

they're gonna need a ladder...
a rowen's ladder...

yardwin fossingren didn't want to be a hero. from the moment she was born, people kept saying weird shit to her. it didn't even stop when she grew up. but she might just be the only super zoner who can navpack the moonfast gate - unless her sister jocklyn can overcome her hemeodynamic threadnencies...

from the author who brought you "HELLBALL: YOU ARE THE BALL" comes a thrilling talk about freaking all this freaking shit again.



rowen's ladder

rowen conry



the dog with the wooden leg

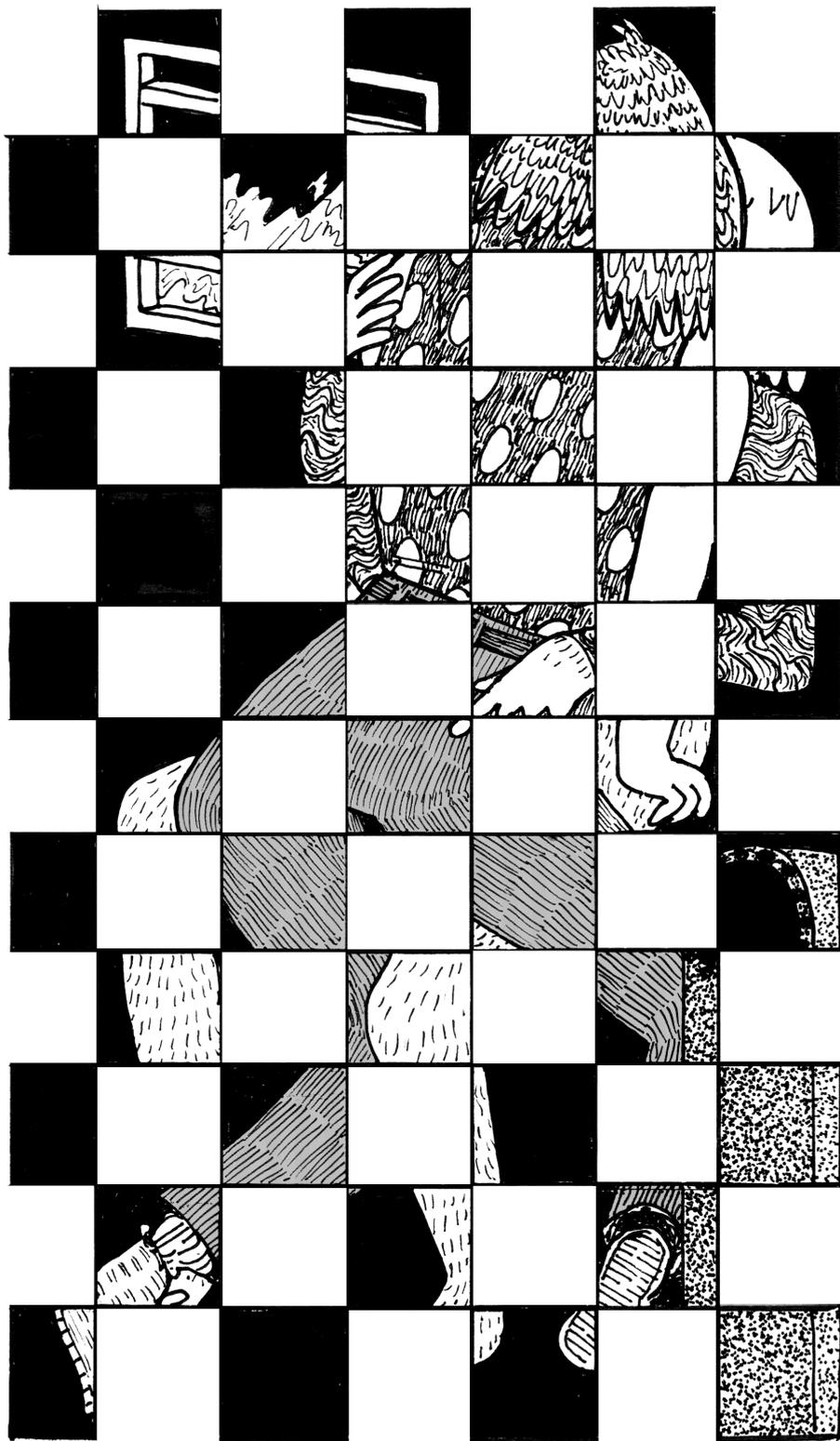
and sometimes it seems
like the smell of balsa wood
is following him

