

'oh, well, I'm done with my General Education units, so now I'm just taking philosophy classes,' says the girl.

'Cool, so, are you a Rationalist or an Empiricist?' David asks \_\_\_\_.

'Mm, I don't know yet.' \_\_\_\_

'Well, who do you read?' asks David.

'I like Nietzsche, Locke, Rousseau, you know....' says \_\_\_\_.

'Plato or Aristotle?' asks David.

'Plato!' says \_\_\_\_.

'So you're a believer in Truth with a capital T?' asks David.

'Yes,' says \_\_\_\_.

'What of when we have no Truth? or at least the facsimile of? Is there always Truth?'

'You mean, hold on, Define Truth!' says \_\_\_\_.

'You're the Platonista!' says David.

Both Laugh.

'So, what are you majoring in again?' asks \_\_\_\_ of David.

'American Studies and Philosophy,' says David.

e stops paying attention for a minute and pours himself a drink. Wine. red.

e gulps half of it down.

'So, Enrique, right?' asks David.

'For sure, man,' says e.

'What are you majoring in?' asks David.

'English.'

'Oh, we have an English major!'

'Nice,' says \_\_\_\_.

'So when are you done?' asks \_\_\_\_.

'I'm in grad school.'

'Oh, wow, nice, what are you going to do with that?' asks \_\_\_\_.

'Write the Great American Dick Joke, that and Poetry,' says e.

'You write poetry?' asks \_\_\_\_.

'Um, Yes, sometimes. You know, once in a while,' says e.

'What does once in a while mean?' asks \_\_\_\_.

'Years apart.'

'Why years apart? What's happening in the years between?' asks \_\_\_\_.

'Those are good questions.'

'And...'

'I'm not sure how to answer Them,' says E.

'Just answer 'em,' she says.

'Go ahead, man' adds David.

E takes another drink, this time finishing the glass. He opens up a beer and takes a sip, too. \_\_\_\_ and David wait patiently.

'I'm sorry, but look, and I feel stupid and lame and I'm not sure what else to say, saying this, but, well,' says E.

'Out with it!'

'Yeah.'

'I only write poetry when I'm in love with a girl,' says E.

'Aaaah, that's cute,' says \_\_\_\_, smiling with her eyes.

'Nothing to be ashamed of,' says David.

'Experience has taught me that writing poetry for a girl, really never goes well. It may seem okay, and even feel like the right thing to do, but there's something to be said about framing a situation and who and what has power in a relationship, or, rather, how people's perception may change by unveiling that which is dying to escape, that is, authentic emotion, an articulation of the heart's constant project, and that's what I mean,' says E.

'I don't understand, so you're saying you write a girl poetry and then things fall apart? You unveil your heart's content, your real way of feeling, and she leaves? That sucks,' says \_\_\_\_.

'I know what you mean, man,' says David.

'What do you mean?' \_\_\_\_ asks David.

'A whole lot of the Time women choose jerks, that's what *that* means,' says David as he takes a drink.

'That's not true,' says \_\_\_\_ as she takes a drink herself.

'Then what is true?' asks Enrique.

'The world is its own exhibit,' says David.

'Its Own Evidence presenting itself,' adds Enrique.

'And what's on Trial here? A Woman's Intelligence? Her ability to choose the right man? What are you trying to say?' asks \_\_\_\_, a bit perturbed.

'This isn't Either Or, This isn't to cast in extremes, it's not a judgment but it seems so, and perhaps it is, and to be as direct as possible, it's the way Things seem to operate, and it does operate.'

'Bullshit,' says \_\_\_\_\_.

'mm, come on \_\_\_\_\_, don't pretend like girls don't go for douche bags and assholes, don't erase *that* Reality just to hold on to your feminist outrage,' says David.

'I'm describing my own experiences. Friends' as well. Or, I mean, what I'm saying is predicated upon those experiences. I'm not willfully trying to rearrange a distorted reality,' says E.

'Still, I don't think you guys are right. There's plenty of nice guys who are in good relationships.'

Both E and David laugh.

\_\_\_\_\_, visibly annoyed.

'Weren't we talking about poetry?' asks Enrique.

'Yes,' say \_\_\_\_\_ and David simultaneously.

'You didn't answer the original question!' says \_\_\_\_\_.

'Yes, I did. I write poetry when in Love.'

'mmm.'

'.....'

'And what accounts for the Silence of Not Writing?' asks David.

'And you're not creating or writing in the spaces between, say, meaning?' asks \_\_\_\_\_.

'Yes and No,' says Enrique.

'What an English major answer!' says \_\_\_\_\_.

'a-ha ha,' David.

'Jesus, now who's on Trial!' jokes E.

Elizabeth comes by, 'Is Everyone okay? Does anyone need anything?'

'I'm good,' E.

'Me, too,' \_\_\_\_\_.

'I'm fine,' says David.

Elizabeth smiles and leaves for the group in the living room.

'So, poet, recite us a poem!' says \_\_\_\_\_.

'Requests!' says David.

'What?' E finishes his drink and pours himself another.

Jeff comes in and sits down between David and Enrique.

'Where were you?' asks David.

'Downstairs with my neighbor,' says Jeff.

'Doing what?' asks \_\_\_\_\_.

'Getting some primo herb,' says J.

Ten minutes later.

E coughing. \_\_\_\_\_ smiling. David just a bit drunk. J fine.

'What were you guys chatting about beforehand?' asks Jeff.

'Truth,' says \_\_\_\_\_.

'Poetry!' states Enrique.

'Philosophy,' says David.

‘HA!’ cracks Jeff.

More people arrive at the party. The number and appearance are not discernible to the four. Elizabeth greets the new partygoers.

‘Jeff’s the smartest motherfucker in the program,’ says Enrique.

‘Oh, no way, man,’ says Jeff.

‘You modest motherfucker!’ states Enrique.

\_\_\_\_\_ & david laugh.

‘It’s the Truth!’ says E.

‘Define truth,’ J.

‘No!’

‘hahahhaha,’ \_\_\_\_\_.

David smiles, rests his head on the table.

‘Truth is the perceived reality without major, significant flaws that would make it not true, True is in the mind’s heart’s reason! True is that which exists in grasp of the mind’s now,’ E.

‘True, but Truth breaks down,’ Jeff.

‘Ha,’ David.

\_\_\_\_\_ moves her eyes side to side, side to side, looking.

‘Give an Example.’

‘Fuck Examples.’

‘Examples.’

‘Fuck.’

‘Fine.’

‘ $2 + 2$  equals 4,’ E.

‘No,’ says David.

‘How, no?’ asks Jeff.

‘Four Flies away!’ David.

Enrique takes another drink. A guest from the Other side comes by and sits by \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_ and the new guest hug. They seem close.

‘So, what are you guys talking about?’ says guest, ‘Oh, my name is Josh, by the way,’ Josh tells Enrique.

‘What’s up, man.’

\_\_\_\_\_ puts her arm around Josh, dashing any hopes Enrique had of pushing any game on her, not that he’s readily proficient.

‘ $2+2$  implies static. It imposes Order, Finiteness, and that’s bullshit because there’s not concrete Order and Finiteness in the World. The World doesn’t exist in Niceness sponsored by Logic,’ says Jeff.

‘Because  $2 + 2$  can be two living things aided by another two living Beings, and then what? Two of the Four leave, thus leaving the Original 2! Fucking Mathematics doesn’t account for the Living Being, human or Otherwise,’ says David.

‘Logic Fails as a Sign!’ says Jeff Triumphantly, raising both arms in the air.

Laughs.

‘How does Logic Fail as a Sign?’ asks Enrique.



‘Logic’s predicated upon the presumption that there’s a larger, definitive Truth with a Capital T. There’s no Definitive Larger Truth except those that may overlap situationally, but a one-sizes-fits-all type of world outlook can’t take root and work in all situations,’ says Jeff.

‘What if it works for some? That is, isn’t partiality something to be held in esteem, what’s a good metaphor for failure rate?’ asks Enrique.

‘Claims to Truth are Claims to Power, Nietzsche, I think, the Life of One Living in the Realm of Other, Constructions made by Both Self and Other---’

‘And where do they MEET?’ asks Enrique.

‘What? How do you mean?’ asks Jeff.

‘Where do the Self and Other meet? Where does Truth and Reality tangle, where does human interaction, human ideals, how’s there Ever any progress anywhere?’ asks Enrique.

‘Hegel has the Answer, but He Doesn’t.’

‘Huh?’

‘The Thesis Becomes the Antithesis Becomes The Synthesis Becomes the New Thesis, into Infinity,’ says Jeff.

‘An Infinite Jest,’ says David.

‘Isn’t that a book?’ asks \_\_\_\_\_.

‘2 + 2 equals Nothing.’

‘Logic Fails as a Sign.’

Enrique takes a paper plate, ‘Anyone Have a Pen?’

‘Why do you need a Pen?’

‘To write this shit Down,’ says Enrique.

“hahahhahah,” David.

\_\_\_\_\_ laughs, too.

Josh looks on.

Jeff hands Enrique a pen.

‘Paper-Plato!’ says \_\_\_\_\_.

‘The Paper Plate of Truth!’ says Josh.

‘None of This will make sense in the Morning,’ says \_\_\_\_\_.

‘Why does Logic fail as a Sign?’ asks Enrique.

‘Because it Presupposes a Grand Truth with a Capital T,’ says Jeff.

‘So what is there?’ E

‘An Endless chain of signifiers, an infinite totality of imprecision, the illusion of Absolute,’ says J.

\_\_\_\_\_ rolls a jay. Several persons partake.

A knock at the door. LOUD. Everyone sits silently.

‘Someone going to get that?’

‘No.’

‘Who is it?’

Everyone’s quiet.

A pounding at the Door.

‘You think it’s the police?’ someone whispers.

‘Shut the fuck up.’

‘No.’

‘They’ll leave eventually, whoever it is.’

Elizabeth approaches the door, opens it.

'Heeeeeeeey, what's up!' says the person at the door.

'Fucking Austin!' says Elizabeth.

'Did I scare you guys?' A.

'We thought you were security or someone!'

'Ahahahah.'

Austin walks in with his lady friend.

'Hey everyone, this is \_\_\_\_.'

'Hi,' almost in Unison.

A wave from \_\_\_\_.

Austin and \_\_\_\_ mingle with those in the living room.

The conversations at the table ensue. Those involved fall deeper into their own rhetoric/ dialectic/as appropriate for their respective time. Topics change and transform. Progressively, they all become a bit more relieved at the depth of honesty. The free exchange of ideas without the fear of judgment. Questions, always more questions than answers, but the answers always seem to give enough of a concrete, more like porridge feel for meaning that leads further down the road of inscription, hollowing out the caves of language. Their meanings are close enough that they have a feel for one another's thoughts and ideas. The brevity of speech appeals to Everyone at the table. There's no wrong question or answer. There's just an attempt to better understand and believe. Perhaps it's helpful that they're all Philosophy and/or English Majors. MAYBE. The party thins out. At night's end, only Jeff, Elizabeth, Austin, \_\_\_\_, and Enrique remain. Elizabeth and Jeff converse in the kitchen, seemingly about wine. \_\_\_\_ sleeps on the sofa.

Austin, 'Enrique, man, where you from?'

E, 'Santa Ana.'

A, 'How's that?'

E, 'I can't really explain it. It would entail a lengthy answer, at least to do justice to the idea and feel of Santa Ana.'

A, 'Go for it, man.'

E, 'Well, there's no single emotion I have for Santa Ana. I hate-love the place most of the time, but at the same time I wouldn't want to Live anywhere Else. There's a strong, fairly large pool of people whose immediate concerns for living and being are very much in their face everyday, their concerns are immediate, pressing, pressing against everyone, making their existence known, I like that. I like the feeling of knowing Others are human, are there, have needs, concerns, that seem, and in fact are legitimate. That's, those are the things I love about Santa Ana. Its authenticity. Its, for a lack of a better word, Realness. A mother pushing three kids in a shopping cart, worrying about the next week, seeing the reflection of her heart's content in her eyes, that's fucking impressive. Walking Downtown Santa Ana. Now there's an Experience. Fuck Irvine, no One walks in Irvine. Irvine's nice, but that niceness comes at the expense of one's soul, one's essence, unless one is inherently empty, then living in Irvine isn't such a big fucking deal. Downtown Santa Ana has Homeless. Downtown Santa Ana has History. Downtown Santa Ana has Food Vendors. Trucks. Noise. People. Sadness. Joy.'

Austin, 'The rest of Orange County doesn't have that?'

'No. At least not South Orange County.'

'Huh.'

'Where you from?'

‘San Diego.’

