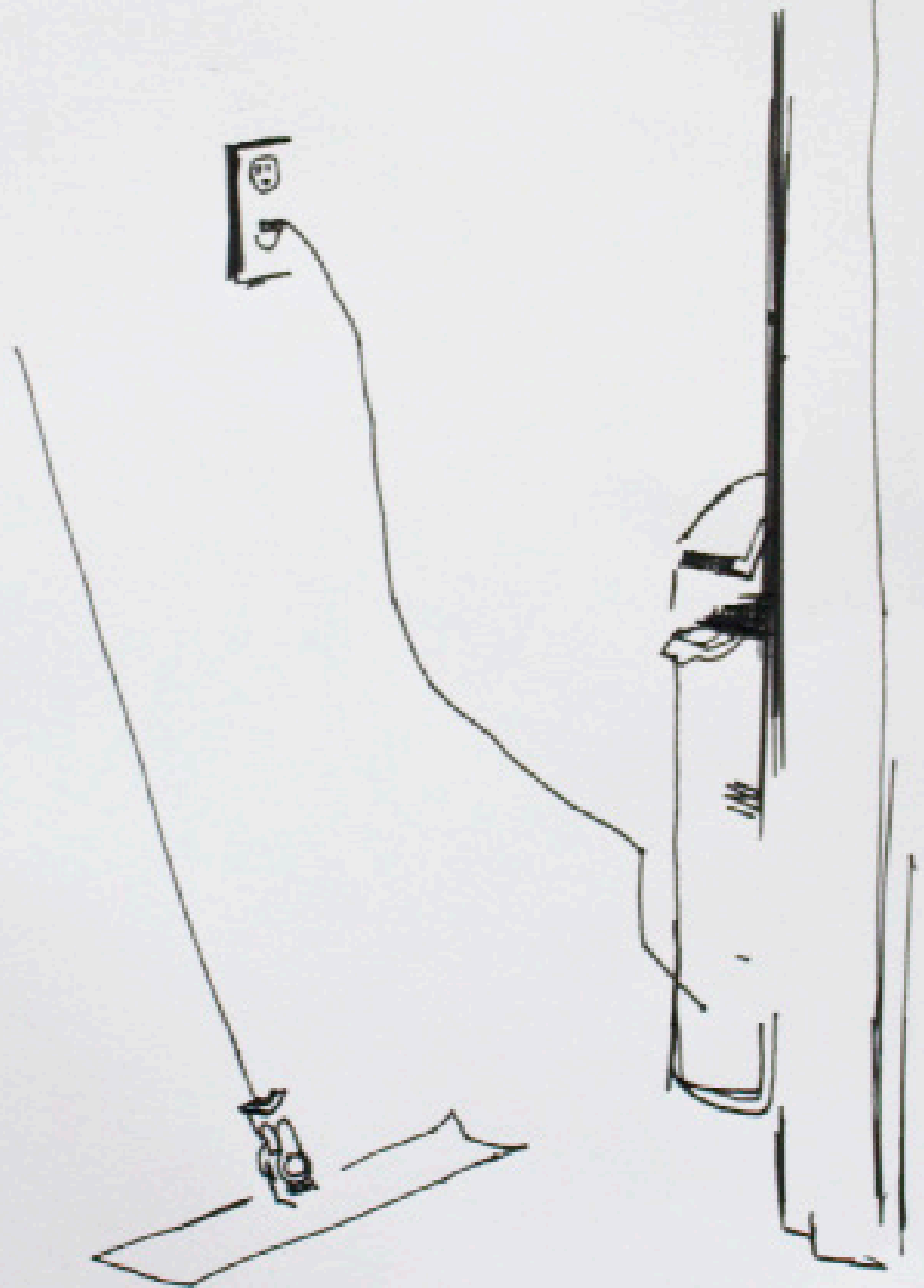


MM



W M U M / H N U M

MUSH/MUM III
Edited by Brandon Hackbarth & Gabriel Levin
Art by Brooks Cashbaugh

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Front Cover Art: The View to the Kitchen

Back Cover Art: Mug

wL, um, lADs N jNLmN—this B cunsumshun

Devin Taylor

¿wud U lik
sum mashd pOtAtOs
O sum cab²aj
O sum sinAmin tOst?

wL, I wud,
N I shal,
N I M,
NdEd, A hungrE man,
th hungrEist man in th lan,
Allv, 1 N OnlE,

Xclo²sivlE, w/ m'stumak
'f bot²umlS pit,
N th bot²umlS pit
'f fo²d wE cal² a frij

N dat,
lADs N jNLmN
's hou I got fat
N dat,
lADs N jNLmN
's Y I gO down
2 th grEnhous
@sko²l,
N I Et al² th bAsil,
N I pUk out m'guts,
N I flM out m'frOt,

drounin in pUk, n flM,
N trite, mEnNglS trEts,
N sujStuns 2 lo²s wAt,
N mashd pOtAtOs N cab²aj
cukd 2gefr in
A *Irish* dish cal²d
Colcannon.

N wL,
lADs N jNLmN,
sinAmin tOst 's A sirEL
cal²d *Cinnamon Toast Crunch*
w/ A bot²umlS pit 'f milk,

A milke abis² 'f milk. A po²l,
A bot²umlS wL 'f, wL, sinAmin shugur.

N th hungrE man,
lADs N jNLmN,
th hungrE man,
's A sko²ba dIvr
ho² got th bNz
N dIABTs.