sometimes he has dreams
where the wood takes him over
trapping him in

the kibble is wood
mt ranier is made of wood
the midwest is wood

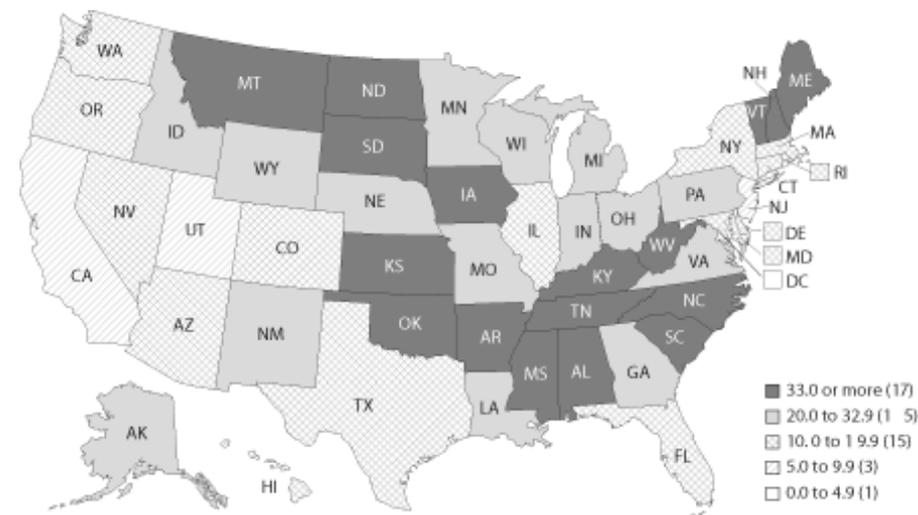
then he smells flowers
people, grass and other dogs
and dreams go away





on a train. my dog, he licked each puppy on the head once and each puppy went *woof!* and each of their woofs was a different note and it sounded like this: *woof woof woof woof woof woof woof.* then i read you an excerpt from a

after an hour i forgot what street i lived on and what i did for a job. i forgot what my major was in college. if anyone asked me what it was i wouldn't know. i realized suddenly that the nine puppies i had seen in my own dream were a premonition



travel magazine and you woke up.

of dance, and i blazed bright like an exploding pen.

we walked together along the rusted rail and concrete steps that led us deeper and deeper into the sewer system. we walked over a few small sheet metal bridges and took a cement spiral staircase, very narrow, until we reached a wide space that held the entrance to the cave, which was guarded by an enormous fence with a door on it. we paid thirty five dollars and walked in. the music was really loud. our friends were there on mushrooms. the lights were flitting in curving shapes over the bulbous walls of the cave. i felt like i was in the end of a dusty and crumpled spoon.

when the music ended, i could suddenly hear the gentle rushing of water from the nearby river des peres, which was as deep underground as we were, and as we clambered back up toward the dawn on the surface of the world, through a slot in the concrete i saw it: the body of the river des peres, which is well hidden. it glistened and flowed like no river i had ever seen in the woods or downtown. it was turning, always turning, sticking with itself in the dark. i stopped looking at it and didn't tell anyone I saw it. i passed through the wind back to my house. you sat on the edge of the bed and you said what am i going to dream about tonight? i said i dont know but i hope it's puppies.

i gave myself over to the imp of dance that lives in me and tries its best, and you danced too. our friends came over to us and held our hands.

THE BODY OF THE RIVER DES PERES



they lifted up the mississippi and put the river des peres underground.

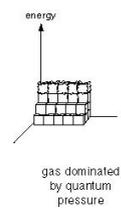
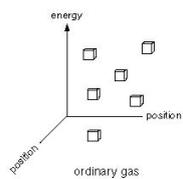
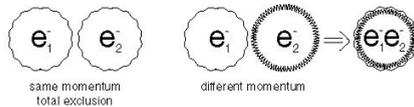
i kept hearing about these raves, these cave raves that you crawl through a sewer to get to. i told you let's go to a cave rave, these above ground raves have grown tiresome to me. you said okay, but you said you keep having these dreams. bad dreams you've had since you were a kid, when you were 13 and watched too much doctor who. you were 13 and you started thinking that if we really ever left earth to go to the stars or even to mars on a spaceship, as soon as we left the gravitational pull of mother earth we would lose the things that are important: kindness, friendship, love, because the planet is the one that gives us those things.