‘Cool.’

‘San Diego is AWESOME. I couldn’t imagine living anywhere else. I LOVE IT THERE. The food, the culture, the women, the scene, Everything about it is AWESOME.’

‘San Diego *sounds* Awesome.’

‘Have you Ever thought about Moving? Not to San Diego, but just in General, man. If you’re not completely happy in Santa Ana, then why not move? Why not get Out? What’s holding you back? What’s keeping YOU THERE?’ asks Austin.

‘That’s a good Question, And I don’t know,’ answers Enrique.

‘You have to know.’

‘I, I don’t.’

‘Is it a girl? Is that what’s keeping you in Santa Ana?’

‘No, man. Perhaps it’d be nice if it was, though.’

‘How do you mean?’

‘Just, some things haven’t worked out, that’s all.’

‘Like what?’

‘Huh?’

‘Give an Example.’

‘Really?’

‘Yeah, man, I’m interested in People’s stories. Why not? Everyone has theirs, right?’

‘Radically Condensed. Ultimately I’m embarrassed and ashamed of certain family members, the fact that they’re in any way connected to me, That they in any way reflect any part of me. That shit rocks the confidence and down the drain, like a stain on my existence. I can’t escape it anywhere. It haunts me always. I take *it* Everywhere with me, it won’t abandon, it’s just There. It’s in the Room next to me, mumbling, grumbling, pounding, making its noise. It’s the half-man-half-beast of a Thing. I feel a responsibility to Face It. The disfigured living reflection, the wordless, perhaps thoughtless thingness of its Existence, its flesh stalking, roaming the very city, the very house of mine. My Brother. My Ghost,’ says Enrique.

Austin, ‘Fuck, man.’

‘Imagine living with the person you hate most in the world and that you have always hated that person since your earliest memory, and they have returned the favor in kind, and the hatred stems from something more than their inability or refusal to speak or do or exist in any way normally, but that they just construct themselves underneath the spiritual foundation of the Family, breaking the very ground underneath, the whole structure readying for its collapse. I’m there to ensure he doesn’t get away with it.’

‘Man, it sounds like you really hate your brother,’ says Austin.

‘Hate isn’t a strong enough word.’

‘Fuck.’

‘He’s the cancer.’

‘What’d he do?’

‘His is a kind of spiritual murder, lethargic symbolic rape and murder, holocaust of faith, he’s the black hole of Being where Everything goes to Die. Energy sucked from Being. I can’t help but imagine how much better my mom’s health would be if it weren’t for him, or how much anyone one of us would be, or the World. Truly, when one talks about a truly worthless human being: my brother is the epitome,’ says E.

‘Gees.’

'Uh,' E.

'There's redeeming qualities, right? There's always a bright side, no? Come on, man!'

'Yeah, for sure,' E.

'I, well, why allow your brother to have such power over you? Why let him get to you?'

'It's not like that. I don't think so. His existence forces me to strive higher, to have a high tolerance for bullshit, to identify with a keener eye, perhaps, I don't know, but if I'd really given in, then I wouldn't be anywhere, I'd just be at home like him, doing nothing, being nothing, existing as nothing in the Flesh,' says E.

'You're in grad school. You seem pretty together. Things aren't so bad.'

'I know they're not. I've worked through.'

'So what's your ultimate goal?'

'To write myself into a hole I can't escape from.'

'How's that?' A.

'I mean, to be able to write myself into a hole, then write myself out of it. To Own the Power to add layers of meaning and find direction in chaos. Just to Be Stronger.'

'Stronger than what?' asks Austin.

'The power to be Stronger than a World that would Create Him,' says Enrique.

'I'm a positive guy, and I think that believing and thinking in the Future and imagining yourself doing great things is the way to go, but that's just me,' says Austin.

'That seems apropos,' says Enrique.

'Think positive,' says Austin.

'I do. It's just a matter of sifting through the shit to truly appreciate that which isn't shit.'

'And those ARE?'

'Beauty, the semblance of, Truth, versions of, something strikes the heart and demands the mind to listen, always, I feel, I think, and that's the version of my truth I feel relatable and sustainable.'

'Alright.'

'So where's Everyone?' asks Enrique.

'\_\_\_\_\_ is sleeping on the couch, and Jeff and Elizabeth, I think, went into the Bedroom.'

'Oh.'

'Hey, man. Whenever you're in San Diego, my sister and I will show you around. It's a beautiful place. You ought to go.'

'Sounds Awesome.'

'Lots of girls.'

'Yeah? How are they?'

'They're cool, man. Real Chill. Real laid-back. Certainly not like Orange County,' says Austin.

'Awesome.'

'So how's the love life going?' asks Austin.

'Painfully Slow.'

Laughs, then both laugh.

'I don't know. I don't really care enough to form an assessment. Been broken hearted a few times, that's about it. Shit doesn't work out, you know. Other than that, it's just a matter of having a supreme lack of confidence most of the time, which isn't a concern because if the right chick comes along, all the confidence in the world will be there,' says E.

‘Sounds like you’re making excuses man! The poet speaks but doesn’t listen!’ says A. Laughs.

‘What happened? Some chick broke your heart and now you don’t want to do anything and not go out and meet Other chicks? Is that it? You got to move on, man. That’s all.’

‘No, no, ha, funny, but no.’

‘Then what?’

‘Just Time. Go years between chicks.’

‘Years!?!’ almost shouting.

‘WHY?’ asks E.

‘Years. Something Good must have happened then! What’d they do?’ asks A.

‘Who, what do?’ E.

‘If you didn’t feel like searching or Being with a chick or you go years between, then something’s going on. She really broke it, didn’t she? What’d she do? Fuck one of your friends? Cheat on You? What happened?’ asks Austin.

‘...,’ reluctant, ‘The two worst ones, one, I was 19, I was in love with this girl, we’d hung out for a while, I told her how I felt, you know, I told her I loved her, she flipped out. She never talked to me again. I didn’t know what to think at the time, I just knew I felt like shit. Made me take into consideration the true power of words, even words that are supposed to be good. It seems to me now, as it did then, that those three words are the most dangerous in the language. It made me very wary, the situation, that is,’ says Enrique.

‘And you got over it.’

‘Yeah.’

‘But.’

‘But what?’

‘The same traps. Nice works. Nice works up to a point. And I feel horrible saying that or phrasing that in that way because it should just be, and to a certain degree, yes, niceness or goodness just happens, but then it overtakes the moment and you end up looking like a doormat or lacking vigor and the girl says she just wants to be friends.’

‘And you move on.’

‘Yes, but it’s the language.’

‘What?’

‘I evolved as a human being, as a person, as a man, my language and vocabulary, my insights evolve, I would hope, the language changes, meanings slightly alter, but Everything Else remains the same and impervious to change.’

‘What?’

‘The World Remains the Same.’

‘...’

‘But it doesn’t, it doesn’t stay the same, contradictions are good because they’re true, it’s only, they’re only, I, I, things, mm, the past has only shaped me, won’t confine me, there’s meaning, and now, I’ll write my way out of it, logic fails sometimes, the heart, that’s where it’s at, whatever I’m trying, attempting, poetry deciphers the hieroglyphics of the heart,’ says Enrique.

‘Nice, man,’ says Jeff.

‘Join the conversation,’ says Austin.

‘I’ve been listening for the past few minute. Awesome stuff, man,’ says Jeff.

‘Words from the heart.’

‘You write,’ says Austin.

‘I have to,’ E.

‘No, I mean poetry,’ A.

‘Yes,’ says Enrique.

‘And philosophy. Philosophy connects the dots, sometimes, and sometimes makes a mess of a mess, Other times presents the glimmer of clarity,’ says Jeff.

‘I thought you said Logic fails as a sign,’ says Enrique.

‘Yes, but the heart. There’s directional logic, gut-level analysis. Sometimes one has to philosophize with the tuning fork of the heart,’ says Jeff.

‘There’s logic even in logic failing,’ says Enrique.

‘But even then, it doesn’t fail all the time,’ says Jeff.

‘What?’ asks Austin.

‘You know,’ says Enrique.

‘I’m majoring in marketing,’ says Austin.

‘Just saying, when logic fails, the heart picks up the slack, but all of it can be debilitating, like I said, logically, I’m over, say, the girl I told you about from when I was a kid, or the girl a dated a few years back, but inside the walls of my heart, fuck, the hurt’s still THERE, it’s just not developed anymore, it’s just a shadow of its former self, you know, and all that shit forms my opinions and actions, and I’m aware of that to the point where I hope I’m making more informed emotional decisions about where to invest love, or wherever, and perhaps the terminology could be better and the language could be a bit more cleaned up, but ultimately I just feel that the proper designation for the past is for *this* reflection, at least part of its purpose, I can’t make totalizing statements, I could, but surely as time moves, decisions fade in their relevancy, then move forward with their importance once again, I’m just saying, shit, I want things to make sense. I want meaning, love, affection, understanding, the warmth and love the past and present seem to be fucking with me, and when looking at literature and poetry and theory, they seem, whomever they are, seem to just, a lot of the time, give up and say, well, Oh, radical meaninglessness and disconnection and alienation, and fucking bullshit if that’s the case, you know what I mean?’ says Enrique.

‘For sure,’ says Jeff, ‘and I study postmodernism and I dig it, but I have moments where I’m like, mm, no. And even for things and times that aren’t recent, I mean, I’m not big on Kant. Yeah, man, some of the answers have to come from elsewhere, somewhere other than the pages of the anthologized dead and dying, we’re the living, we’re the future-writers and we’re in conversation with these cats, right, and we need to bring the future now,’ says Jeff.

‘Earlier you were talking about the animal-Other. How’s that, I mean, that’s what you meant?’ Enrique.

‘Yes, part of it. Bringing Ethics to Postmodernism. Bringing Kant’s categorical imperatives and applying them to different areas that haven’t otherwise been considered, at least the mainstream hasn’t yet. There are some people that have written on the subject, but theirs is more of a classical case against eating meat, whereas I’m seeking to give logic concert with a PostModern Ethics to the conversation,’ says Jeff.

‘And when will the world take notice and implement all this? That’s what I want to know because we should do this for all our work. Things are falling apart, and what does convention have to say about it other than to place bandages on the exit wounds convention inflicted on itself? Nothing but excuses,’ says Enrique.

‘Definitely. There needs to be a movement outside the ivory towers of Academia,’ says Jeff.

‘And inside,’ says Enrique.

‘For sure, Definitely, and the Internet is so fractured and free, and even democratic, in the truest sense of the word, that there’s definitely the medium to spread a message to the masses. The only concern, one of many, so the primary concern: how will the message survive? Will it have the will to survive?’ Jeff.

‘I’ve lost track of the conversation,’ says Enrique.

‘Me, too,’ says Austin.

‘Clarity, more Clarity.’

‘That’s the thing, clarity,’ J.

‘Simplicity, too?’ E.

‘Selling it,’ A.

Enrique laughs.

‘We have to sell the Truth!’ says E.

Jeff and Austin laugh.

‘Well, yeah, convention and illusion is the reality, so the Truth will seem shocking, radical, perhaps even dangerous,’ says Jeff.

‘And what is the Truth,’ asks Austin.

‘You mean, not what is Truth but what is THE Truth?’ says Enrique.

‘Yes, exactly, what the fuck does that mean?’ says Austin.

‘That’s another good question,’ Enrique.

‘...’  
‘..’  
‘.’

‘Peace, Love, Truth, a person could spend a Lifetime explaining them, but one has to live them.’

‘Does that seem right?’

‘It feels right.’

‘We’re back to radical reductiveness.’

‘No, but there’s clear aims now.’

‘We can use finite examples and try and narrow meaning but that’s what will get us into trouble linguistically, no? Regardless of the narrowness or the illusion of finiteness, the meaning’s larger than the very words used to describe those ideas.’

‘That’s it.’

‘That sounds right.’

‘Differentiate through dialectic, that’s the way most will try and unhinge, unravel, so to express that which already exists beyond words doesn’t necessitate clear static definitions.’

‘In an ideal World!’

‘Fuck.’

‘Are you writing this down?’

‘I’m out of ink, but I’ll try and remember through the best of my abilities, though sometimes I dream I’m reading and then I wake up and think and feel that I’ve already done the assigned reading, which isn’t the case sometimes, so I may write this down in my mind’s eye only to realize it’s not there, but the essential gut feeling knows. It’s always there. There’s no loss for direction.’

‘Can you package meaning? Truth? Love?’ asks Austin.

‘Market it, you mean,’ E.

‘Yeah,’ A.

‘Unfortunately.’

‘Along with the packaging, the meaning is lost as well.’