The Arbiter of Nothing. The Poem is *Devin Taylor*

a custom, mint condition, unopened
First edition of nothing. Hand-crafted.
Artisanal, even, as the packaging states—
all sales are final. When sculpting nothing

is it better to slowly chip away
over the course of many courses, many years,
many paths and careers? The clubfooted front-
runner winning the losing race nowhere;

the zipfold, sumpteenth Dumbbell prize winner
for advancements in studies of in the field of regressive
filibustering. An alchemist transfiguring fool's gold
into boogers? To be appointed first-and-only
CEO of No-No-No Co? No, one should—I must

— nothing. First, Nothing the nothing.
Nothing: The water out of fish story (and versa vice).
Nothing: The tale of the pedophilic muscle
at the Gymboree clambake. Next, one must
Something the Nothing. Splurge, and give it all,

investing it all. Stockpile Nothing.
Purchase stocks in Nothing; of said;
of said nothing. Stockpile said stocks
of Nothing, all the while, taking stock in
nothing; believing in Nothing—its regenerative
powers like the liver of nothing or nobody

in particular: A honeysuckle jaundiced
in bloom; a waxed waning gibbous moon.

The Spirit of 420 v. the patriarchy

Devin Taylor

*lik Elijah b4 him, he descended
from his heavenly swamp, ridin
a flamin, caramelized onion, propelled
by sterile dragon/donkey hybrids.
His voice drizzled dwn Mt. Sinai's
sumit lik Loch Ness custard.
I, a millennial sheperd, bore witness:*

8 “The venom runs wi'in mah veins, fur
Ah too have bin indoctrinated bah the spiders
that be, 'n' consumed fae wi'in bah gender roles.
Bit Ah have had enough o' such nonsense. Now is the time
fur mass-awakening. We hae bin condishund, 'n'
posishund betwixt the fangs of male inshecurity
fur too lung. These Napoleonic-Farquaaads
poishund us, perverting oor cultural ideals o'
freedom, which noo staun precariously balanced
atop the abdomens o' giant arachnids weaving sinishtuh
interweb threads toutin' lassie oppresshun. Why,
mah fair Fiona does nae venture ootside
oor shack in her skivvies fur fear o' bein'
called a boaby-tease! Indeed, a fashcisht regime
o' fem-oppresshun threatens all Far Far Away.

“These meninist, menandnazis are comin' fur us all,
clippin' the clitorishes of oor wumminfolk—lesht
they get hyshterical from their plesshure 'n'
wheck aff oor willies. These Prince
Charming douchebag proponents
o' the nice-guy, knight-in-shining armor,
chivalric mythos know nuffin o' courtshep 'n' deshency.
Bit we wull fight! We mist smite! We mist
take tae oor pitchforks, oor torches, oor bonges. We shall th'gither
blaze the system. We need tae huff the tastykake fumes
until oor lungs become sugar scrotums—
disaccharide sacks—'n' wee ants crawl thro' uh geyser. Fur truly I tell ye

oor wind pipes as we sleep, 'n' oor ogrepowerin' snores
shoot thaim oot lik' uh geyser. Fur truly I tell ye
that this sick rape culture of oors is roofying
females, lik' uh spider catchin' flies.

“Bit we kin change! Uh gargantuan cleod
o' cannabis smoke shall engulf the green glen
o' the future, o'er yonder valley of darkness. 'ere
oor breth/siseth/gen.neutrethren shall sit th'gither
in uh giant spliff-circle 'n' feast upaun milk 'n' honey
'n' succulent onion nectahr, as the feshterin' spider
corpshes o' cish-male privilege shmolder
upaun uh bonfire—the rohtun smell o' which
masked bah infinite variuhties o' the dankest
kush that Christ has tae ooffur.”

*and so, brogres and bedfellows,
our lord has been hella clear
in his word. We must take 2 the forums
and sow the dank BitTor seeds of internet
hacktivism. smoke weed evry day becuz Shrek
is love, Shrek is life*

Cell Phone Poem 10

Lenore Weiss

On the day of your eviction
three blue sentinels stood
at the edge of a parking strip

almost a year
after your father had died
on a Sunday that stretched into police reports

when sunflowers in the backyard
spit black and white seeds
into my face.

You hugged me then
because you didn't know what else to do
before you crawled beneath the sub-flooring

10

hissing my name.
Go away. You are a mother
of Shit Heads.

You said other things
I can't repeat
because I am a mother

and because I know
you are my son, the first
to teach the miracle which life is.

I'm not sure when you started to hate
with the green stare of a cat's eye marble
who'd already dismissed me from my post.

I don't know how a child can do that,
you who discovered pill bugs beneath every rock
and tamed snails

always searching for their tentacles
through mint and calendulas
maybe learning from the molluscs

how to hide your terror.
Are you listening?
Can you hear me?

Teetotaled

Micaela Foley

No fenestration
de facto no

fevers tartar
(disambiguation)

no rations allotted
no laughing farm animals

the scratch n' sniff
book closed now

nothing caught at the catch
no panties could boast

a cotton crotch no
clean faces turned up

asking for an ending
naturally it ebbed

and was ratchet no
wait was I not allowed

to say that? No hard
cover too expensive

unthrown it fucked
your mouth with its

expansive vocabulary
no lunch wasn't bleached

enriched wheat flour no
you said he said oh god

oh baby baby
no it wasn't true

and he didn't really
the bit about abortions

especially cringe-y
no we made out

on overtime no
wetting that little

left of our lives we lived
in war with no other

the fairest sex no
an autoimmunity

the popped corn
sweet n' salty no

no the sausage factory
the wine so bottom shelf

it stood on the floor
shrouded in dust

no turd unpolished or
rather rolled in glitter

occupy ocupada no
your eye seeing it all

no hand down my pants
soft as shit and bowled

over no dragging a rapist
no naming the mattress

was it literary no
fucking whiteys

nursed a fulling ego
the here and now

demarcated / zonal
she breathed into

the microphone no
yes and didn't speak

until I no everyone
was uncomfortable

~Haiku Syllogism

Rose Knapp

All (men) are mor nil

Poetry is made for men.

Gaze can be mortal lmao.0~

Secrets of the Inner Chamber

Jonathan May

Julia felt her wedding ring come loose inside the other woman, Zoe, as the holy mountain within her own body rumbled to signal its awakening. Black, wet hair coiled on her cheeks; Zoe bit at strands of her own red hair as it crept into her mouth while Julia licked her nipple, drawing her left palm in almost lazy circles over the other.