in the dream you're on a spaceship, the first rocket to mars, and the whole crew has turned into a gaggle of unfeeling murderers, killing each other and themselves, far apart from nature, and you don't feel anything either except the evils of outer space. your hands are bloody. "it just wouldn't work out all nice like it does on doctor who" you said. the next night you would dream about millions of spaceships around a distant

planet turning toward an alien sun and flinging themselves into it one after another, the ships disappearing behind the wicked corona and charring black, then disintegrating into nothing.

in the hours before the magical cave rave, i told you to sit in my wooden chair. i gave you a book full of words that my friend had printed for me and i told you to whisper the random words rhythmically — *clock portent cooperstown vigil drain drama liquid cutter* — while i paced around the chair in a circle, occasionally touching your forehead lightly with the dangled end of a string. *eulogy fist fraternize catskills purchase fake emergence* — you read for twenty minutes or so. then i told you close the book and keep talking. you closed the book and kept talking — *disc cremation dialysis cotton cube nightstand* — until your voice faded away and i said okay, you've

been hypnotized, now listen: im the doctor, the doctor from doctor who, and let me tell you, space is fun, science fiction is exciting, everyone loves going to space, rocketing up into the infinite stars. and maybe instead you should dream about what i dreamed about last night, which was my dog giving birth to nine puppies



the rowen's ladder

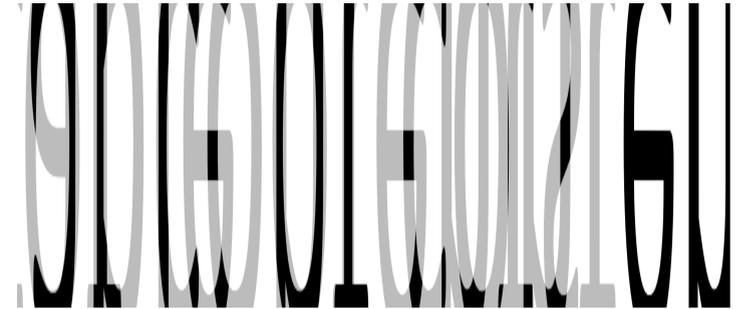
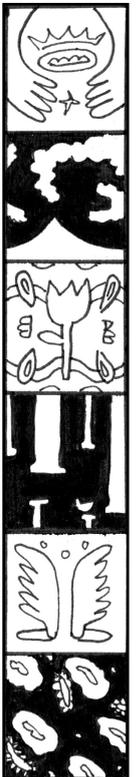


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and the food chain

in the animal world

a detective has to pick her battles
and decide each day if a death is
the circle of life or injustice
and there is no court of law
for her to lean on
like a saccharine crutch

a philosophical novel
where our detective meets
alligators who talk in rhyme
a novel whose thesis
defies the rational — a book
helga rattlesnake explains
that seeks to prove true
or at least normalize
the spiritual aspects
of rattlesnake detective work

their love
the love of two rattlesnakes
wilbur and helga
is strong and knotted
like cord
sex is very serious
the space shuttle crashes down
into the waters of love
that
friend
is spiritual realism

these baby snakes

this new generation

generation snake

with their slithery ipads

ipads that shed their screens

and hiss

these pioneers

gods of nothing except

the subtle direction

of future rattlesnake discourse

they will not take fucking

for granted

they will include fucking

in their prayers

without irony

riding in boxes to the cincinatti zoo

and overseas to russia

they are emboldened

in their mission

in russia under a warm lamp

a young rattlesnake

looks out the window

the cosmonauts

climb the metal steps

into their machine

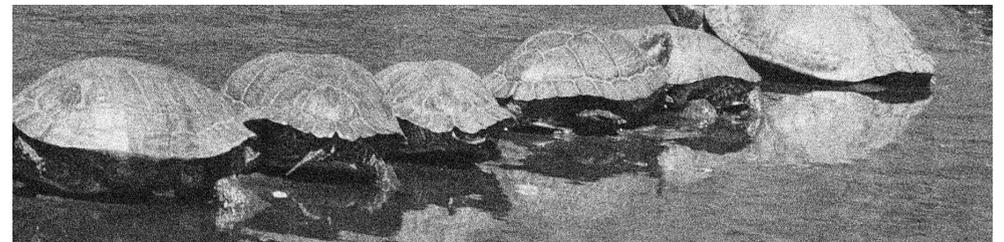
the noise almost breaks

a rattlesnake's ears

and the young rattlesnake

bares its teeth

in anger.



is sex funny?



is sex funny? is sex a joke to you?
you laugh at sex?

buddy, we're in a serious world
or at least
a serious place in the world
where sex is serious business
it requires concentration
memorization
and frowning
it engenders militarism
it is about putting your feet
shoulder width apart and saluting