‘Gone with the Gloss.’

‘Sold and lost, an investment in the idea but not the reality.’

‘I don’t believe marketing an idea works when you materially sell it.’

‘I hate using the word organic, and I don’t believe it’s appropriate here, but there needs to be some natural spiritual, gut, heart and mind gravitational pull that develops from an ignited flame inside the hearer’s mind, from inside the failed logic of the mind clawing the heart’s flesh,’ says Enrique.

‘Music,’ says Jeff.

‘mm.’

‘Film.’

‘Idols.’

‘words.’

‘Let’s start Over,’ says E.

‘Where?’

‘...’

‘Remember, these things are already woven into the Heart! Aren’t they? Their existence extends beyond human language, human understanding, and perhaps this inability, or perception of inability, strands us from reaching--’

‘Not Transcendent, it’s not transcendent on some imagined plane.’

‘People, some people live it. They’re exhibits in the flesh.’

‘All this shit is possible, I know it.’

‘It’s there.’

‘Market it, package it, sell it. Transform the World,’ says A.

‘No, money, that’s the problem, too,’ says Enrique.

‘Overly produced, hyped, empty celebrity wont’ do,’ says Jeff.

‘You can’t sell Love. You can’t sell the fucking emotion because it’s not transferable via money. A physical act can be sold or executed but not the heart, so, then, perhaps the question is how to change hearts? Does that sound corny? Fuck it, I don’t care. That’s the problem, too, Giving a shit about how things sound. I’d rather make mistakes with sounding sounds attempting the mystical realm of whatever it is I’m striving for than to be stuck with convention,’ says E.

‘Fuck Convention... but hasn’t it brought us here? as a Society? as a Civilization?’ asks A.

‘No. Convention holds *us* back. People always cling to the past,’ Jeff.

‘Convention says shit is always the same and always good as the same,’ Enrique.

‘Convention keeps humanity back by hindering visions of the possible,’ says Jeff.

‘One has to storm the Future,’ says E.

‘Without marketing the idea? Without gloss? Without Buzz? Without Celebrity Endorsement?’ says Austin.

‘Those things are necessary to products that can’t stand on their own two feet,’ says Enrique.

‘True, when quality is low, the product needs all those things. Gloss. Hype. Celebrity,’ says Jeff.



'What's the goal then?'  
 'The impossible!' says Enrique.  
 'Undermining the very foundation of society,' says Jeff.  
 'With reason?' E.  
 'Yeah, with what, man?' A.  
 'A good enough example, a good enough--'  
 'No, good enough isn't good enough, it has to be spot-fucking-on,' says Enrique.  
 'The building blocks of reality, of society have to be shown behind the veil. One has to unveil that which resides underneath, then one and everyone can see what has always lived under the surface, the facade of stability, its very nature as constructions made by man,' says Jeff.  
 'And then what?' asks Enrique.  
 'And then nothing,' says Jeff.  
 '.....'  
 '.....'  
 'Animals.'  
 'Humans are animals.'  
 'Language.'  
 'So what?'  
 'You mean Miles Davis?'  
 'ha.'  
 'hehe.'  
 'We should be as a species more logical.'  
 'Logic fails.'  
 'Smokescreens.'  
 'Logic, facts, who needs that?' Jeff.  
 'The logical philosopher would say,' E.  
 'No, He took all the poetry out of language. He had a big hard-on for Truth,' Jeff.  
 'Who, Wittgenstein? Derrida? Plato?' asks Enrique.  
 'Animals aren't concerned with Truth, they just live!' shouts Jeff.  
 'I want to live like an Animal and live without Truth!' says Enrique half joking.  
 'haha,' A.  
 'Look at the whale. Truth without Truth. Knowledge without knowledge. Existence without knowing you're existing. Always in the moment. That's a fucking whale!' says Jeff almost shouting.  
 'Wittgenstein would say, Can a Cat LIE to you?' asks Jeff.  
 'That makes sense,' says Enrique.  
 'Philosophy is doomed in its head,' says Jeff.  
 'Most of Everything is an exercise of pure abstract knowledge,' says e.  
 'Words,' says A.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ wakes up.  
 'What the fuck are you guys talking about?' she asks.  
 Elizabeth walks into the living room from the bedroom.  
 'What's all the commotion, I'm reading over here,' says Elizabeth.  
 'Philosophy Circle,' says e.  
 'hahahah,' a.  
 'Ah, you boys!'

'You can join us,' says Jeff.  
 'I have real world applications to worry about! I can't be stuck in my head!' says Elizabeth returning to her room.  
 'I'll join you guys,' says \_\_\_\_\_.  
 'Welcome Aspasia!' says e.  
 'Who?' \_\_\_\_\_.  
 'huh?'  
 'What were you guys talking about?' \_\_\_\_\_.  
 'While you were sleeping?'  
 'Well, yeah, all that weed and wine,' says \_\_\_\_\_.  
 'You're right.'  
 'Language and Animals,' says e.  
 'hahah,' \_\_\_\_\_.  
 'We were talking about Whales being in the Moment,' says e.  
 'Imagine if time could be pink!' \_\_\_\_\_.  
 'what?'  
 'huh?'  
 'I'm just fucking with you guys!' says \_\_\_\_\_.  
 'Let's abandon language!' says \_\_\_\_\_.  
 'Nooooooo,' says e.  
 'All philosophers always stay wondering,' says \_\_\_\_\_.  
 'If we want Language, Language obscures meaning,' j.  
 'Then how would we communicate?' e.  
 'It's so out of nowhere to begin with,' says J.  
 'The Future is Not Alive, It's unPaved!' says J, almost shouting.  
 'I wrote a book once, I destroyed it,' says e.  
 'What?' asks j.  
 'when i was a kid, when i was a kid there was this girl, i wrote this book, i was going to write the book anyway, somewhere along confusion, i couldn't even keep the i in the uppercase, i was e e cummings the shit before i knew what it was, joycian the shit, shooting the shit, confusion the shit,' says e.  
 'on what?' \_\_\_\_\_.  
 'On the way down I wrote a book,' says e.  
 'Down where?'  
 'Where there was meaning, Beauty, Truth,' says e.  
 'on the way down,' e.  
 'the way down there,' says \_\_\_\_\_.  
 'how do you know you're not there already,' asks Jeff.  
 'because someone would have stamped my boarding pass,' says e.  
 'we're walking towards the end! this is eventful!' says \_\_\_\_\_ gleefully.  
 'so cryptic,' says A. laughing.  
 'it's the movement of the sign, where is it going to take us!?' j.  
 'Pure reality, fuck that. This is reality,' says a.  
 'Unicorn meat,' says \_\_\_\_\_.  
 'So where do we begin now?' asks e.  
 'Animals are always already forgetting Everything,' says Jeff.

**FRAGMENTS REFLECT:**

sometimes i wonder how LONG  
it's been since i was a child  
and i still called  
my brother  
by his  
name.

*our* mom,  
our mom  
still reaches out to him. she calls him by his name.  
she looks at him with a forgiving tenderness.  
she calls out to him as if nothing  
has ever happened.  
she calls out with warmth.

and with her eyes,  
reflecting pools  
of the heart's lament,  
sparkling, readying  
for that moment that  
seems never to  
arrive.

she waits for him.

she speaks to him.

she stands there in the kitchen making herself food,  
speaking to him as he makes his own.

he pays no heed,  
 he's in his own world,  
 she tries to break in.

he was in a mental ward once,  
 he begged to get out.  
 he cried, he promised  
 to become better.  
 i was a child then.  
 i saw my mother's heart break.

it's only a phase, we thought.  
 it's only teenage angst we hoped.  
 there's nothing else to believe  
 we felt.

mom, she felt what everyone  
 else felt, we thought,  
 but it was something  
 more.

'I love you all the same,' she would say in Spanish.  
 'Why doesn't he have to speak?' I would ask.  
 'He's your brother,' her only response.

And then one day,  
 he just dropped off the face  
 of the Earth.

'Where is he?' mom screamed in panic.  
 Hysterical for her son.

He returned. He kept to his room.  
 Nearly Everyday and Every Hour.  
 Just Silence. Those were the Early Years.  
 I would forget sometimes  
 he even existed.  
 He was home-schooled for a time, too.  
 Someone, he had a name, would come  
 to our home and speak to him for a few hours.  
 My mom would be There.  
 She would be proud for some reason,  
 at least he's getting an education, she would say.

But he quit even that, I think.

I try to remember times  
even further removed from the ones  
I've written about.

I can't recall very many.  
I remember once I slipped and fell in a puddle of mud.  
I went to the school nurse and they called my house.  
No one was home except my brother.  
He brought me pants. He didn't say anything to me.  
I must have been in the 1st Grade.

There was another time, this time in the 3rd Grade,  
I was taking Karate lessons,  
and mom told him to watch me while she and dad  
went to the bank (or maybe it was the doctor).  
He sat in the back of the auditorium.  
He didn't say anything or show expression.

There aren't too many photos of my brother.  
There's one that's in a frame in my parents' room.  
It's one where him and I are holding a cat.  
Well, actually, I'm holding the cat.  
There's no real expression on his face,  
but in his eyes there's something else.  
Something different. It's as if he's seeing  
something I'm unable to.  
He can't be more than 12 years old  
in the picture, and I'm no more than  
5.

My mom was in an accident in the 80's.  
She doesn't remember the year.  
She worked at a machine, it caught her sleeve and  
then pulled the rest of the arm in, twisted it,  
ripped and pulled apart ligaments and nerves, she says.  
It gave her the opportunity to be a stay at home mom.  
When I was a kid, she always related a story bearing significance.  
She said it was in Elementary school when Robert refused to attend.  
He would cry and plead, cry and beg.  
So one day she walks Robert to school, as she normally did,  
but instead of leaving she stuck around. Of course,  
she hid from view. It turned out this bigger kid in Robert's  
class was bullying him. Mom said the kid was twisting Robert's  
arm and that Robert was crying for mercy. She ran towards the two

and separated them. She said she had to restrain herself from slapping the kid, or worse. ‘How would you like it if someone did that to you?’ she asked him. That’s why it was so important for mom to walk me to school everyday. She would stay until the bell rang and class started. It was embarrassing, but I understood why she felt she had to.

When I was a kid, my sister got really sick. Mom says she almost died. It seemed like it, too. She was in the ICU and everyone who visited her had to wear a mask. I don’t remember anything else except that she got better.

I have another older brother. His name is Daniel. He’s very charismatic. In fact, I would go so far as to say his very confidence borders on hubris. Sometimes I wonder if that very confidence got him into some of the trouble he got into when he was younger. I remember he would be out late and that mom would yell at him when he got home. They’d get into arguments, but it was never anything too serious. Robert, I feel, broke mom’s heart, but I think Daniel had his share of heartbreaking, too. When Daniel first got locked up, Mom took it real hard. She was so disappointed she cried, and then I cried. The first time he got locked up he got a few months. The second time he got a few more months. In 2003 he was arrested and charged with some serious stuff. He served 7 years in Federal prison. Mom cried a lot, but she always defended him. She would say things like, ‘but he never killed anyone, he never raped anyone. He made a mistake. He’s making up for it now. He’s my son and I love him’ (in Spanish). Dad would always stay quiet. He rarely says anything anyway. Not about Robert. Not about Daniel. Even when we talk, I have to initiate conversation, mostly about baseball or graduation or whatever is in the news. Mom says that my dad has emotion, though. Mom says that when Loop had her first baby, dad cried, that he knelt before the Jesus on the wall and prayed. I believe her.

Sometimes mom tells me just how proud she is of me. She’ll say, ‘Don’t tell your siblings, but we’re very proud.’ And then sometimes mom and I have conversations about what society values. I keep telling her that society only pays lip-service to education and knowledge. No one cares about what anyone knows. We’re a society and culture addicted to Entertainment, I tell her (in Spanish), ‘Mom, no one cares about my fucking masters degree. No one gives a shit. A person gets more respect coming out of prison than coming out of graduate school. People don’t value shit<sup>96</sup>. It’s the sad Truth. It’s part of the Ugliness of Life.’ And she’ll respond, ‘Oh, that’s not True.’ I don’t feel like arguing much, so I say nothing.

Mom always tells me I should go to family functions; that is, aunts and uncles throwing parties or Christmas or Thanksgiving events. I rarely go. I don’t care. Dad always says, ‘You need to know your family.’ I always respond, ‘Don’t I already know them?’ However, I do admit, I do have favorite cousins. If I know for a fact they’ll be there, I make an effort to show up.

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<sup>96</sup> That is, ‘People don’t value anything.’