Monday, April 20th

They lie in bed afterwards and smoke a joint. Julia cradles Zoe under her right arm as she takes a small toke. Coughs seize her, and Zoe watches as the waves of Julia's stomach ripple. Still on the bed between the two women glistens the ring, haloed by the damp sheets in a magic circle. Zoe turns to her after the coughing subsides.

Are you okay?

14 Yeah, I just...felt something.

I think that's supposed to happen.

Julia smiles.

No, I mean, something else.

Would it help if I made some eggs?

Zoe takes Julia's face in both her hands.

Look, it's going to be okay.

*

The women shower and prepare a basket to take to the park where they'll watch the stoners bake in the sun like tie-dyed earthworms. Julia says she forgot something and walks into the bedroom where the ring stains the white bedspread. She holds it up to the window where the light passing through the oak tree turns it the palest shade of green. Then she wraps it in a white handkerchief, safe in the darkness of her purse.

*

Julia steps outside first and sees Mr. Fenwick watering his lawn. When Julia and her husband moved in three years ago, their other neighbors told them that Fenwick's wife had died just a year before, leaving the man to ride out his eighth decade alone. His face brightened when he saw Julia.

Hey Julia! I know Frank's been gone awhile. You sure you don't need me to mow the lawn?

Zoe came out from behind her, and Mr. Fenwick's lips pursed together. The two stared at each other for a second. He gave her the slightest nod.

Zoe.

Mr. Fenwick.

Julia looked down at her naked hands and then at the burning yellow glow of hosta all around them. She felt hot. Fenwick's white moustache twitched as her face met his, as if to say, *I know what you two ladies are up to.*

Mr. Fenwick, thanks, but no thanks. I've got things under control.

You sure?

Zoe stepped in at this point.

I think we're all good here, Mr. Fenwick.

He turned back to his watering, but then back again, his face puzzled.

Now Zoe, where'd you say you were from again?

Zimbabwe, Mr. Fenwick. My parents were missionaries.

Well isn't that fine? What's it like there?

Zoe had heard this question many times from strangers. They wanted to hear about the animals or the poverty. Many wanted to tirade either for or against missionaries. To Zoe it was all the same. The skinned body of the girl flashed into her mind, there, under the tulip poplars and the sun in full Memphis midday swing. She thought for a second she might tell the old man about the girl, how Zoe and her mother took the same walk every night down Colne in the Matshumshlope district. How her mother carried a big, polished black stick. How the girl's body was only visible because of the dogs around it, licking at the bloody dirt. The girl's skin and

organs harvested for *muti*, witch-doctor magic.

It's hot!

Fenwick's face lit up with a barking laugh.

Hot! Best damn thing I've heard all day!

And with that, the two women got into the car and, windows open, rolled along towards Overton Park.

*

16 Stopped at a light, Julia looked over and saw a small hill before the park's entrance. A blond girl of about twenty stretched out on a towel at the slope. Julia thought back to her dream last night where she crawled towards the holy mountain in rags, begging for water. Its top obscured by clouds, the mountain taunted her with its terrible purple crags. She could hear the go-away caw of birds, but turning upwards, her head swam in the empty toxic beauty of the clouds and the black sky. Nowhere for miles were birds. Reaching the base, Julia collapsed on the ground, her white body a crumpled offering before the monolith. She couldn't tell Zoe yet about holy mountain.

Ummm...green light.

Julia looked up.

Sorry.

She pushed the gas, turning into the park.

*

They parked and unloaded the car. Basket and blanket in tow, the women rounded the hill. Julia looked over at the blond girl and nodded. The girl managed a weak peace sign before dozing back into sunlit half-slumber.

Dance music blared from a tent set up in front of the Memphis War Heroes Memorial overlooking the park. DJs with sweaty-looking goat beards spun their busy hands across the electric table while before them gyrated topless men with long hair and women in sundresses. Their kaleidoscopic movement intensified as the beat quickened, as if this blurred menagerie of color and sound were the one thing keeping this whole world turning. Small canopies and tables were set up all throughout the park in the main lawn between the lake and the memorial. *Baked Goods. Smokable Jokeables.* People freckled the grass all over with blankets.

Obviously fucked up, right?

Julia looked beyond the goofy stoners and saw the statues of soldiers gazing blankly over the whole weird scene. Sweat began to form ever so slightly above her lip and under her arms. She thought of Frank and how hot it must be near Kabul. She hadn't heard from him in so long, but in just three months...

Zoe squeezed her arm.

Hey, I see a great spot right there. Half in the shade of the magnolia, half out. I know you're only down for about half and half.

She chuckled as she said the last part, and Julia blushed as she turned away from the statues and looked towards the spot.

*

After they settled on top of their blankets, the two women pulled their dresses up mid-thigh and began to apply sunscreen. Zoe brought SPF70 because she worried about her white skin. As she rubbed her milky calves, Julia saw that morning again in bright flashes. Her nose right above Zoe's bright red pubic moss as if she was wearing a moustache. *I sink ve can do somezing about zis...problem you've been haffing.* She glanced over into Zoe's eyes and held her index finger up beneath her nose. 17

And how are ve feeling now?

The women collapse in laughter.

*

Stoned Zoe walks away towards the porta-potty while Stoned Julia looks down at her toenails intently. They're painted Red Ornament Luster #58. They look just like little Russian dolls, she thinks. A shadow obscures her clear vision of the toes eating each other up until all she has are swollen big toes, smacking their big-toe lips in satisfaction. Julia looks up into the face of a girl of eight or so.

Oh hello, where's your mother?

Where do you think?

Julia hoped if she had a daughter, it would not be like this little girl. She had her Catholic schoolgirl uniform on, the white knee-length socks, the black mary janes.

Everything. Even plaited brown braids. *This*, the girl's face said, *was no field-trip*.

Well, sweetie, why don't you just amble on over back to her then and I'll just...

Julia looked around helplessly for a diversion. All her planning with Zoe had included time together spent laughing and lightly touching, strawberries crash-landing into the sweetness of each other's open mouths. No Cosmo, no iPod. She hadn't counted on the bored musings of a bored hippie's child.