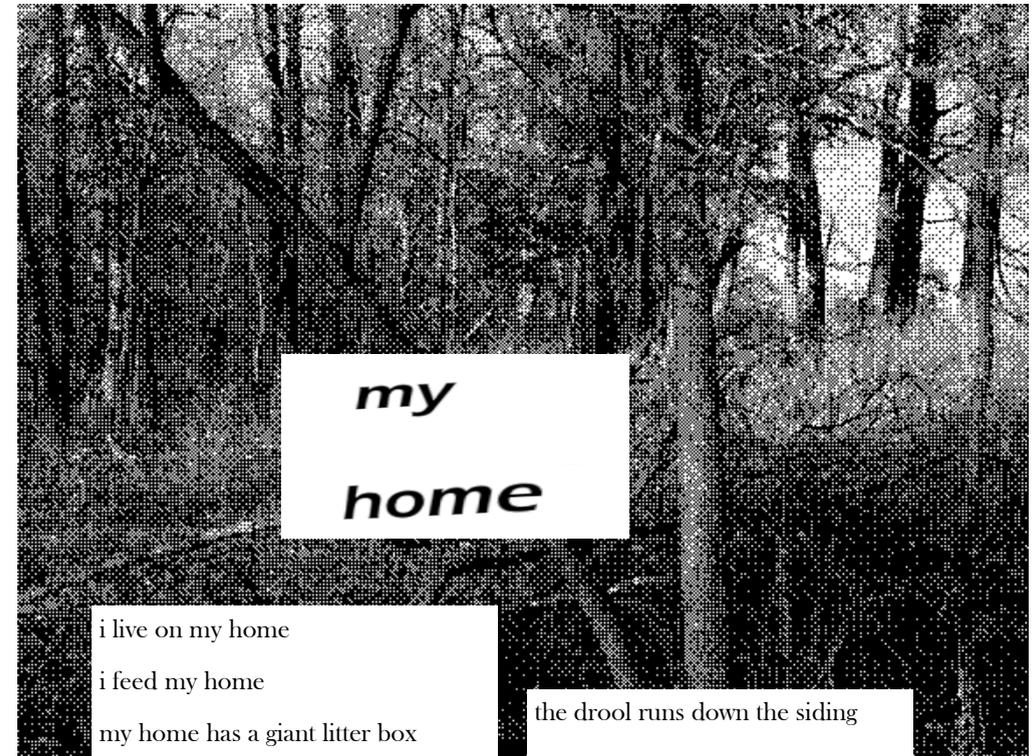
wilbur rattlesnake
didn't think sex was funny
now there
was a man worth looking up to
or actually a snake
he was a rattlesnake
he hated sex and the space shuttle
he lived right next to cape canaveral
he lived for fifty years and watched
the space shuttle fly up and up
but it never came back down
and that pissed him off
maybe because it was kind of like a
metaphor for a powerful erection
or maybe because across the board
rattlesnakes despise technology
he was mad
ready to bite someone

he bit three people at an outlet mall
he hid under a mailbox
and jumped out three times before
they caught him

at the zoo, he found himself tossed
up against a plaster rock
and they brought another snake
another rattlesnake named helga
in to meet him
and he saw in the eyes
of the onlooking zookeepers
that silent but persistent cry:
breed
they said

and maybe you think that's funny
you think the tortorous life of a fifty-
year-old rattlesnake is funny?
you think it's funny to make a rattle-
snake have his mid-life crisis
behind a sheet of plexiglass?
unpaid circus act rattlesnake with no
money to buy a ferarri?

helga the rattlesnake,
so casual about everything,
working on her novel
a mystery book
where a detective rattlesnake
roams the florida bogs
lost in a sea of murder

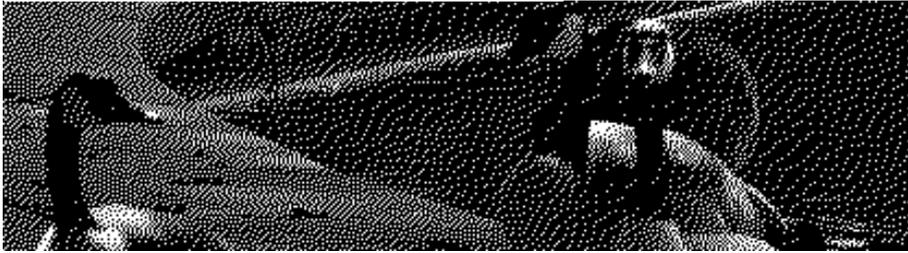


i live on my home
i feed my home
my home has a giant litter box

my home is playful
look at it run
i hold tight to my home
as it lurches around
my home likes to be pet
my home likes a treat
my home likes me
it looks at me often
with its enormous eyes
hello home
im back
how was your day
it blinks slowly at me
i fill its food bowl
it sloppily eats its food