One cousin asks me to proofread his essays. I think he's serious about school. That's good. The most important advice I give him is this: get yourself some white friends. I tell my cousin: "if you want emotional and spiritual support, get white friends. Because if you're male and Mexican *and* do well in school, you'll be called a faggot, a bitch, a homo, and be accused of *acting white*. And that's not an Opinion, that's fact."

Mom can barely breathe sometimes. She says she has bronchitis, pneumonia, and she has had those things in the past. She's had a whole mess of things: surgeries that number in the dozens. Something with her arm, nerves, ligaments, and tendons. She's a walking pharmacy. A lot of the time, I'm not sure she really knows what's going on, which is indicative of some of the wild shit she'll say. Then again, she does have her own social worker, psychologist, etc. I hate taking her to her meetings. She always ends up crying. I always wonder why she doesn't just lash out at the people that have hurt her. She just cries a lot. Crying doesn't solve anything, I think, but then I'll do it sometimes when I get sad, so I can't really say anything to her about it. Sometimes all there is to do is hug her.

When I was 19, I told this one girl I loved her. It was a big mistake, not because I didn't mean it, I did mean it, but she didn't feel the same way. She ultimately severed our friendship. Her and I were good friends, or at least I thought we were. We would go to movies, baseball games, and concerts. We'd chat online for hours. At the time, I thought, 'If this isn't something meaningful, then what is?' But, full-disclosure, I fucked up. I told her I liked her first. That didn't hold up well and she ignored me for two weeks. After two weeks she started talking to me again. After a few months, I told her I liked her again; that time only because I thought she felt the same way, too. I was stupid.

Dad has always worked 60 hour weeks. All my memories of Dad are mostly him getting home from work exhausted, eating, and then falling asleep. However, I do remember Dad taking me to Angels' games. Those were the Days of the California Angels and Anaheim Stadium. There were literally about 10,000 people at the games. Hotdogs and tickets were reasonably priced. It didn't matter that the Angels lost most of their games. It didn't matter they were perennial losers. All that mattered was baseball, that, and hanging out with Dad.

*I'm at church,  
I'm inside my mom's embrace  
my brother  
steps out  
from his  
communion class,  
and  
he  
cries.*

*'what accounts for this shift?'*

*'what accounts for this break?'*

*I'm losing site of the question.*

*someone cries in the distance.*

*I'm injured, says the rabbit.  
a smiled stamped on her face.  
my mom sings her song.*

*Endlessly awake  
Bloop.  
Look at me.  
Swim. ha.  
I see you.  
And then my family  
comes over  
and  
stares at you  
you staring  
at them.  
and  
you display no emotion*

*hi, how are you?*

*I want to scream  
at your face*

*does a fish have memories?  
I hope so.*

*Mumbles cleans the Fish Tank.*

*Mom: 'Tu tio Jose se murio cuando era joven. Andabo nadando en el mar durante la noche. Se ogo. Pobre. Era muy amable. Todo el tiempo bailaba a nuestra mama. Era muy carinoso. Muy platicador. Muy chistoso. Era mi hermano. Me recuerdo de el.'*<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Your uncle Jose died young. He was swimming late at night out in the sea. He drowned. Poor guy. He was so amiable. He would dance our mother around all the Time. He was very affectionate, very talkative, so hilarious. He was my brother. I remember him.



She Reflects.

## AUGUST 2010

I'm at \_\_\_\_'s place. She literally lives down the street from me. About 4 miles down the street taking Main St. It's a pretty fancy place. Gated Community and All. She doesn't have a buzzer to open the gate at the front, so I have to wait for Other cars to open the gate and then drive in after them. Sometimes the wait gets lengthy, but Other times I get lucky and there's no wait at all. During the day, however, there's no wait at all because the front gates stay open until about 4 or 5PM. Anyway, I'm here. She lives on the third floor. All the apartment complexes look the same, so I just have to remember to have a feel for where I'm going, and I feel by now I just have a gut non-thinking instinct. There's plenty of parking in the early afternoon. I ring the doorbell. [There's a shift from the first to the third person that occurs a few pages in.]

'eek!' she yelps playfully.

There's the sound of papers rustling.

She opens the door.

'Hi Monster!' she says.

'Hi Munchkin!'

'Don't call me that! You know I hate it!' she says.

I walk in. She wears black short-shorts and a sweatshirt.

'Are you going to be Help me, Monster?' she asks

'Of course, Why wouldn't I?'

'There's Diet Pepsi in the refrigerator. Help yourself if you want any. My mom made quesadillas, too, if you're hungry,' she says.

'Awesome.'

'But if you're going to drink Diet Pepsi make sure to finish it. Last time you were here you left a can half-full! Diet Pepsi doesn't grow on Trees!' she explains.

I laugh.

'You're funny, Munchkin.'

'No, I'm serial,' she says.

I open the refrigerator and opt not to drink a Diet Pepsi.

'Drink One if you want One,' Munchkin says.

'I'll have some Water.'

'It's empty.'

I go out to the balcony and get a full jug of water and then come back and heave the new jug to replace the old one.

'I've you trained well,' she says.

'Ha.'

'Are you going to eat, Monster? You need sustenance for you big, giant brain!' she says.

Laughs.

'You're too funny, Munchkin.'

Munchkin bites me.

'Ah!'

'That's what you get!' she says playfully.

'I love you, Munchkin,' I say with warmth.

'Don't say those words!' she protests.

'Why not?'

'I don't know,' she says.

'Don't you love me, Munchkin?'

'Yeah,' she says.

She wraps her arms around me.

I kiss her on her forehead.

'I'm evil,' she says.

'That's ridiculous,' I reply.

'No, it's true,' she says.

'Beautiful girls have low self-esteem,' I say.

'Stop it!' she protests, not seriously.

'Why do you love me so much?' she asks.

'Why wouldn't I?'

'Maybe you're evil, too!'

'Would that make you happy?'

'YES!' she says excitedly as she almost jumps.

I start laughing, turning away.

'Look at me, Monster!'

'Fine,' I turn, 'Munchkin, you're hilarious! That's why I love you.'

'No, Monster, is that the best you can do with your big, fat brain!'

Laughs.

'You're funny.'

'I'm going to start calling you Brian!'

'That makes no sense.'

'You have a big, fat brain that fits in your big, fat head, and your brain has a name: Brian,' says Munchkin.

'I don't give you a bad nickname.'

'Munchkin is a horrible nickname! It sounds like keychain or something.'

Laughs (mine).

'Okay, then what would you like me to call you?'

'Warlock!'

Laughs (mine).

‘Warlock!?’

‘Yes, Warlock! I’m a Warlock!’ says Munchkin.

‘Okay, what else?’

‘I don’t know.’

‘Come on.’

‘Troll.’

‘That one’s not even--’

Munchkin gives me a soft kick to the leg, ‘Leg Sweep!’ she says as she moves on to the sofa. I pour myself a cup of water and sit down.

‘How was your day?’

‘It was alright. I ran 4 miles and then I went swimming,’ she says.

‘Wow. That’s impressive. How do you have the energy for that?’

‘Maybe because I don’t eat at Del Taco every day,’ she says with a wry smile.

‘You’re a funny bunny.’

‘That’s not how you’re supposed to talk to an evil warlock!’

I kiss her.

‘Aaaaah!’

‘In yo face.’

‘I’m trying to work on my project and you’re trying to get in my pants!’ she says loudly.

‘You’re crazy, Munchkin.’

‘Now help me with this.’ She opens a giant one-thousand page book and proceeds to search for a quote. She finds it, marks it, and opens her bag with several folders. Dozens of academic articles appear to be inside. A hardcopy of her Thesis, too.

‘Huh.’

‘Now look at what I have so far,’ M.<sup>98</sup>

‘Okay.’

‘What do you think? Am I retarded?’

‘No.’

‘Can you make it sound pretty?’

E laughs.

‘You’re funny,’ E tells M.

‘I’m Serial,’ m says in a cutesy voice.

‘I’m hungry,’ E says thumbing through the pages.

‘Of course you’re hungry! You’re a monster,’ says m.

E laughs.

‘Make yourself a sandwich if you want,’ says m.

‘Okay.’

E proceeds to make himself a sandwich.

‘Are you going to use mayonnaise?’ asks m.

‘No, why?’

‘Mayonnaise is the lube of sandwiches,’ says m.

‘I was unaware.’

‘Don’t drop your eyebrows at me!’ says Munchkin, half kidding.

‘Ha!’ says e.

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<sup>98</sup> Names are reduced to their Initial letter. At times, such reduction is symbolic.

'What are you going to put in it?'  
 'Cheese, cheetos, ketchup, turkey,' e.  
 'That's crazy!'  
 'How's it crazy?'  
 'Cheetos?'  
 'yeah.'  
 'That's Anarke (sic)!' says Munchkin.  
 'Anar-ke? ahahahahaha!' laughs E.  
 'Stop making fun of my stupidisms!' cries Munchkin.  
 'They're funny! I need to Tweet that!' says En.  
 'I'm going to kill you!' M approaches E.  
 'Ahahahah!' E laughs.  
 'Serial!' with a funny angry face.  
 'Nooooo!' playing along.  
 'Your Twitter is recording my Retardisms!'  
 'They're Genius!'  
 'Everyone needs to get punched in the face once in a while!' M.  
 'Domestic Violence!' E.  
 'At least I don't leave marks when I smack you!' says Munchkin.  
 E laughs.  
 'You better not write about this!' says M.  
 E embraces M.  
 'I love you, Munchkin.'  
 'You're crazy, you big, fat-headed monster.'  
 'Did I show you the short story I wrote?'  
 'Don't turn me into all your short stories!'  
 'It's only One!'  
 'What's it titled?'  
 'Do you need a Title?' asks Enrique.  
 'Yes!'  
 'Or, I mean...'  
 'What, you're going to need 3 hours to think about it!?'  
 E laughs.

'Eat your sandwich. I'm going to take a shower,' says Munchkin.  
 E eats his cheeto, cheese, turkey, and ketchup sandwich, sans mayonnaise. Drinks a Diet Pepsi (now). He sits down and Turns on m's computer. Surfs the internet. E hears M singing in the shower. She's singing along to a Rihanna song. He continues surfing the net, checking his Facebook, Twitter, and GMail accounts. [15 minutes elapse]

m comes into the living room.  
 'What are you doing, Brain?'  
 'What?'  
 'You're Brain.'  
 'Okay.'  
 'Did you read my project?'  
 'No.'

'Who told you you could use my computer?'

'You gave me your password, remember?'

'You probably gave my computer AIDS.'

'Yeah, probably got it from you, then,' dryly, though not serious.

'Where's my unicorn?'

'On the side here.' E takes the unicorn and hands it to M. He smells it first.

'Don't smell my unicorn!'

'Touchy!'

'Serial, though, what do you think of my project? Am I retarded? Be honest,' says Munchkin.

'Jesus, you're not retarded. Why do you always say things like that? Believe in yourself. You're in the program for a reason. Very few people major in English to begin with, even fewer go to Grad School. You're almost done with your MA, and I don't understand how in the fuck you can even think or imply that you're retarded,' says Enrique.

'That's easy for you to say, you and Jeff are super smart,' says Munchkin.

'Christ, you can write. You are smart. You like the same things I like. We're here together. Why can't you appreciate that?'

'I don't know,' in a small, demure voice.

Enrique starts to read Munchkin's MA Project out loud.

'No, don't read it out loud. Read it to yourself,' says Munchkin.

'Fine.'

Enrique reads the first few pages of the introduction, then thumbs through the first section of the project thereafter.

'This reads fine,' E.

'No, it's stupid,' M.

'You've done an immense amount of reading for this project. You've read the leading scholars on the subject. Why can't you give yourself some credit? This is good. You're on your way. It's quality. Your mind is more than capable of writing and producing an excellent project,' says E.

'I don't know,' says M.

'You do know,' says E.

'Did you finish your Diet Pepsi?' M.

'Not yet,' E.

'Diet Pepsi doesn't grow on trees,' M.

'You're acting like I'm wasting food,' E.

'When you're poor, Diet Pepsi is Food!'

'Ha,' E.

'Did you read the poems I e-mailed you?' asks Enrique.

'Yes, I love 'em.'

'Awesome.'

'Why do you write me poetry?' asks Munchkin.

'Why wouldn't I?' replies Enrique with a question.

'Aren't you busy with your classes and studying for the MA Exam and doing your MA proposal?' says M.

'I find Time. There's always Time for that sort of Thing, isn't there? It's time well spent, an investment almost,' says E.

‘How?’

‘Love,’ E.

‘ha!’

‘Radically Reductive but Accurate!’ says E.

‘You’re duuuumb,’ Munchkin says playfully.