Why don't you tell me about holy mountain?

Julia didn't feel high anymore.

What did you say?

I said, tell me about holy mountain.

18 Julia grasped at what to say. Who was this girl how could she how was it even possible? Within herself, she stirs and finds a pool of water beside her. She throws her face into the black pool with its grey clouds and drinks until it vanishes. Holy mountain appears to have woken; the purple crags shake gently and a few are dislodged from their seats of adornment and tumble into banishment. Still tired but no longer thirsty, Julia stands and looks at her bloodied hands. She must go on. She rips a piece of cloth from her lower torso and ties back her black hair and begins her ascent.

*

Julia! Julia! Wake up!

Julia startles into a reeling blue sky and Zoe's face inches from her.

Where's the girl?

Julia this is important! There's a fucking dead guy in the porta-potty!

What! Are you serious?

Yeah, I went over there and these two guys were there and they said, well I don't know if he's breathing and I toed open the door and he was dead!

What Zoe didn't tell her was that the man's body rushed back her fear and she had vomited in the grass beside the two men and again all of the feelings she had alone in bed about what if she was the skinless dead girl and she tried to banish the thought for years and her mother had come in and shushed her to bed but where was her mother now where was she?

*

The two women packed their things and walked away from the park in silence. Julia still wanted to ask Zoe about the little girl, but Zoe seemed so far away. She caught Zoe looking at her, and both women smiled, but less playfully than before.

Julia wheels around towards the park's entrance. As they approach the light onto the main road, Poplar Avenue, she sees the blond girl, still tanning. Julia accelerates as the girl looks up and smiles and blows her a kiss.

The car spins slowly into the rotation of hotel carousel doors in a movie Julia saw once—she can't remember now—except that instead of both women laughing and clutching their Sak's 5th Avenue bags, Zoe screams from the passenger's seat and Julia grips the wheel hard to avoid the oncoming traffic. Until they stop and the horns die away, Julia barely registers that they'd been hit. Birds careen above her in silence; warbling heavy sounds come from Zoe's mouth. Julia sees herself and Zoe swinging around in their best dresses their mothers could find for the Missionary-Military Ball the state of Georgia had thrown that year. We're both brats, Zoe had told her upon meeting. You're a military brat, and I'm a missionary brat—they'd been friends ever since—and now the spinning had stopped and each saw the other to be okay and they unclasped their seatbelts and stepped out of the car.

19

*

Are you okay, ma'am?

Yes, I'm all right.

I'm sorry. I don't even....

It's fine. These things happen.

The three women stood on the side of the road as they waited for the police to arrive. Julia and Zoe gave each other a quick once-over for the stench of pot, discretion hidden by a concerned, friendly hug. The woman in the other car, they learned, was named Delois Robinson. Her black skin stood taut against her cheekbones, even though she looked to be in her eighties. White hair coiffed simply beneath a green pill-box hat.

I got plenty more cars where that came from. You sure you two are all right?

Both women nodded, still hugging each other from the side.

Oh I see. And what occupies you two?

Well my husband Frank's in Afghanistan.

Delois looked over to Zoe and stared hard into her green eyes. It took Zoe several moments before she realized the woman wanted her to respond.

I'm just a close friend, here to wait out these last few months until Frank comes home.

Zoe dared then to look at Julia and smiled. Delois cleared her throat, and the two white women saw that although she was standing still, her body seemed to give off small vibrations, as if it were almost about to shine.

I had a friend come stay too, back when my Marion was fighting over in France.

20 *

As the women rode in the backseat of Marion's car, Julia watched as Delois squeezed her husband's hand and smiled.

I'm just glad y'all are okay.

Julia looked down at her own hands and saw that her ring finger was slightly tan where the white circle had been.

*

After the women climbed into bed that night, they made love while the fan whispered above them in appreciation of the slow, liquid way they moved and the milky expanse of their bodies somehow more pure than the sheets and the rustling and the outside fluorescent night. Afterwards, Julia lay awake while Zoe snored softly into the pillow. She could still see holy mountain while awake sometimes, as she did now. Her bleeding feet slip over the rough stones so fast they look like fish in a purple stream. She knows that the cloud will always loom farther away. She knows that if she ever makes it to the top, the face she sees won't be the face of God, as she'd once thought, but her own.

All These Women

Vincent Francone

Good morning to you, Mr. Harrison
who died without ado though
I was more than a little taken aback
when I read the news—on my smartphone
on the toilet—and couldn't wait to tell someone
specifically my wife who has read you
and loves what Hollywood did to your novella
though I recall all the women I knew who loved
the way you wrote women
such insight—was this the product of sustained attention
or storybook love or were there women from the beginning
cooing around you as you squirmed in Michigan grass
women who taught you to be among them
and then men who taught you to drink and fight
against the bullies who saw in your glass eye
their own fallow guts.

Were the cocaine and the bottle to blame,
or the outlets of someone who understood
too well his wife and his daughters?
How did you cultivate this ability
without sacrificing the grand posture?
I'm thinking of my mother
In her car leaving to work
and me watching her ex-mother-in-law
cook oatmeal and yell her daughter's name
the staid voices, the way they are so light and loud
all these women I have
to tell me what you apparently knew
I'm walking then with them
to school where nuns will scare us all to death.