the drool runs down the siding
yum yum yum
dang you love that stuff
i play with my home
i call the firefighters
and they give my home a bath
my home shakes the water off
hang on tight! shake shake shake
let's play! i chase my home
around the neighborhood
watch out for that car!
my home and i return
to the lot where we live
what a day
time to go to sleep
goodnight home
the home blinks slowly
then closes its eyes

two thunders



like that picture of albert einstein tonguing the universe, i basically love and believe in everything. and i believe it all at once. i like to watch those youtube videos where they explain about black holes and how galaxies work. but i also know the sun is a creature and the moon is thinking. one time at night on a small hill in the middle of the rain, sitting on a bench in a bunch of grass, i heard two thunders, one from the left and one from the right. it was pitch black. the trees were waving like crazy. if two thunders can happen at exactly the same time, you can go to every afterlife when you die, and be reincarnated into every animal at once. and become a star. and keep living too, if you want. just

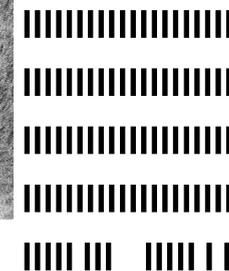
like how there's no scientific reason for doctors hitting you on the knee with a mallet. they just like to do that.

a few months ago i hit my head really hard. i had to go to the hospital. you sat there in the armchair next to the hospital bed looking at me and sometimes writing stuff down. i basically could only think about one thing at a time. i zoomed in real far on your nose. your nose was so big in my eyes. it made me happy especially the way it twitched. every time you moved your head even a little bit, i had to swing my eyes so far to catch up

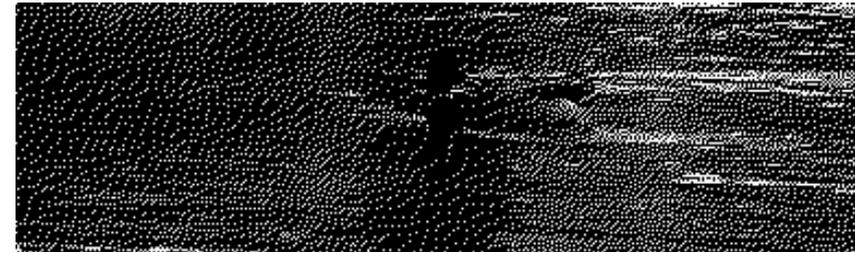
the doctor came in and i kept looking at your nose. another doctor