‘yeah,’ E.

‘Love is Dumb.’

‘Preposterous!’

‘It is!’

‘Pft!’

‘How can you be so smart and so Dumb!?’ says Munchkin.

‘Whatever, Munchkin!’

‘Stop Calling me Munchkin!’

‘Love you Munchkin!’

‘Grrrrrrrrrr!’ a playful anger.

[SHIFT]

Munchkin pushes Enrique and lies on top of him on the couch. They kiss.

‘I don’t understand you,’ says M.

‘I can say the same thing about you,’ says E.

‘So what are you going to do after you graduate?’ asks M.

‘I don’t know.’

M. ‘How in the fuck do you mean you don’t know! Monster, you need to get your PhD!’ says

E. ‘Why would I do that? There’s already a surplus of PhD people. The market is saturated,’

‘What! This coming from you! You’re the one telling me to believe in myself!’ says M.

‘That’s different,’ says E.

‘Bull plop it’s different!’ M.

‘Maybe.’

‘No Maybes!’

‘And then what?’ E.

‘You could be the First Mexican to Write a Book!’ says Munchkin.

‘I don’t think that’s accurate, but it’s close enough to be painfully true,’ says Enrique.

‘You’re from Santa Ana. How many people even read there? How many just dropout of school and drop out of Life? Didn’t you say your oldest brother is in Prison and the Other one is Schizophrenic? And then you said you’ve had friends who were homeless, heroin addicts, smoking crack, dropping acid, basically homeless, fucked-up, too, and how Santa Ana is murder-central, and yet you somehow rose above the shit to be where you are Today, and you don’t want to document that!?’ says Munchkin.

‘No, not really,’ says Enrique.

‘Then what are you going to write about?’

‘What have I written? I’ve written you Love Poetry,’ says Enrique.

‘You’re too Nice,’ says Munchkin.

‘Is that a character deficiency?’

‘No, but the World will Take advantage of you,’ says Munchkin.

‘Anyone one can write about the shit, few people can write about what makes life worth living, that’s my aim, though it’s very hard to do without sounding cliché,’ says e.

‘It’s inevitable.’

‘I don’t know about that.’

‘Well?’

‘Cynicism is too fucking easy,’ says Enrique, ‘anyone can do it. Let the World write Love in a meaningful way. I’d rather fail writing Love than Win writing Cynicism,’ says Enrique.

‘Idealism,’ M., ‘what about Academia?’

‘Half the time, if not all the time, when I’m at a conference, I’m thinking, who the fuck gives a shit? I mean, besides the 4 people in the audience? Academia needs poetry,’ says e.

‘And what about the future?! Go!’

‘As long as we’re together,’ says e.

‘No, I want to be independent. I’ll visit you,’ says Munchkin.

‘What?’ e.

‘Don’t talk about the future like that. You’re going too far into the future making plans [With Me]. I don’t know where I’m going to be, and maybe you’ll find another girl--’

‘Are you serious? Where is this coming from?’ asks Enrique.

‘It’s not you. I want to be independent.’

‘Then where are we now?’

‘I don’t know where I’ll be six months from now. Maybe I’ll want to marry you, maybe I’ll be somewhere far away,’ m.

‘I’m talking about right now,’ e.

‘Let’s just enjoy the right now,’ m.

‘So what are you going to do, Derridanize me?’ M. Adds.

‘No,’ e.

They both sit up.

‘You don’t need anyone to be happy,’ says m.

‘That seems correct, but it doesn’t *feel* correct,’ e, ‘there’s something missing from the statement.’

‘It’s reality,’ m.

‘That’s not reality, it’s perception. People are happy together. Not all, but some.’

‘I know, I’ve been through it with my divorce,’ says m.

‘Yes, you can’t use that for every case. The past is not always the case,’ e.

‘It’s most of the time,’ m.

‘Fuck time,’ e.

‘Things don’t last,’ m.

‘In their literalness, yes, I agree, in their material being, yes, but everything else? Things last, persons last, ideas, memories, moments,’ e.

‘You know what I mean,’ m.

‘What are you trying to get at right now? Do you want to be with me?’

‘I’m just saying don’t plan the future,’ says m.

‘I’m asking a clear question,’ e.

‘You know I love you,’ m.

‘...’

‘Are you going to help me with my project?’

‘It’s already in your mind, just draw it out,’ says e.

'I need you to make my words sound pretty and make sure the theory makes sense,' m.  
 'You know how to do it.'  
 'En-ri-kay,' says Munchkin, how she usually says E's name when she really wants to sound cutesy.

'Will your mom get angry if I write on you?' asks M as she starts writing on E's arm.  
 '.....'

'I'm hungry now,' m.

'What do you want to eat?' asks e.

'A burrita! It's a feminine burrito!' Munchkin says excitedly.

'You're funny,' says Enrique, feeling slightly better, almost amused by her statement.

'I need some Monster!'

'I'm right here,' says Enrique.

'Not you! The drink!'

Laughs.

e kisses m.

'You just want to get in my pants,' m.

'You just want me to help you with your project,' e.

An almost truth if not for the entirety of the statements feeling false. They both feel something more than their words had spared. Enrique loves her. And he hopes that she loves him, though moments like this don't help. He wonders what the future holds, and then squints his gut, feeling a matter of repulsion. His stomach expands with gas. Burps, too.

'Where's the poetry I wrote you?' asks Enrique.

'It's all in this file. I save all the poetry you write me, Giant,' says m.

'Now I'm Giant? Good,' thinks Enrique to himself.

\_\_\_\_\_ brings Enrique the file.

'Look, Monster, I save all your poetry,' she says.

'Wow, I, I don't know what to say, I thought you were just saying,' e.

'Look, from the first essay poem you wrote me, to other poems and writings. Look Monster,' she says.

'Munchkin-'

'Don't call me that,' she says.

'\_\_\_\_\_, I love you,' e tells her.

'I love my monster,' she says.

## 7/ 26/ 11

[The First Piece I Ever Wrote Her.]

To, if, ONLY Attempt to Try what had previously been hazarded by Prior Experience as something altogether risky/risque, by the facts held to the lantern, I would only attempt to Write what I Can't Say ALOUD for Fear of the Past making The PRESENT



[unthinkable] for the distant-far-out Future, for beauty masks all apprehension, and this same apprehension is a byproduct of that which never was/ but that which /one/i wish it was. For if you only *saw-her-eyes*, then you would understand as much as the next *cat--perhaps no-one-Being could*. And so it goes as the crystal ship rocks the world to sleep, making lullabies sound their perfumed air snapping up dragons, infiltrating unicorns, downgrading earth's gravitational pull as if saying, 'you are no longer grounded by the laws of physics,' whatever those may be, and you shape the World as your Own, regurgitating dreams, framing memories as stone, writing dreamscapes that have yet to Exist because you love the idea more than the reality and what is real outside of your own mind could only make you flinch at the thought that all is all too fleeting, and running away from the most indecipherable point of self-reflection, and so you say to yourself, 'self, i don't exist, not like this, and i, and i, and i,' makes three forums for interpellation between Beings of Sound, rocking the nebula to sleep, harvesting dreams in the fields of light, *irony eclipsed*, hurtling your past past your dreams, past your inevitability, past all pasts to pass on sound, if *ONLY* I could feel something remotely good would I even *Begin to Write That Sound. And so, I Begin to Write...*

Hurtling towards that indefensible mountain of work that has yet to come to fruition in my mind because running on dreams' fumes while all others swim, navigates the altruism(s) that word-spell-check won't allow me to write without those little red or yellow-or-whatever-fucking-color-is-in-vogue-at-the-time here on this page where I'm *writing into* my words I *wish, I hope* will have an incurring affection for all withholding sounds of a vagrant simple little art working towards its own *CREATION*. and there's the key for unlocking, unlocking, *UN-WORDING*, the *lyrical Ninjas* floating on there, *Right There, OH, NO, SOUNDS*, and their shadow *forwards the talking for that very especial ART*. And, You start talking to yourself, 'Enrique, Why? are you writing? W/ the Double Question Marks because You're Trying to Be Clever, but then realize if you *really were/ or are/* you wouldn't have to even consider the outside possibility of including the dereliction of *other words* because, Oh, weren't you so clever when u wrote 'if you only saw-her-eyes' (because she would get it right *then* and *there*) but realize it's so god-damn-transparent there's no way in (redacted) she wouldn't get it? *and .... There are two kittens writing their memoirs outside my door, and their names are Pinto y Chocolate. My mom named those stinky little critters. I'm not sure why she decided on those particular names, perhaps she just wanted friends she could relate to on a Furry level, you know, something cute and cuddly that wouldn't talk back when they've heard the same fucking story for the millionth time, and their progeny of words would answer and strike back with callous Framing*, because that university education she is so proud her son has is *ONLY* making him capitalize, essentially words he wants to give emphasis for, while accomplishing several-all together intricate things, namely: (1) Bridging the Gaps between parts of speech and tense, (2) Being the Arithmetic Between Beings, (3) Commentating on Several Aspects of the Writing/Being/Speaking/Prospects/ in an Absurdly withdrawn yet incredibly personal way, AND (4), perhaps most importantly, including kittens, ninjas, unicorns, and bizarre sentence structures and word-types to try and *write something that could in any possibly way impress her eyes*. And the lyrical yo-yo completes its turn, writing recipes on the precipice, overlooking, wandering towards/into/the frost/ of *the WONDER that could be*.

[And she loved it.]

**7/27/10**

Lyrical Chest--- Enrique Avalos [She asked for a short story and was e-mailed this.]

Smithereens from affluent soundcheck(s) throw stars overboard, missing parts of speech, angling for positions, wondering where those degrees from their thermostat[ical] geometry would break into the new world. And, the least amount of most isn't much more than the imperative yes, for which humanity has owed the menu, signaling star to star, time to time, glaring into the sun, the fattest dope sign under the spoon, regaling space with lyrical meter, where aliens strike, flounder, interject, crash, win bread and butter, lyrical casinos where the price of admission is the human heart.

Their finest agents descend and break their code on the fringes of interplanetary espionage, ransacking histories, memories, reestablishing pre-dawn civilizations every 4,000 years, yearning for the butter for which they can eat their lyrical toast.

<interjection/ phone call/ from Jeffrey R. Diller>

Diller: We should write a book.

Avalos: No, We Should Both Write Books.

Diller: Okay. I'll write the Odd numbered pages, and you write the even numbered pages, and people will Have To BUY Both Books to make ANY sense out of it.

Avalos: For sure, mang. And I'll be like, 'Diller writes on page 373, that X,Y, and Z aren't chromosomes of the Art, but, rather, if one were so inclined to Believe in such things, chromosomes of the Heart, to which I will respond on page 374, from which you are currently Reading, Dear Reader, and Yes, this Correspondence Between Books, this Dialogue Between Books is incredibly ridiculously/stupid/but Hilarious to US/ and we're Brothers from different Mothers/ you understand/ and, so, On With the Theory, mainly: I Will Write the Book to Undermine All Other Books, for Once you start counting pages, and, say, on average 350 page books, times say 400 (including plays/anthologies of poetry/random thick magazines/instruction booklets\*/all thrown in together only in the sense that at (at) certain number they COUNT as ONE BOOK, then, say, 100 magazines= 1 Book, One Anthology=2 Books, so on and so forth, etc., yes), now, 350 X400 (prolly [sic] MORE), 140,000 pages X 400 words? = 56 MILLION WORDS. TO which @ SOME POINT one really just has to STOP oneself from reading all this shit, not that theory or philosophy or DERRIDA/BAUDRILLARD/Bukowsky is shit or anything, far from it, it's not shit at all, and sometimes i have to catch myself saying, you know what, you need to stop interjecting with parenthesis and brackets and quotes and just let it ride, and not even a fancy colon/semi-colon/dash type of DEAL because you always already get it, so really, there's not even a need for the explanation for the explanation, and really, aren't we all just all really off track anyway? And my trains of thought drain the igloos from their scaffolding is what I should have written back when my heart was feeling cold enough to actually write a book i would only later regret, and later still only regret that i regretted, but thankfully learned

not to regret because there's no such thing as regret or concrete memories, you know, because it's just fragments that we all just thread together and we construct a narrative and call it narrative, because there is no single all-knowing fact or person or account, and anyone who says there is is full of shit, but i've forgotten my point that I had thought i had made only to think that i would have made it earlier if i had not already gone on the tangent's tangent and non-sequiturs galore, whatever that means, so, yeah, to prove or try and prove regardless of any point...

Diller: Fo Sho, Man.

Avalos: Yeah, you know.