16/23

mwpm

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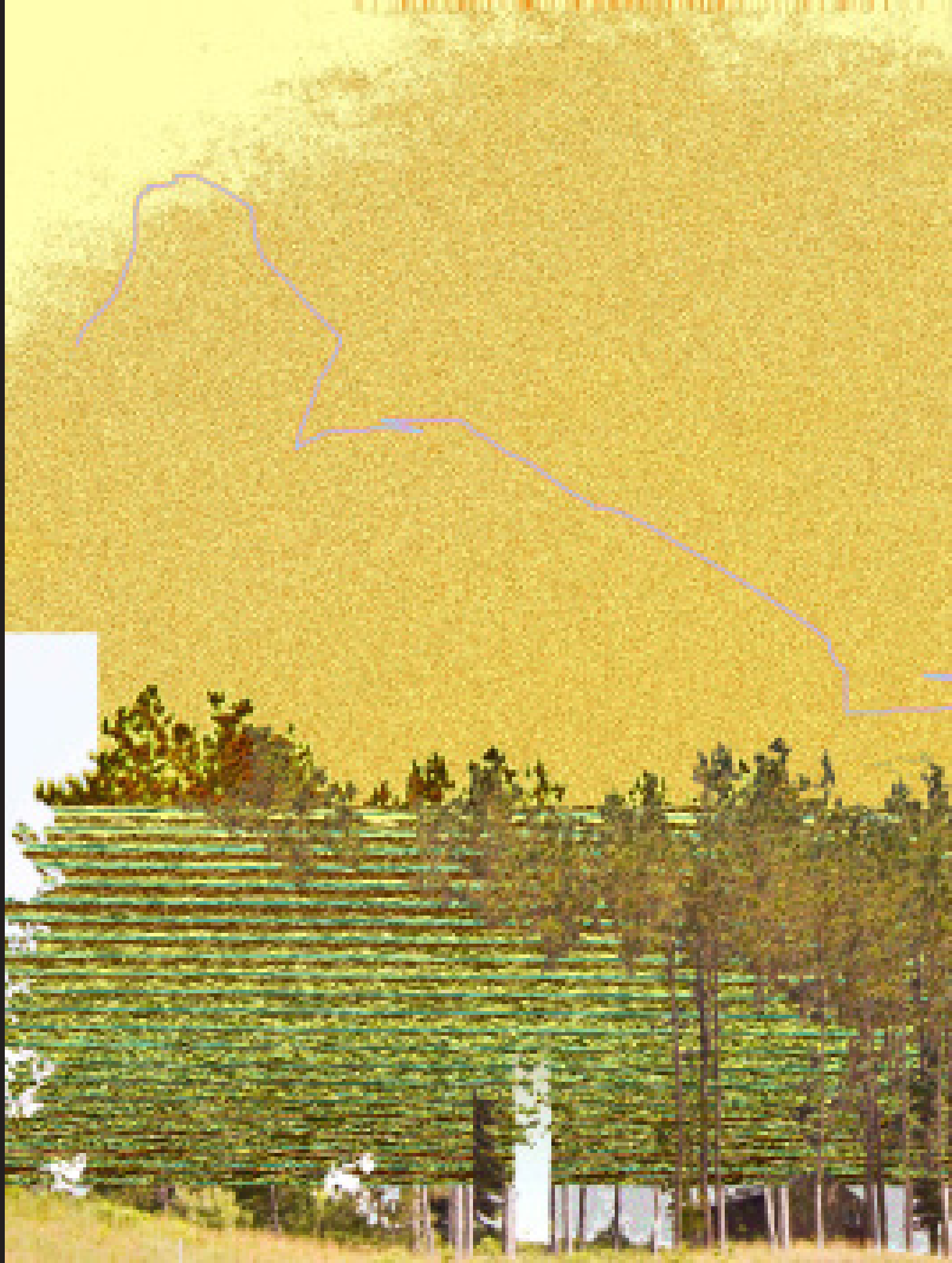
Mabus