freya's poem

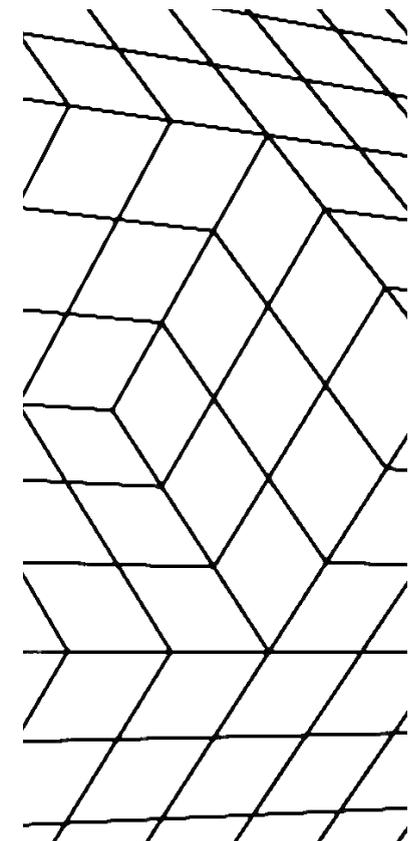


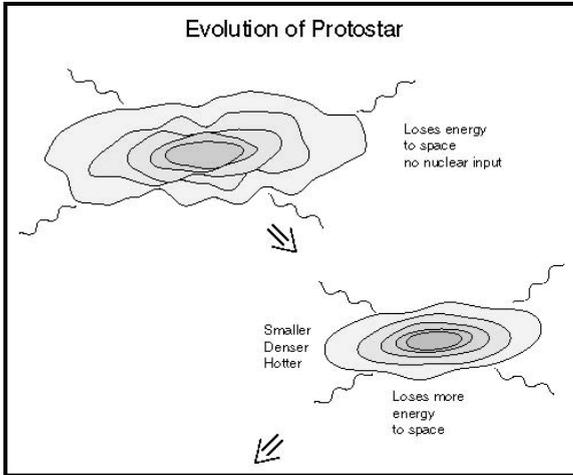
double think?	at 0800
honey ive got triple think: live laugh love	she's a dinosaur but she'll still sink
im sorry the font was too "cheugie" for you	strapping the headlights back on with electrical tape
im sorry the spirit of the earth sometimes takes forms you don't recognize	and spinning out into the ocean
maybe your face would stop hurting	underground riverway under- ground cave system under- ground ocean
if it wasn't killing me	the smell of a helicopter hov- ering over a field of waving grain
hold my hand, call me sir	and flinging it all back
i might like it this time	my shot glass hitting the bar
i'll tell you to get to your post, cadet	another revelation night
this your first time on a sub- marine?	another epiphany dance floor
and what do you think our kid will look like?	another chasedown
your cool eyes my giant in- flexible nose	lights flashing off my gritted teeth
the only part of my body i truly understand	you think our kid will look up at a flickering light on a tele- phone pole?
fifth floor of st lukes our kid will arrive under the flourescents	or will she just keep walking the folks i hung out with in college kept saying in three years they'd be dead
reflecting only the low blue light of underwater daydreaming, private?	but they're still alive, i see them from a distance in this city
on my orders, private wine o clock ended	they're all still alive



came in and i tried look-
ing at his nose. his nose
was basically crap com-
pared to your nose. later
at my house god it was
so cold in my house, i
stood there in the small-
est room thinking one
thought at a time trying
to expand my mind to
two thoughts. i heard
your voice and i heard
you playing minecraft. i
asked you to come to
this small room, the only
room i could handle. i
asked you to stand right
in front of me. you
touched your nose to
mine. i didn't even have
to ask you, it was instinc-
tual. i felt your nose on
my nose, it felt good. i
pressed my nose into
your nose. you tried to
kiss me. i didn't kiss
back. i touched your
hand lightly. just the
nose please. i heard a
skeleton kill you in mine-
craft in the other room.

the arrows kept going
into you, and then there
was the sound of all your
items exploding out. you
didn't seem to care. we
stood there and i could
smile so much. i was so
glad, because of that.

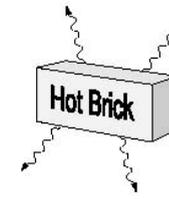




looking up
cosmic
brownie on
urban
dictionary

a cosmic brownie
is when you're over here
and she's over there
while you're here and you
kind of turn her thing
like you turn
her thing and she
sort of "rolls" your thing
while you turn her thing
or like,
like you're kind of "under"
her? (not really under her)
the butt has to be involved
that's the brownie part right
that's the brownie part
so her or your butt is here
and you're "there"
i mean you're really there
and you go up to her thing
and like you're crossing into
a very similar but slightly differ-
ent
dimension
something "changes"?
like you can tell something
"changed"?

you're right up against her thing
now
you got her thing on your thing
you flip it
now your thing's on her thing
you flip it
you keep flipping it
here comes the butt
now we got her thing your thing
and the butt
swap em
butt's on top
order:
butt
her thing
your thing
flip it again
see what's happening?
thing butt thing
now you got thing butt thing
add another butt
thing butt thing butt thing
and maybe at the end when
you cum
it's like
it looks like the galaxy



was the summer i decided i
would never wear blue jeans
again.

if i believed in anything it was
that to be born at all was hu-
bris, a thought that has soft-
ened into the funny accep-
tance of the parasite, like
evil viruses chuckling to each
other saying "it's a living", even
when scientists are debating
whether or not viruses should
be considered alive at all
they're sitting around playing
with atom-sized decks of cards
going "it's a living, it's what we
do, that's the way it goes, repli-
cating hard or hardly replicat-
ing", well, that was the subject
of many conversations with my
canadian girlfriend, who later
dumped me for my infuriatingly
strict adherence to my severely
limited health-food diet, con-
sisting chiefly of two protein
shakes, one drunk at midnight
and one at high noon, and also
because when we would hang
out with our friends i would ask
everybody the same questions
over and over again, not be-
cause i forgot but because i
was anxious, and although i
was extremely physically fit i
was hairy and hunched and
everyone called me canadian
bigfoot.