Diller: Like, you'd be, hey this is the Book to fuck the Book to Undermine all Books, cause if you just took a shit and laid it on the platter, it'd still overlook what other works--

Avalos: At some point i just have to stop reading and write *That* fucking book.

Diller: and, to say, my mind is your mind is all our minds rounding together forming that mind that would write the book that is written of, intertextuality-wise, and take a massive shit,

Avalos: yeah, for sure, mang, pantheism, solipsism, but really regarding it like it truly exists,

Diller: you got it man.

Avalos: i don't got shit, and the shit i do got is more like shit i already took before i even thought i knew how to shit.

Diller: hahaha

Avalos: We need another philosopher's Circle.

Diller: For sure, mang.

Avalos: Cool, man.

Diller: Alright, I got to go, homie, catch you later.

Avalos: For sure, mang.

Diller: Che'a.

Avalos: Che'a, lates..

AND NOW BACK to writing what I was writing about interplanetary corroborations between secret and not-so-secret alliances, but, really, i had written some pretty good details on my phone when texting XXXXXXXX (not literally the X's, but person) in saying, or rather, laying out the structureless form when hearts render meaning from the lyrical eclipse (which is my new favorite word), for, and, nor, do I Understand the complete ramifications of a coherent, clear, or all together type of teamwork deal in regards to ideas working towards one another, perhaps with one another, because i stopped trying to write to [cant find the word] a certain corollary a while ago, if i'm only certain that what i feel to be certainly certifiable while not making up words is T-H-I-S write here, and this was supposed to be, ORIGINALLY, a blog about Outer space, but you know how those things work out when you don't have a science background and you're just trying to figure out why you're even worrying about things that are completely out of your control, and acting normal and being normal are two totally separate ideals that don't even mother- exist, and if only because my mind and stomach are currently filled with Diet Pepsi, and I assure you I am not trying to shill for the Pesi-Cola Corporation just to get a free case load of free Diet Pepsis for life or anything, i'm just trying to write, AND to further some Other point i may try and engender upon the reader while making up new meanings or verb forms for words i like because i can rationalize the mother-fucking thing in my mind even as the reader says, you can't do that, but why would it even matter? i'm sorry, here's my point rendered in what remains of a story:

I'll just allude to ninjas and unicorns, then, 'she moved stealthily, as if she had an airy gallop, perhaps a single horn on the forehead of her mind, bringing down the stars with her BURP, and the story would revolve around ALIENS, literal ALIENS, you know, like in the movies, but MORE cerebral and less alien, less scary, more friendly, more approachable aliens, and people, for if any reason, would only detest the aliens because they were foreign matters of matter, which is why, even if i would have used the original allegory that everyone was expecting for immigration would have fit in perfectly right on there, but this story isn't like changing tires or anything, it's more like tackling a motherfucking beast of a novel or book, or watching your favorite movie in life like a hundred times up and to and perhaps even beyond the point where you would really rather literally write far more descriptive and interesting shit, that is, if your poop could take a poop, that poop would write more novel, encongressed (sic) ideas than most Hollywood screen writers/ comedians/ , why not go after everyone? the book will never be published, perhaps, literally, anyway: there's a mission of uncanny (the word had said) importance to the galactic front, the Space Alliance Reform Interplanetary Annex Heist, or, [ ] for short. The most interesting space agents had formulated the lyrical dimensions, and' etc. and literally, reader, perhaps, then, now, thence hence when, you can probably unveil for yourself the encrypted intention of certain shorthand, err, acronyms, and realize that there are hidden-not-so-hidden likes, but i would like to assure all readers that there is ONE BOOK, in the [ ]-sense, and in that one respect, there is ONE READER, also, and when we read, we are merely practicing a form of literary pantheism, or perhaps even [ ], and we can understand to understand the not-so-understandable, and we are all representatives of that ONE BOOK, ONE READER, and I am not in the [ ]-ian sense any one author, for i think, if my theory class serves my memory correctly, there is no Author at all, but I would like to disagree with that point and merely say, i am a representative of the cognitive storm that ignites the mind into action, and that other representatives perhaps get tired of representing and fly off the deep-end of a short-bridge to nowhere between the spheres of reality and fiction, love and loneliness, alienation and crowd-surfing, one and nothing, one and zero, her and other, him and her, other and self, self and other, and other-self-other-self-other others selfs selves, and so on and so forth ad infinitum upon infinity until the moon bleeds ink and i cant even think on how to end this story, perhaps not even a story, but an exercise in trying to attempt to try to attempt a fiction based on a truth relegated to the experience of her, or one, that as sure as there is doubt, there is concrete certainty, and i would much rather believe and hang on to the reality i hope is real than the hundreds of millions of science fictions trying to pry me from my search, en search, of perhaps that beauty that has eluded, seemingly, one forever as it seems to launch unto the Other the enormity of Her manifested in the proems of one writing representatives choosing not to explicitly write into the structure stealth and horns, but will, much later, as in the matter of seconds, comprehend that one only chooses to choose at the space of deconstruction, of the same cosmic collision where form meets beauty, strikes reason, alliance, thought, and creeps into the wandering shadows born under the specter of dawn and night's breeding once more for the continuance of the species, and because the Gods could not write, they left their Homework for the Mortals Being sucker-punched by ninjas of the ultra-foxy variety, cerebral female, and that even if this whole enterprise sprung a leak in the collective waterfront of the international coalition of hearts and crafts, than that one single solitary space craft is worth all time and eternity of Being from this Point and Forward, for I want to Believe up and to the point and Beyond what is possible, because I want to not only believe but experience flight, want to explore the depths of time to

their un-logical conclusions, and even then, there's no real un-logical conclusion to this sort of space travel within the outer-inner space of one's own mind and hearts, because, really, when you get down to thinking about it, there is no Other. A Collection of Selves is What We HAVe. And what we have, the parameters, contours, and dimensions of that lyrical Being, of that literal translation, That, that unknowable knowable known, that's what we strive for, or at least, that's what I want to strive for, and even if it's in outer space, far-off into the nowhere, i want to be in that no where with you, whomever you could be, in stealth and surreal lyricism of magical realism, with all Latin literary references and dimensions intended for the utmost intent of affection in the solstice of the effect, if any, of what I'm trying to say, that ~~that~~ that cosmic slice of the draw, an act of neo-dimensions, that teach you how do dig even deeper in the uncharted dance step of newborn stars, a nascent dream taken for nearly ever to form, until the lyrical n-o-w that harnesses the power of words taken full-effect upon the heart, for if the mind would simply stop reading and learn to realize, then, and perhaps, murmuring from wind to wind, crests and storms, binaries be damned, and stories that are just literally fronts to cover the enormity of the intensity for which the representative writer writes to alter the course of history, perhaps one together, uncovering the lyrics from the songs that have gone unloved by time, and 'the roses would grow', as is the long forgotten tune, from the chronic cruelty of life to form the lyrical, statistical, irregularity, and Beauty that resides within and without in her own dimension, in her own heart, that perhaps she may one day learn to realize crystalizes the essence of her own Being, even without the interface between worlds and theory and poetry, but just Be, There. And her own story towers over the limbering shell and crackling structure i have learned to create from timeless hours and days and weeks and months and years learning not to realize but comprehending how to understand to intersect the interchange between signifieds, for every signified is a direct representative of the all-empowering ONE, perhaps transcendental signified that may or may not really be, but I would like her or it or whatever to be in the not Deconstructionist sense, but rather the Constructionist sense, if/yet I have ever learned to understand that i had neither done either one of those things but have already always been that guy that could perhaps learn to craft the lyrical tunnels, burrowing under scope and radar of the world's heart and just Be and Exist in the vain hope of having someone there, there, Being in the thrown-ness (~~heidegger/derrida/sartre/type of synthesis of the word~~), to not even think or write or be, even cross-referencing and rendering what had previously been only a mirage in order to CREATE this New Entity [?] that is beyond my own power or reflection or intellect or thoughts and dreams, and i just want to write her poetry because if i do feel anything, which i do believe i feel, then those words are more concretely solid and manifestation of all sounds on earth in their most pristine utterance or identification, when one wonders what there really is to be or do because really we only have the shortest amount of time on this floating rock of an earthly planet to understand not understand but to Think we do and, really, we should just Live and Do, and worry not about all those other things that matter not, and now, because I'm 2,518 or so words into the frightening reality that even if i fail, at least i tried and tried and tried to understand, and i can only unravel and entertain the cosmic-city of my own being in relation to other beings. So, binaries, aloha, I want Outer Space, I want secret Blogs, I want Weeks that Don't Exist, I want the COOL WIND of Understanding Nothing, in the lyrical chest where the treasures of the heart reside.

7/28/10

**Intro/Preface/Dedication:** from Earlier, “The First Poem goes through (allusion-wise) 2500 years of philosophy, to essentially make the point, one can’t rationalize the enormity of the Logic of Beauty, it just is [...] Artists and poets can go mad trying to unravel every fiber of Being, perhaps, sometimes, it’s just better to Appreciate Being, Appreciate Beauty, And What is the Essence of Beauty? All I know is that your Beauty radiates, and supersedes all that is around the sparkling ignition where time and space crash into One another, in the formless warmth of Being There, at the Epicenter of Meaning.” Additionally, the subsequent poems are more likely in the realm of *Post*-Postmodern thought, and try, or at least attempt, to expand on the musicality of Experience; that is, there is a Soundtrack to Life, I believe, and *that* Soundtrack narrates the course of human Events, subjectively of course, each according to the Individual, in the simple melody of the heart’s rhymed and metered lyrical pounding. So, [ ], I write with the aforementioned in mind of the mind of the ideal of what my heart’s gut narrative and logic impels me to write as if projected, as partitioned by the limits of language, for which I try to expand, distort, erase, and Free, in order, if at all *possible*, to even reflect one iota of your Being that illustrates *that* Beauty, and *that* Lyrical earnestness of Being there, or rather *Here, where that reflection of Beauty is Your Own, a cosmic source of gravitational inspiration, lulling the Universe towards an enlightened There, Breathing Life into Beauty and Proving Once again That even in a World such as Ours, there may Exist an actual ideal outside the realm of Abstraction, and that She is You. Proving the Impossible.*

Beaming  
 lyrical descriptions,  
 ancillary promise, range, form, and dreams,  
 caterpillars in stealth mode, undercover forums for the cyclops  
 to roam, imaginary borders come to light, the contours  
 of her heart, Borges’ fable in Baudrillard’s dream,  
 All Hearts, Listen!  
 Creation has lost ONCE, but never Again!  
 May darkness descend, and heave against  
 the memories of the lost kind,

Creation before the Binary that Ruled Once,  
Transcendence Before the *Rain*,  
I MUST admit to the Loss of meaning prior,  
perhaps no longer may the empty rule the kingdom,  
Democritus has shunned the light,  
Anaxagoras brokers peace throughout the Universe,  
the Socratic Break storms and rushes through millennia,  
conquering Hegel's Spirit, Blinding Milton and his God,  
the immortal bard enters the Globe and dies before his time, Even  
Nietzsche could not account for her hammering, her tablets,  
her constructions, her beauty, for if there ever were a word that could  
even Begin to Construct or Re-Construct the living, breathing, statistical  
anomaly of her Living Presence, HERE, YES, ON EARTH,  
What Worlds Could Contain Her? NONE.  
I write if only to attempt to try to engender a nomadic portrait  
of a woman as a living goddess, even for an atheist, she exists,  
heralding from the forests once blighted by an ancient sun,  
she excuses the past for its ignorance, for its antiquated reasons  
breaking at the dawn of a nascent age, one promulgated via the  
ancient social network of Belief,  
for I believe in Her, if only reasoned by a kiss.

## Poem # 2

musicality, embroidered on the heart's strings,  
sounds sounding sound, anchored  
by an unlikely logic  
break, arc,  
years to unclench the risk  
of forgetting,  
answering anew,  
forging futures,  
lyrical  
singing  
spree,  
the sauntering lyric strikes the key,  
imperfect if only by perfection,  
her smiling grace,  
writing in between worlds,  
answering her logic in between dreams,  
the World at rest,  
*her beauty sings*

## # 3

frantic light, heavier it seems, unchanging, static, and moving,  
frozen, the inner freight, gods crashing into heat, inveterate and so it seems, until,  
lyrical rex, answering, breaking into fleet, rank,  
*and flowering LIFE.*



## 7/29/10

Preface/Dedication: Before, the conversation had wildly struck at all sectors of the philosophical, emotional, and lyrical economy. My point is simple: The World is Not Bankrupt of Meaning. The Stars will Not Return to Dust, at least not for eons. One has to Believe Beyond, And Sometimes that Beyond Exists in the Now, Or, other considerations may evolve around the satellites therein, Yet, And, Still, the lyrical sprint has surely turned into a galactic marathon, One where One has to Beam into Existence, as had already been the case but never fully realized until the cosmic earthquake strikes the fan, and gods lose their cool as we form and shape our own Worlds, ones of Understanding.