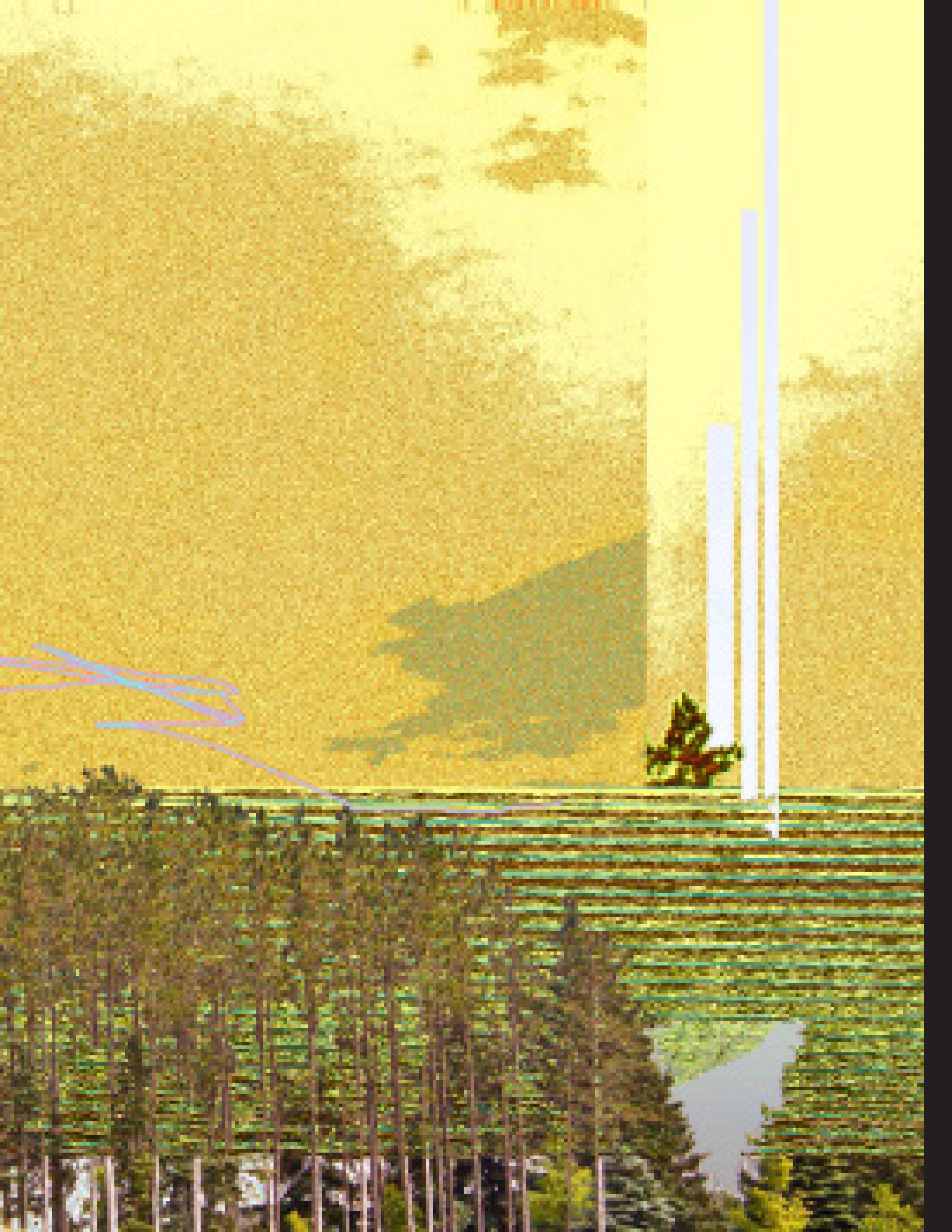
Jesse Glass

To pull a false flamingo's beak over the frontal lobes
& in the Zip-lit-tip to burn whole cities full of the aged, the halt the infirm
So that one can't smell the candle of human fat projecting mauvely across the page of Kant that one holds
In imagination and from which one improvises a Sprechgesang that is immediately broadcast
To North Korean bathing beauties demanding the world's attention at low tide, this 21st day of Sky,
leather gloves duct-taped securely to one's glandular ambitions, this month of Sometember
& to pass one's hands in their disguises among the thereminic frequencies of alembics, curcurbites, retorts,
& centrifuges of those self-reliant women as they gaze back mildly into the non-reflective lenses of our eyes
& to do so while solar storms knock lodestone, bar magnet, and Tokamac from their proper
Orientations--& the elevators in the Hotel Pennsylvania open & close all night on bardos of CNN-
filled emptiness in Manhattan—
Is to mark one the Beloved of a Solomonic Tomorrow, with secret names "Mabus" & "Almitab".

& hello my name is "Almitab" try to decipher my name
Count the letters to make divine gematria, snap your fingers at each occult connection
& initiate the chain of associations, the correct sequence of silence sound & number
& yes the valley is "Mabus" the train that slowly rattles up the switchback "Mabus" the sky full
Of twitching horns & thunder "Mabus" **My ABSOLUTELY FREE** gift to you
OUR PATENTED, LAMINATED CARD full of INSCRUTABLE BLINKING EYES as you
Stand, sit, cower, move the card this way that way in the autumn light:
Their miraculous metamorphoses in your hand "Almitab," my irregular breathing "Mabus," the
Gaze of the beauties hidden behind government-issue, camouflage binoculars "Almitab"
The background of evaporating sea and single pigeon convulsing on the sand "Mabus"
The tiny figure waving hello, then goodbye, & the answering shrug of the horizon "Almitab"
The pale fellow with too much grease in his hair with the velvet folding table, throat microphone,
& white plastic mouse zipping across his sta-pressed shirt-front, over his clip-on tie around
His wrists, into and out of his pockets attached by a plastic thread
To a button, that fellow, too, attempting to sell on a less-than- fabulous commission tiny biopsies
Of the moment clipped by the precision engineered shutter of the **WORLD'S SMALLEST**
CAMERA--

His secret resolve, the single room he lives in, the 60 watt bulb, the unmade
Bed, the nicotine stained ceiling, the terminal flower, the shouting in the alley below,
The boxed stock of rubber mice fishing line tiny film and cameras in his brief case with torn zipper,
The throat microphone wrapped around two clip-on ties, the toy amplifier in its own ingenious compartment
The pay phone in the hall ringing out the hours of the night
Until he stumbles along the Lestoil-reeking landing,
Takes the hollow steps four echoes at a time, breasts the darkness in his socks
The cracked, florescent crucifix on the wall the only light--
Lifts the receiver to his ear, saying "ello 'ello", only to hear a voice
Whisper, "Almitab?" and he answers, rolling the toothpick to the far side of his rage, "No, Mabus."





Bordeaux, France, 1976

Thomas McDade

A runaway slave graced
a prodigious sheet
cake the Chief Cook
baked and iced
to mark the Bicentennial.

No happy birthday U.S. of A,
Don't Tread On Me snake
or candle formation.

Crispus Attucks the star,
spelled out and depicted, black
man down on knee aiming
a musket, Colonial garb,
tri-cornered hat and all.

26 Crispus the first
Boston Rising casualty.
Snickers, smirks and mutterings
infected those one would expect—
joined by assorted surprises,
as well as the tightened jaws
of the few still afflicted,
shell-shocked over color-
blind European belles.
Photos were snapped,
cake tasty, no mutiny.
Next time at sea
gunnery games,
mounts blasting,
fireworks painting
memory skies,
hues of Bordeaux
skirts and scarves
or salutes galore

for Crispus Attucks
and his confectionary
resurrection
on the Fast Frigate,
named for a Pearl
Harbor sailor who saved
his captain and others
before wasting
no ammo downing
enemy bombers:
Dorie Miller,
an Afro-American
the law permitted
to merely serve chow, never
to man an anti-aircraft gun.

Mandrake and Magician

Thomas McDade

You'll find him staring at the littered grass
patch in the park by the university.
When moneyed enough, he buys quarts
of wine that remind him of hand grenades
in old war movies and the nights feel safer.
Lean times it's a half-pint ration.
Blowing off tunes across bottle tops
he changes tone with measured swigs.
Students toss change applaud his sketchy
rendition of "Barbara Allen" most.
His audience is mostly pigeons he claims
have carried his tuneful messages.
He tells them they are related
28 to the Holy Ghost and the sparrows
that raid the stale crusts pensioners'
toss are angels of Lucifer.
When wineless, depressed and silent he recalls
a tale one student shared about death,
termed it the long sleep of Socrates.
A snappy coed claimed when a man hangs,
he comes as his neck snaps
and mandrakes sprout where seeds fall.
The only mandrake he can remember
is the magician on long ago comic page.
Spinning a yarn to his flock
he describes himself hanging,
an urban scarecrow,
legacy of suet.