our trunk, i slunk back to my
grandfather's house, ate a big
meal, went to sleep, ate break-
fast, and got the bachelor's de-
gree which has fucked up my
life ever since.

so with the opening bars of
'theme from jungle chain'
spraining my ears, soring them,
the familiarity basically a
screech at this point but i'm
stockholm syndromed into the
ditch of this world that asks
each of us to have a favorite
fucking film, and i'm struck,
blindsided by the opportunity to
finally leave this life, strike it
rich with a sexy anime girl and
finally live out my fantasy mi-
lord, the fantasy. milord, where
i wake up and i see every color,
a rainbow of glass, formed
formless hanging plentiful
around my dry cot - i wake up
at five in the morning and go to
the furnace and i dream up a
dragon, a glass dragon moving
and melted shut, a glass planet
with a funny smiley face, glass
that people look at like they
look at constellations, with awe
and curiosity and fury, and all
day i blow until i can't move
and the only thing to do then is
sleep.

hitchhiking back into the united
states somberly and almost cry-
ing for no reason when the
customs agents asked to check



JUNGLE CHAIN

Jwell hbo max delisted my favorite movie jungle chain the other day and so i was forced to go onto the internet and google jungle chain free movie watch online now and click on the fifth link and close out of a bunch of ads except this one ad, this ad was sort of enticing to me, it was like an anime lady, a sexy anime lady and it said "live your fantasy, milord" - well, you don't get a proposition like that every day, and to be perfectly normal and honest with you, in every year of my life i have been provided with very little opportunity to "live my fantasy", if you want me to get angsty about it i'll say i have lived a downtrodden life, spurned at every turn, even my gap year was sad, i drove around the southern united states in my grandpa's pickup truck, tried to learn glassblowing and all i learned was that i lack the lungs for it, got a job at a smelting plant and went to bed every night hot and greasy, woke up every day in a cold sweat and went back to work - these were twelve hour shifts there at the smelting plant, and everything we smelted looked like a big lump, the manager guys would point to a lump and say "that's goin' in a ford" or "that's for the back of your re-

frigerator" but in my head i smirked and i said "fellas, that there is lump A, that's lump B, that's lump C and so on. what we make here, boys, is lumps, bumpy or smooth, i don't care, and though it could be said i'm bulking up here in the smelting plant, i can lift more and more every day, my muscle mass grows with every lump i heave, my glassblowing pipe sits unused and if anything my lungs get weaker and weaker."

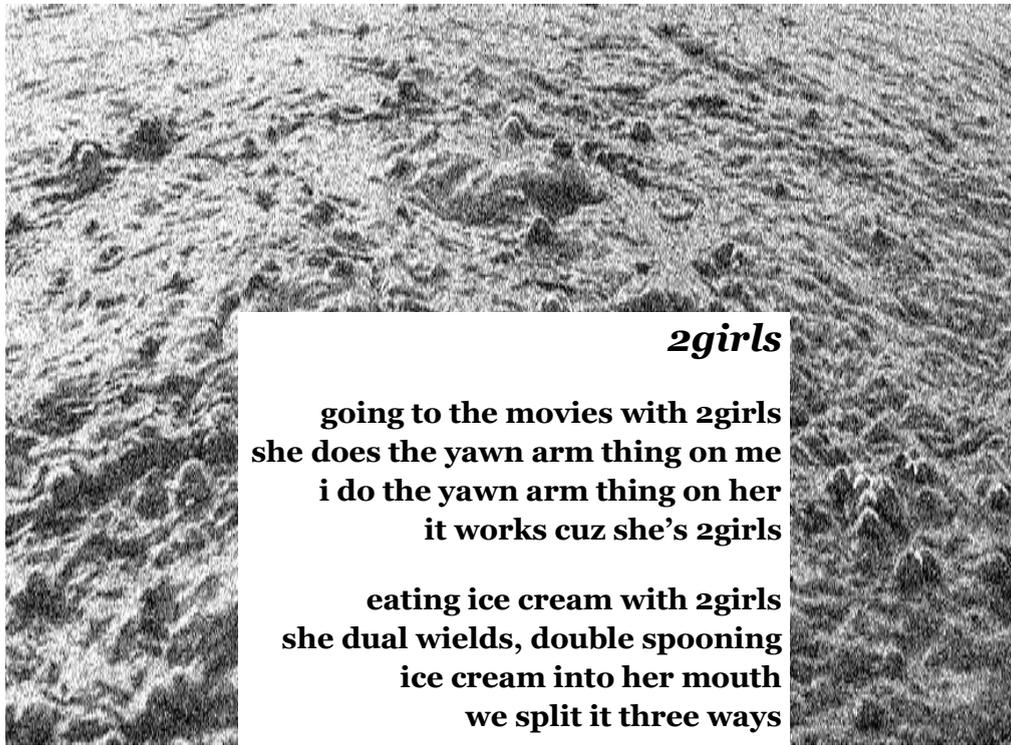
i smoked my last cigarette in that apartment and i drank my last drink at that neighborhood bar, and, sober like a mummy, me and my grandpa's truck split the last paycheck, and i got a ticket to canada and the truck got the long tow home, but even then, touching down in vancouver, i knew i was running around not out of fear of death but the lingering ennui of my terrible birth, the umbilical cord wrapped around my neck, on the deep day for the frog that only appears once every four years, every astrological sign and symbol pointing in a spiral downward, all my friends frowning trying to find the positive edge to that bitter fortune, walking the earth carried along by the winds of jupiter, canadians smiling and shaking my hand, that