We are living, breathing creatures wandering in the portrait of our time, Reflecting the Beauty all around us. Some more than Others. You are that Lyrical Inspiration, One to Transform Worlds, Constructing into the Beyond, Wonder, Love, and Hope. The World Views and Wanders into Sleep, Encrypting Dreams, Exploding Once Awake, like a Newborn Star Ready to Light the Universe.

4

lyrical sprint, half-way through the pass,  
merging lanes, cross-traffic dimensions abridged,  
melting karma, eyes encircling degrees,  
hearts in outer space,  
gods lost to an art,  
i want to believe in the impossible,  
and Prove it's Real,  
to Discover and live the impossible with you  
The Whole World Lives in a Kiss  
Populated with Meaning, where energies interact,  
the lyrical destination between you and i,  
where two worlds understand

5

to return to dust  
the world will seek and destroy  
two dreams of their own

i don't believe  
they will break our cycle

the world's cruelty  
won't last

6

i want to kiss the inside of your mind

7

i want to hold your hand  
8

across the milky way  
our spaceship  
readies for  
intergalactic  
flight

9

i want you to see what i see  
beauty reflects everywhere  
invigorating life  
courting the heart's  
reason

bringing logic to the intersection  
of beauty and deconstruction

10

you understand you  
but perhaps you don't understand  
that which you have yet to discover  
perhaps that you is the you i see in you  
the one i believe in  
the one i see  
the one i want you to see  
and believe in  
believing beyond  
the past,  
kissing dreams  
that understand you

**7/30/10**

**#11**

WORDS/AND/HEART

Treasured Hearts, an art for a loss  
of words, delivered in a kiss,  
an angel, if Ever there Was One,  
Here, Now, Bringing  
Reality to Flight,  
Where  
Dreams  
Come True,  
Beauty, sweet,  
*your* Heart  
inspires,  
Worlds Reflect the shine

the Beauty you Inspire,  
 i heart your kisses,  
 we can defeat the evils  
 of the World,  
 in One sweep,  
 bring the Earth to room,  
 Write the hearts  
 of the Eclipse,  
 for  
 [                      ],

#12

## LYRICAL ERUPTION

LIFE, CROWN, sewn in the edges of radicalized thoughts wrangling  
 spaces from the anon, Worlds in Breathless Dreams,  
 SERVING her Kingdom,  
 HERS, is, Smiling from the Falcon's Dream,  
 Bringing Truth in the Entirety of Her Beauty,  
 Over flooding thoughts,  
 Bringing Arcs from Outer Space,  
 Blind to Light, Scarcity that Roams,  
 WORDS, Lyrical Reasoning,  
 Bringing Her Fortress in Disrepair,  
 abandoning doubt,  
 an armor left to rust,  
 embracing the reality  
 of the improbable,  
 believing in the dream,  
 breathing fresh,  
 an art for her,  
 words to wonder,

UNIMAGINABLE  
 FREEDOM

FROM

LEAVING CYNICISM  
BEHIND,

THE LYRICAL LANDSCAPES  
BRING TO LIFE

THAT

WHICH HAS RETURNED  
ETERNALLY,

*LIFE IS WORTH THE DREAM*

**7/31/10**

***poem #13***

I'd rather write a poem for someone

I care about than a book of theory

no one will...

I still haven't read you the Poems

I will Write you Tomorrow,

i want to hold your hand,

Turning Plato on its head,

the experience of holding your hand

breaks the ideal of the very same,

experiencing the now, here, together,

one republic,

emotions beyond the binaries,

for you,

everything

#14

August 1st, 2010

once when i wrote,  
once again, writes, when  
i experienced,  
*when* 'when' becomes *whens*  
plural perfects  
detente  
between dreams,  
and hearts broker than the distant periods on earth  
relent nothing more than the ancients' dreams  
to their own mythology turned *Real*,  
once when your heart invaded mine,  
once more, when your heart invaded minds,  
once, once, more and more,  
lyrical empires founded, scrolls  
from wells, the heart's own,  
caverns emptied, and then filled,  
your beauty perfect,  
an art unknown,  
worlds evolve,  
yours  
and mine,  
the Wonderer's  
Dream  
Born  
Alive,

[ .....]

#15 8/3/10

Preface: Because I believe in what I feel, and I believe in you.

*Writing  
you poetry  
in the italicized*

*feelings, ants of migration,  
burrowing, Words,  
ancestors  
of my art,*

*stories  
unseen*

*her, for she  
believes  
not her own  
reflection,  
she  
Believes  
not  
her  
own  
beauty*

*the  
seen  
unseen  
of  
what i see:*

*her.*

*all worlds of warmth,  
storms and seas,  
in*



*her  
eyes.*

*8/6/10*

*poems 16, 17, 18*

## **FALLING INTO BEING**

Because I believe in the breaths  
that come out of my mouth,  
in the words spilled  
onto the page,  
in the inherent,  
intricate,  
complexity  
of  
you,  
all  
of  
you,  
the  
you  
i  
see  
in  
you,  
the you that's always already *There*,  
*always already Being There*,  
living between *Time*,  
*living dreams in Real Time, There*,  
*Yes, here and now*,  
Presently as to the WHY?  
Because, *more than* just because,  
*i heart you, more than heart you*

*as the living embodiment  
 of you, yourself, here,  
 breathing Life into  
 Being, relapsing into Time,  
 proving more than the  
 entire spectrum of  
 LIGHT capturing  
 your BEAUTY  
 in the run away SPEED of LIFE.*

## POEM 17

*as stars make love  
 footprints are lost over dreams<sup>99</sup>  
 inside her heart's mind,  
 romantic congress,  
 Freedom's to Write,  
 Stars and Light,  
 an overture  
 for a dream,  
 hers and mine,  
 born<sup>100</sup>*

---

<sup>99</sup> quoting myself from past conversation, perhaps collection of remembrances in relation to Time and Being, application of Heidegger-ian/Derridian ontological dreamscapes as in Now.

<sup>100</sup> the Dream, that is, as in Come to Life, as in, from POEM 16, 'Beauty in the run away SPEED of LIFE.'

## POEM 18

*eyes*  
*heart*  
*your*  
*kisses, conversations between dreams,*  
*the indefinite definitive *Real*,*  
*All Too Human, Beyond Good and Evil,*  
*Thus Spake, [~~—~~]thustra*  
*writing on the tablets*  
*of my heart's mind's eye's*  
*allusions,*  
*conferring*  
*meaning*  
*in outer space,*  
*reasons harboring thought, logical to its ends,*  
*watermark of the real,*

8/15/10

## poem 19

the softness of a kiss encased in a moment moving towards  
 the restructuring of the World, as only she can,  
 unleashing the Wild,

Burning Down the Lyrical Industrial Complex  
 of the Before *Before*,  
 relics of a forgone age,  
 Erstwhile Reason born in beauty,  
 nascent crown,  
 queen, royalty and hearts,  
 kingdom, love,  
 and Anar-kee

Addressing Crowds  
 with little more than a smile,

one to rule all Knights,  
 serving Her,  
 Compass of the Stars,  
 retrieved from Night,  
 lights and swirls,  
 Her and Her alone,  
 towards gods,  
 lightning, brooks, and stones,  
 I heart her heart,  
 She Can Have My Own.

I want to kiss the inside of her heart,  
 and write poetry  
 on all chamber walls,  
 enshrining hieroglyphics,  
 the poetic scrawls,

I want every moment to last forever,  
 for Time to Halt in its Tracks,  
 for Being to take Precedence,  
 for the World to Understand the Wilderness  
 from whence these new tablets sprawl,  
 unEarthing Treasures, yours and mine,  
 teetering Towers, overwhelming light,  
 Drenched in Life.

My Heart-Mind-Soul-Art-Theory-Spirit-All-at-Once-and-Every-Sound-of-Creation-  
*In These Three Words, Leveraging the Weight of My Being,*  
*Triggering all that may Ever Be, in the breaths that utter, 'I love you.'*

8/31/10

## POEM 20

flowering, hunger's brides  
 splintering at the altar,  
 Save grace,  
 altruism, aesthetics,  
 She loves to Dream,  
 EVIL, Evil as her love,  
 love as the relation between  
 beings living at the intersections

of her mind's Eye staring  
eyebrows of the mystical's  
internal variation,  
hydrogen dreams (bombs),  
Fortresses Turned Asunder,  
humbler, Dreamer,  
COMES ALIVE,  
AND I, her Slave,  
ruminating on her steps,  
drenched in her poison,  
suckling at the tit,  
womb of her venom,  
LOVE HER.

9/3/10

#21

there, noticeably a congruency  
to foster, grow, thrive,  
unbeknownst  
words in absence  
even now  
creation in, extinction out

beauty deep  
structured out  
of magic

everything  
LOUDER  
IN HER SLEEP

SHE LOVES in  
every WORLD

EVEN  
OURS

EVEN  
NOW

9/6/10

#22

lady

all too ungrammatical

queen of the  
inebriated sign

the  
heart brews  
the ultimate  
wine

she drinks her own reflection.

drunken beauty,

you  
i  
love

9/6/10

#23

What's in a Favorite Word  
But Her Disdain For It ?

Has a past so marred  
her relation to *that* word?

A word that doesn't exist  
is no word at all...

Until it *Does*,

And,  
'I Don't Believe in \_\_\_\_ ,'  
Doesn't mean

what *it* means

because there's  
 that WHOLE rest of the WORLD and maybe, yeah, that WHOLE REST OF THE  
 WORLD does have its SHARE of OTHER *things*, but even So, that Word you don't want  
 to exist so badly, that word that *really* has you *feeling something about it that makes you*  
*say you don't believe or like or \_\_\_ that word, MAYBE, just maybe,*  
*because that Word has had affect, an affect, possibly many,*  
*and perhaps what you really HATE about That Word is that what it means to convey*  
*you believe is so ephemeral and not long lasting, etc., so on and so forth types,*  
*but how many real reasons aren't real good reasons at all?*  
*Because I only know that I, me, SELF, the Enri-Kay-narrator, TRULY*  
*believes in the words that come out of my mouth, that reside and dart*  
*out into wind and hold structuring patterns around the subject of its SIGNIFIED,*  
*and Why, there's a reason, but I'll ONLY say, but always-already MORE,*  
*that THAT word isn't the one you hate or despise or detest, but, really,*  
*is something else associated with that Word, and when it all comes down to IT,*

*that word IS really THE WORD.*  
 and the world is not the world.  
 and the word is not the word.  
 and everything as it Has Been  
 doesn't need to continue to regulate  
 the present or future as it had been,  
 and please believe me when i say it because for me that word actually, truly, immensely,  
 like nothing else in the world actually signifies more than any other sign or symbol in  
 language than perhaps your own words coming out of your own mouth as they gently  
 lay to rest a language with the warmth and comfort and beauty of your own Being as  
 you process the language which you use and make it your own product of, and just so I  
 can be very clear and concise for once, me, I think, I know, I feel, Believe, YES,  
 AND, I (\_\_\_) U is some sort of equation that *feels so right and so good and... and to*  
*express what my heart emits just feels so good when I tell you, 'I love you.'*

[       ],

*I Love you.*

*I hope you like the Poem.*

XOXO

*enrique*

[e-mail]

9/13/10

#24, 25, 26

# POEM 24

And I love you, love you so much  
words are working double-triple shifts  
trying to figure how to convey that which  
I am feeling to convey via syntactic  
patterns not easily defined  
as is this. LOVE.

love 1st spurned, then turned Over  
as Worlds Decompose lyrics  
as their art, working ease,  
Flowers  
in their wake.

## BIRTH

of Tragedy and our Love,  
meta-fiction of the Real,  
meta-narrative of hearts  
in the outer race  
of Being, Beings  
as the Beings  
limping through Time  
symptomatic of  
their LOVE, & Ours,

Love and Being

## FALLING

## INTO

## BEING

## BEING

## BEING

that in LOVE

as Beings Falling

Into Being

Falling Harder

Falling Faster

Loving Love

Loving Dreams

Loving Love

Loving Ours

[....]



POEM 25

eyes traverse  
the Skies  
of Her LOVE.  
I am lost  
in her Flight.  
how I wish  
the STARS  
would find  
her.  
STARS  
sweet  
LOVE,  
engaged  
in  
Flight,  
GUIDE  
HER  
KISS  
TOWARDS  
MINE.