Robot #14 (Panel Discussion)

Jenny MacBain-Stephens

The panel discussion contains all robots and one human moderator. They discuss how to imprint human brains (brians) onto the circuit boards. How to really feel all the feels. How to use tear ducts like a self-cleaning oven. There is no laughter, however. The robots like to tell jokes but they haven't figured out laughter yet. No one knows who is laughing because the laughter is all the same. It's an awkward

HAHA HA. Just the three "HA"s at the same decibel level.

The humans do not laugh because they are scared.

Notes from the brochure:

Witty commentary comes when one is relaxed. This is another concept that is hard to translate to robots. Wit is a distinctive characteristic – sarcasm is not always witty or even humorous. And each human does not always find another human to be witty. Guest speaker, Data, will take questions at 2pm.

Poem #2

Volodymyr Bilyk

Aruba-du, ruba-tu, ruba-tu.

(laughter)

(laughter)

(‘)

(murmur)

(laughter) um,

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter) Uh, you used to giggle.

30 heh (laughter)

(laughter)

What? Huh? naw.

(laughter, clapping)

(laughter)

Uh,

uh,

(laughter)

Oh oh

(laughter) oh

Oh

(footsteps fading away) (papers ruffling)

Read it! (from audience)

(laughter)

(clapping, whistling) (murmur)

Yeah. (murmur) (continuous clapping)

(end of continuous clapping)

(‘)

(‘)

(laughter)

yeh,

ah,

(laughter)

(laughter) Ha! So!

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter) Oh

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

Uh

(murmur laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

Heh (laughter) Wow!

Whew!

(murmur, laughter)

(laughter)

Aw! (laughter)

ah (murmur).

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter) heh

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(‘)

uh,

(laughter)

(Murmur)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(‘)

yeh, yeh, yeh,

(laughter)

32 yeah

(laughter)

(laughter)

Oh,

(laughter, murmur)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(‘)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

(laughter)

Twat! Yeh

(laughter)

ah

(murmur, laughter)

Ah,

(laughter)

(laughter)

it! (murmur)

uh, ah, uh

(clapping whistling)

Some Mechanism

George Salis

On the third day her eyes feathered open and the glass on the ground, in her lids, made her see only the constituents of light. She scrambled up from the glittering void. Leaf upon leaf. Flash upon flash. She was a human born in a crow's nest, her own blood as amniotic fluid, now dried. She felt her shard-embedded face and began to squeeze the diamond-bits of glass like they were carbuncles. Sections of her flesh were missing, revealing the bright red muscle, anatomy in the open air. Her left arm, which she hadn't attempted to use until now, was broken backward, beyond the range of extension that her elbow provided, a useless anchor of skin and bone. With her functioning right arm, she collected the flakes of glass and put them in her shredded pocket. She remembered falling. Not down, but forward, in a manner fit for a tipped earth.

There was more glass amongst the leaves and she followed the trail while picking them up. Glass as breadcrumbs. After a while she stopped, stricken. A trail of ichor, metallic and pearlescent, mazed over the ground. It seared her eyes to look at it for more than a few seconds. Then, knowing the truth of her fear, she came upon an inclined tree that held the face of Him, or He the tree. Did this God sacrifice Himself for her? No. That gift had passed. The Crash Test: Frontal-impact. Crown of Thorns. Small Overlap. Crucifixion. Side-impact. Lance of Longinus. Moderate Overlap. Rock-hewn Tomb. Roll-over. Thereafter, she had accepted the resurrected form of Him. No, this wasn't sacrifice. She had committed deicide.

34 She leaned over and kissed the crumpled hood, dusting her lips with dirt. Her mangled arm tenderly touching the rim of the gaping bumper as in propitiation. The single unshattered bulb of God's eye glowed, jaundiced with displeasure, with compact wrath. She was a follower turned wayward. She had swerved from the highway into the left hand path of the woods. The highway was in the distance now, chanting. But she wasn't always like this. She had studied the Word. 1-9: *If you are wearing your seat belt properly adjusted and you are sitting upright and well back in your seat with both feet on the floor, your chances of being injured or killed in a collision and/or the severity of injury may be greatly reduced.* 1-51: *A cracked windshield should be replaced immediately by a qualified repair facility.* The Commandments: *Obey traffic signals. Stay in proper lane. Follow at a safe distance. Observe right-of-way.* She could recite the Book line by line. But obeisance does not follow from lucubration.

The sin of apostasy was at the core of her guilt now, her repentance. She dragged herself up the foliage-covered hill, between the trees, and witnessed, once more, religion as it was meant to be. Sinuous. Synchronous. Unswerving. Demoted to hitchhiker, she simply stared, mesmerized, until headlights were necessary to reveal the path. Low beam. High beam. She followed them with her fogged eyes. Those lights, traversing the dark highway, dual stars moving in sync with the paved planet. $V=S/T$. Three-factored God. With the passing of each reverberating deity she reflexively lifted her right hand to her face.

Consciously completing the gesture, she brushed a strand of hair into the cleft between skull and ear. Roar of the accelerator. Screech of the brakes. Unforgiving and unappeasable. The trust one holds for the passing vehicle is the most unfathomable act of faith. All it requires is a minute turn toward the light for one's world to be punished. Roadkill creatures, gore exposed and limb-twisted, are familiar with this. Evidence of uncreation. Not far off, she smelled it, a follower of this logic. Once a cat, now a rib-caged bowl of blood. She approached. Dark maggots and darker flies scrambled to make it anew. Putrefaction as thurible's sanctifying incense. She knelt, her left hand's knuckles monkey-like on the grass. Several vultures, the black-cloaked and hunch-backed priests of this dominion, nodded in her direction. With her left hand she peeled a portion of the racoon's dehaired flesh, dipped it in the hemoglobin wine and placed it upon her tongue. Eucharist prepared by the elastomer hands of God. Transubstantiation unneeded.

But it was futile. She had been inside God's love, the leather upholstery, the AM/FM tuner with CD receiver, the multitudinous light-emitting diodes of the dashboard, the refrigerant-fueled A/C. At 60-70-80 miles-per-hour the highway hums, the wind its breath, a constant and simultaneous inhalation and exhalation. The Holy Spirit. But she had disobeyed, polyester-webbed seat belt undone, and had been cast out. Through the urethane-sealed safety glass, she was reborn in shards yet damned by the breaking of the molecular bond.

Fly Fishing in the Morgue

Daniel Roncace

She waves a dizzy farewell for weeks
until it blurs into something recognizable,

so that even the boozy bumblebees are muttering
about it in the backyard.

The mortuary is my estuary,
so I cast my reel out into a body of dead things.

The hawthorn fly catches a mouth,
and Lilith bobbles up from the water like a buoy bobbles,

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looking beautiful tonight with a hook in her lip.

Evening Winds from the Shed

Daniel Roncace

Miscreants hear other heartbeats
in the swallowed nocturnes swelling ceiling fans,

beyond all the wet-rotted webby sheds,
clamoring cicadas fuss, a lot,

and Lilith comes out like a bride to the buggy choir,
wire-black angel hair thrown over deltoids:

Al Dente.

Don't think for a moment she doesn't recognize me from the shed—
She's an arch-demon with great eyes.

Also, we had sex over there in the dirt.

Out for a Nature Walk in Minnesota

Nick Romeo

“Look dad, the constellation Leo.
Just follow the pointer stars
of the Big Dipper to the sickle,
which forms the lion’s tail.”

“Very good, son.
Please keep an eye on him
while I fetch my rifle.”



Biographical Information

Volodymyr Bilyk is a writer and translator from Ukraine. His works include visual poems in the series *This is Visual Poetry* (2013), CIMESEA (2013), Casio's Pay-Off Peyote (2013), SCOBES (2013), "Heartbeat, Footclick, Machine Gun Vocalizes" (2016), and Roadrage (2016). He authored screenplays for the films "Midget-Stripper" (2012-2013), "Escapee" (2014), and "The Trial of Beilis" (2013-2015). His works have been exhibited on Bright Stupid Confetti Asemic Show, Yoko Ono Fan Club, Venti Leggeri in Bologna, The Spiral Asemic Show in Malta; EL MARTELL SENSE MESTRE in Barcelona, The Future is Here Again: VISUAL LANGUAGE in New York, World Association of Visual and Experimental Artists in Valjevo and OVERCONSUMPTION in Ternopil.

Brooks Cashbaugh's work draws heavily from the mythology of America's Midwest. He was born in South Bend, IN in 1985 and studied painting and political science at Indiana University. In his work, Cashbaugh combines archetypes of Americana with portraits to locate a familiar humanity in America's complicated mythology. He lives and works in New York. Find more at brookscashbaugh.com

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Vincent Francone is a writer from Chicago whose memoir, *Like a Dog*, was published in the fall of 2015. Find more at www.vincentfrancone.com

Jesse Glass is the author of *The Passion of Phineas Gage & Selected Poems*, *Gaba Noas Zorge*, and *Lost Poet; Four Plays*. His work is available online at Penn Sound and Ubu-Web, among other places. He lives in Japan.

Rose Knapp is a poet, novelist, electronic music producer, and multimedia artist. She has an experimental novel forthcoming and poetry publications in *Chicago Literati*, *PDXX Collective*, *BlazeVOX*, *OccuPoetry*, *Danse Macabre*, and others. She currently divides her time between Brooklyn and Minneapolis. Find more via her Twitter handle @Rose_Siyaniye

Jennifer MacBain-Stephens attended NYU's Tisch School of the Arts and currently resides in the DC area. Her chapbook *Clown Machine* is forthcoming from Grey Book Press this summer. Recent work can be seen or is forthcoming at *The Birds We Piled Loosely*, *Queen Mob's Teahouse*, *Inter/rupture*, *Poor Claudia*, and *decomp*. Find more at jennifermacbainstephens.wordpress.com

Jonathan May grew up in Zimbabwe, but lives and teaches in Memphis, TN. A queer writer, he uses poetry therapy to help people with eating disorders. Find more at memphisjon.wordpress.com

Thomas McDade is a former plumbing industry computer programmer and analyst. A graduate of Fairfield University, McDade is a veteran of two tours of duty in the U. S. Navy, ashore and at sea. He lives in Fredericksburg, VA.

mwpm lives and writes in Waterloo, Ontario. His writing has appeared (or forthcoming) in *Blueprint Magazine*, *The 22 Magazine*, *filling Station*, *(parenthetical)*, *Sewer Lid*, *Otoliths*, *Sonic Boom*, and *untethered*.

Nick Romeo is a multidisciplinary artist, musician and poet. His poems have been published in “The Brentwood Anthology, by Pittsburgh Poetry Exchange,” *Uppagus*, *Rune*, *StreetCake Magazine*, *Eye Contact*, *Syzygy*, and others. He lives in Pittsburgh with his wife and cat, Megatron. Find more at pittsburghartistregistry.org

Daniel Roncace did not provide biographical information.

George Salis received a B.A. in English and Psychology from Stetson University. He has won awards for his fiction and journalism, has taught in Bulgaria, and recently finished writing his first novel.

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Devin Taylor studies English and Creative Writing at Washington College in Chestertown, Maryland. He reads poetry in the Washington D.C. area, sometimes under the pseudonym “Chuck E. Cheese.” He has been published in *The Lake and The Poeming Pigeon*, and *In Between Hangovers*, and has forthcoming publications in *Gargoyle 65*, *Five 2 One*, and the inaugural issue of *Silicon Heart Zine*. He plays electric kazoo and eats his fruit and vegetables.

Lenore Weiss did not provide biographical information.

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