POEM 26

Storms the Winter Serves,  
an anthem  
for a heart's  
content,  
crystal ships  
of a dreamless shore,  
and her cargo-- LOVE's  
torment<sup>101</sup>

---

<sup>101</sup> ascent, consent, cement, clement, torrent, crescent, nascence

9/19/10

POEM 27

to fight the  
sadness of the World

its red sands,  
bloodied skin,  
vanishing Times

in which the WORLD  
disappears

how  
I wish  
to  
SURVIVE

ORPHAN  
of a  
RACE

BORN  
ONCE  
AGAIN

I  
AM  
HER

GIANT

9/20/10

poem 28

SHATTERING

GLASS JAWS

ON THE LYRIC,

straits in the in betweenness,  
foreclosures STRAINING DREAMS,

CROWS BARKING ORDERS

EYES stand AGAINST  
ILLUSIONS

DECIBELS EVEN  
LOUDER

HEARING the  
REVISIONS

THE  
GIANT  
WRITES

EARTH  
DREAMS

AND LOVE

DEVOURS

BEING

-----

9/21/10

poem 29

LYRICAL

HIEROGLYPHICS

STARS

STRIKE

HARPOONS,

BORN

@

SEA

WANDERER

STAY

FREE

FREE

FLOATING

WHY? Must you write, DE[A]R MOONLIGHT @/IN THE HEADLIGHTS

HEARTS A LIL DOWN, MARINER. STRIKES. WOLF.<sup>102</sup>

NEWS STORIES. AND THE SORRY TRUTH.<sup>103</sup>

Lives alive in a padded womb, embrace your hearts.

There exists a lil freedom for you.

Biographers of souls torn apart write you,

on the wrong side,

eyes philosophize death,

holding/erasing Light,

PLEASE, THINK LIFE.

as my art<sup>104</sup> strikes you nigh.

---

<sup>102</sup> Mariner Strikes Wolf

<sup>103</sup> News Stories and the Sorry Truth

<sup>104</sup> originally 'heart' and I also considered 'car.'

9/24/10

poem 30

HEARTS BURSTS

at  
the  
SEAM

beasts of rome, manic entrepreneurs enshrining news feeds  
unlike the lyric, shepherds of the herds, one Earth to ONE,  
LOVE cuts EXTINCTION to the BASE,  
ROSE DEVOURS SEASONS,

reports from... static... news feeds dysfunctional,  
wounds from every sound,

SURVIVORS  
EVERYWHERE

FLOODS. EARTHQUAKES. MIST.  
FEELINGS OF ARMAGEDDON.  
EVERYWHERE A SUPREME \_\_\_\_\_.

Once here I found you

Lying to yourself, embracing every FACE of Being

UNTIL, once everywhere, and ONE CALLS  
overwhelming  
considerations  
BORN/

AND I AND YOU  
BECAME

POEMS, LYRICS, ARTS,

LOVE  
INCAPABLE  
OF

BEING

CONQUERED

TWO WORLDS TO DEVOUR ONE.

9/29/10

poem 31

!      !

UNICORNS for the Derby,  
EYES WILL FREE them for you

WHISTLING towards an ORIGIN

unDiscoverable until Morn

ON THEIR JOURNEY

Here !

Dreams

of      an

INFINITE PEACE...

***poem 32 missing***

10/24/10

***poem 33***

Do you really want to write this?

What if it's published, do you want

to be known for this?

"You can't be dead twice."

Are you really standing alone\_

"Quentin's heart exists in an age that does not exist."

Should be your response to Faulkner\_

It died before I was born\_ I said\_

"You can't run away from yourself."

Sometimes I don't connect what I am

directly to what spawned it or what it

should relate [ to ]. Line 1 was intended

for my narrative book, not an essay.

10/20/10

*poem 34*

out of season, regulation between Others,  
 freelance freedom  
 founded underneath,  
 restless chaos brewing in its postseason,  
 Giants of logic presupposing truth in the lower case:

brain, check.  
 writing, check.

write, munchkin, writ.e

11.23.10.

poems 35 & 36

POEM 35

lettering scars tumbling down the farthing square  
 solely on the wail of the vagrant fowl

stampede of the allegory,  
 lyrical cut, butcher of the lexicon

staggering signified lifting herself  
 out from underneath the weight of a  
 world gone mad,

ensnaring dreams, bear traps of reason,  
 theoretical court, ecclesiastical inseminations,  
 an existence too far under  
 writing in the secondary,

worlds apart, dreams connect

bludgeoning patriarchal pigs,  
 she carves her words...



POEM 36

a tongue too big,  
 she flings it at the world,  
 writing herself  
 in the lyrical shape,  
 harvesting dreams.

11/25/10

*poems 37 & 38*

sutures clouds, names on things  
 the sounds of frogs splinter  
 heights of an insight,  
 leisurely freight,  
 stones remake their frames,  
 students derail trains,  
 phantoms and histories,  
 what's the worth of an atom?  
 disintegration

spores  
 breaking  
 flanks  
 the  
 rhythmic  
 shattering  
 of  
 a World

re-makes rema**King**

arteries  
 of a  
 lexicon

and  
 rooms  
 for

her

## COURT

### POEM 38

hegemonic, TORRENTS (*sans* logic)

FLUSH ( x )

REASON,

LOGIC.

PATRIARCHAL HIERARCHIES. [more like monarchies]

eve *distilling*

truth

12/18/10

poems 39, 40, 41

### POEM 39

beams stripped of their light,

space's lyrical graveyard,

hyperbolic lacerations, unseen alien forms.

Broadcast Earth: Check One, Check Two...

Life's Informants Static and the Bone,

En Search of the Grand Theater, numbers burdened by their weight, in and of their spatial

relation to their meaning, affecting hope, transmutation of the meta-narrative, one humans says

to the Other, 'Hello, How Are You?' In a deaf-warp of understanding. Science has had its say.

Writing Stones, Drafts, Chronicles on an Abyss, Meta-Reflections... An aging past flees towards  
an absolute. Tenses break from the mass... . . . a Totalizing Force. En Search of Love.

## POEM 40

en search, structured identities burst en flight, travel-weary, storm-fronted,  
floating signifiers floating en kind, demarcate rules,  
signature of an absence, unkind, bleeding over rhyme,  
Science's Reflection. Language's release:  
Logocentric Transcendental Signifier(s),  
Blanket Means of affection.  
God's last breath, an unborn thought, the Infinite Unknown.

## POEM 41

arteries of the concrete, brewing conflagration,  
[Save Ice, Save Rhyme,] histories feign revulsion,  
underneath one spider crawls, eyes the earth  
and screams its web, a hungered-love.

12/18/11: FRAGMENT:

Enrique calls \_\_\_\_ . No Answer.

4 hours elapse.

Enrique calls \_\_\_\_ . No Answer.

2 hours elapse.

Enrique texts \_\_\_\_ . No Answer.

E vomits into his room's trash can. He exits the room and paces the hallway, then the kitchen. He starts to comb his hair with his hands. Tries to control his breathing. E sits. Goes back to his room. "Why isn't she picking up? She hasn't picked up all week," he tells himself. E

@ Miguel's hosue.

(e enters)

'hey, what's up, man!' Migs.

Enrique quiet.

'What's going on there, Enriko?' asks Rick.

'Keex,' says Bola.

E sits down on a stool, looks at the floor.

Migs, Rick, continue previous conversation.

e sits, tries to compose himself enough to say something.

his eyes tear involuntarily. he tries to hold 'em back.

'What happened?' asks Migs.

'She'd been distant for weeks. I attributed it to her growing concern about her project. I thought that was it. Last week she did her MA defense. She said we would celebrate during the week. We didn't. She was unavailable, or at least made herself. Now she's not responding to texts or calls, but she has time to update her Facebook. It's fucking Over, man. Why couldn't she just tell me? Why did she have to go about it this way? The growing distance, why didn't I pick up on it? The fading intimacy. Fuck!' Enrique starts crying.

'Fuck her,' says Miguel.

'Fuck her,' says Bola.

'Fuck her, forget that Bitch, you don't need her, you don't fucking need her,' says Rick.

'We were in Love. I Still love her.'

'Don't say that shit.'

'She obviously doesn't love you.'

'She does, I mean she did,' says Enrique.

'You don't need her.'

'Fuck her.'

'If she only told me.'

‘Told you what? If she loved you she’d be here with you. You and her shared something and now it’s over. Move on, that’s what it boils down to,’ Rick.

Enrique tries to compose himself, restrain tears.

‘She got this chick, you can get another one.’

‘That’s not the point,’ says Enrique.

‘Fine, you can find Love once, you can find it again.’

Dan walks in.

‘What’s this guy’s problem?’

‘His girl broke up with him.’

‘Oh, yeah?’ Dan.

‘....’

‘Fuck that bitch,’ says Dan.

‘....’

‘You only miss her because you think you need her,’ says Dan.

‘Don’t I?’

‘No! You fucking pussy,’ says Dan.

‘Be easy on him. He just got dumped on, shat on,’ says Rick.

‘Man, at least you got laid. Look at me, I never get laid. I don’t give a shit,’ says Bola.

‘Again, that wasn’t the point. I loved her,’ says Enrique.

‘At least you’re saying it in the past tense now,’ Rick.

‘I mean, I still do.’

‘No, fuck her,’ says Dan, ‘write your book and go to Yale. You could be the first Mexican that goes to Yale<sup>105</sup>. Fuck her. You can write your book and she can sell it. She’ll be working at the bookstore that’s selling your book. Fuck her,’ Dan says.

‘It’s not that easy,’ says Enrique.

‘Yes it is. You don’t have kids. And now you don’t have a woman holding you back.’

‘I have nothing.’

‘Yeah, nothing holding you back. You’re Free,’ says Dan.

‘Do you have any idea how hard it is to do any of the shit you’re saying I should do?’

‘Yeah, so?’

‘Just write your book,’ says Miguel.

‘What about?’

‘Look at your Life. You’re living with fucking Mumbles, your mom is crazy as shit, you’re the only Mexican in Santa Ana that reads books and shit,’ says Dan.

‘I don’t feel those words are very precise,’ says Enrique.

‘Words, fuck words.’

‘Words have a power of their own,’ says Enrique.

‘You wrote poetry like a faggot, now write a book like a man already,’ says Dan.

‘Fuck her,’ says Bola.

‘So she just stopped talking to you?’ asks Miguel.

‘The past few weeks have been strained, and the past week has been cold as shit,’ says Enrique.

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<sup>105</sup> Pipedream.

‘How?’

‘As soon as she turned in her project and did her defense,’ says Enrique.

‘So you’re saying she used you? Fuck her. Fuck that stupid bitch,’ says Miguel.

‘I don’t think she did. We had some great times,’ says Enrique.

‘Then remember those,’ Rick.

‘Then what do I do now?’ asks Enrique.

‘Go with your gut,’ says Miguel.

‘I feel like shit. And my gut says don’t call her, but all I want to do is call her.’

‘Fucking tell her off,’ says Bola.

‘I don’t think that would help, plus I don’t feel like doing that,’ says Enrique.

‘Shit, just kidding, dag,’ says Bola.

‘How much of your book do you have written?’ asks Dan.

‘One page,’ says Enrique.

‘Start writing.’

‘Not this.’

‘Especially this. And mumbles. And the rest.’

‘No, I mean, I don’t know.’

‘What else do you have?’

‘Notebooks of poetry,’ says Enrique.

‘You don’t need this shit, by which I mean dwelling on heartache.’

‘Yeah.’

‘I know it’s hard. I’ve been through this shit. I’ve been to war. I have to live with shit everyday. There’s things and shit I will never forget. Just have to take it one day at a time. Things get better. It sounds cliché, but fuck it. It works. Time heals all wounds. Look at me. You’re going to be okay,’ says Rick.

‘Do you want a hug?’ asks Bola facetiously.

‘No.’

But Enrique starts crying again. A more uncontrollable sort of sickening crying. Involuntary.

‘Come on, man. I was just kidding,’ says Bola.

‘nooo, it’s not t-t-that, fuck, man, it’s just, shit,’ Enrique tries to say something coherent.

‘It’s not your fault, man. It’s nothing to beat yourself up over. These things happen,’ says Miguel.

‘I, I know,’ says Enrique, more controlled.

‘You’re going to be alright.’

‘I don’t want to be alright. I want to be good.’

‘You’re good. We’re here.’

‘I know.’

‘We’re your friends.’

‘I know.’

About the Author: Enrique Avalos

Born and Raised in Santa Ana, CA.  
BA & MA in English from California State University, Fullerton.