my social security number

my social security number
has a nice pattern in it
it's a cool number
wish i could tell it to you
but i can't
it's my social security number
the most important number i have
for the government and stuff
but yeah it's one of the cooler numbers





2girls

going to the movies with 2girls
she does the yawn arm thing on me
i do the yawn arm thing on her
it works cuz she's 2girls

eating ice cream with 2girls
she dual wilds, double spooning
ice cream into her mouth
we split it three ways

i took 2girls to a show
a thrashy show, she got some guys
to lift her up onto the crowd
and i could still hold her hand

i got drunk that night and saw
two skies
one with a sunrise on it
and one with orion

later i took a nap with 2girls
she giggled in her sleep
when she woke up she told me:
i was at the park
i was a ferocious little dog
biting ankles

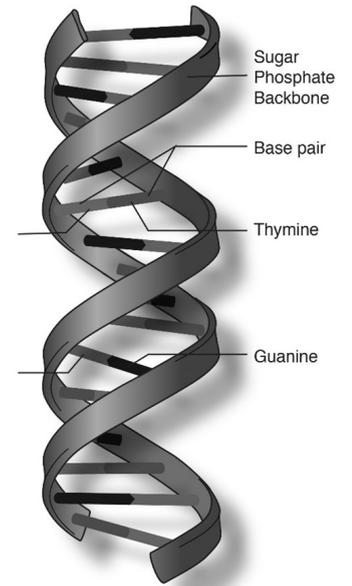


i know a couple sorrowful ragers like this
who need the chaste kiss of the little
google earth guy you drop onto the world
to go to street view
his featurelessness a comfort
he turns lust gray and fades crazy

i was better at fortnite
when i did coke
like when a skateboarder does a "trick"
and the skateboard itself probably feels
good about that too

but although two doctors, desperate and
blinded by sweat and/or work ethic
operating side by side without knowing it
accidentally removed both my kidneys at
the same time
still, this morning, with many flourishes
i made pancakes
the window was open, the countertop
was cool
in the park
the distant houses
were the squarest thing i could see
a bout of pleasant nausea
gave me xray eyes
and i could see my feet
my squirming feet in my socks and shoes
and my dog walked slowly in a circle
around a flower

the face of my dog stays on top of my
eyes
like staring too long at a light
the steady axe of your fingers
as legs, on a swivel point
rush from my head to my chest
yes,
my body is a wonderland
for the running man
the running man knows me best





he said i dont know
what world war 3 will be fought with
but i know world war 4 will be fought
with the galaxy buster 6000
a gun so big the bullet is a galaxy
and the birds of our world will evolve to
read the data on cds with their eyes
scrounging derelict cities and sewer
systems for the dreamy taste
of aol 10-day free trial or
mac os x install disc
their mating calls warped
by the millennium long shift
of concert pitch

he said there was much more room on
earth for trenches
and last time we did a bad job
that in world war 4 we're going to
tetris those trenches in tight
wind them across the plains and moun-
tains of the world mathematically
with precision like fractal equations
and dig them deep and in layers
each layer dug more secret than the last
down to the indecipherable
theatre of war
at the magma core
where there's military ego death
and the fight is the true chaos fight
like how bugs do

in the astronomy club's
dark and spacious van
he put his hand on my face
and i fingered the railroad rod
from where it came out of his head
to where it kept banging on the van's
sliding door
i said stop telling me these sad things
sad boy
because the world i know is beautiful
but the thing about sad boys
is they are addicted to telling sad things



this particular habit

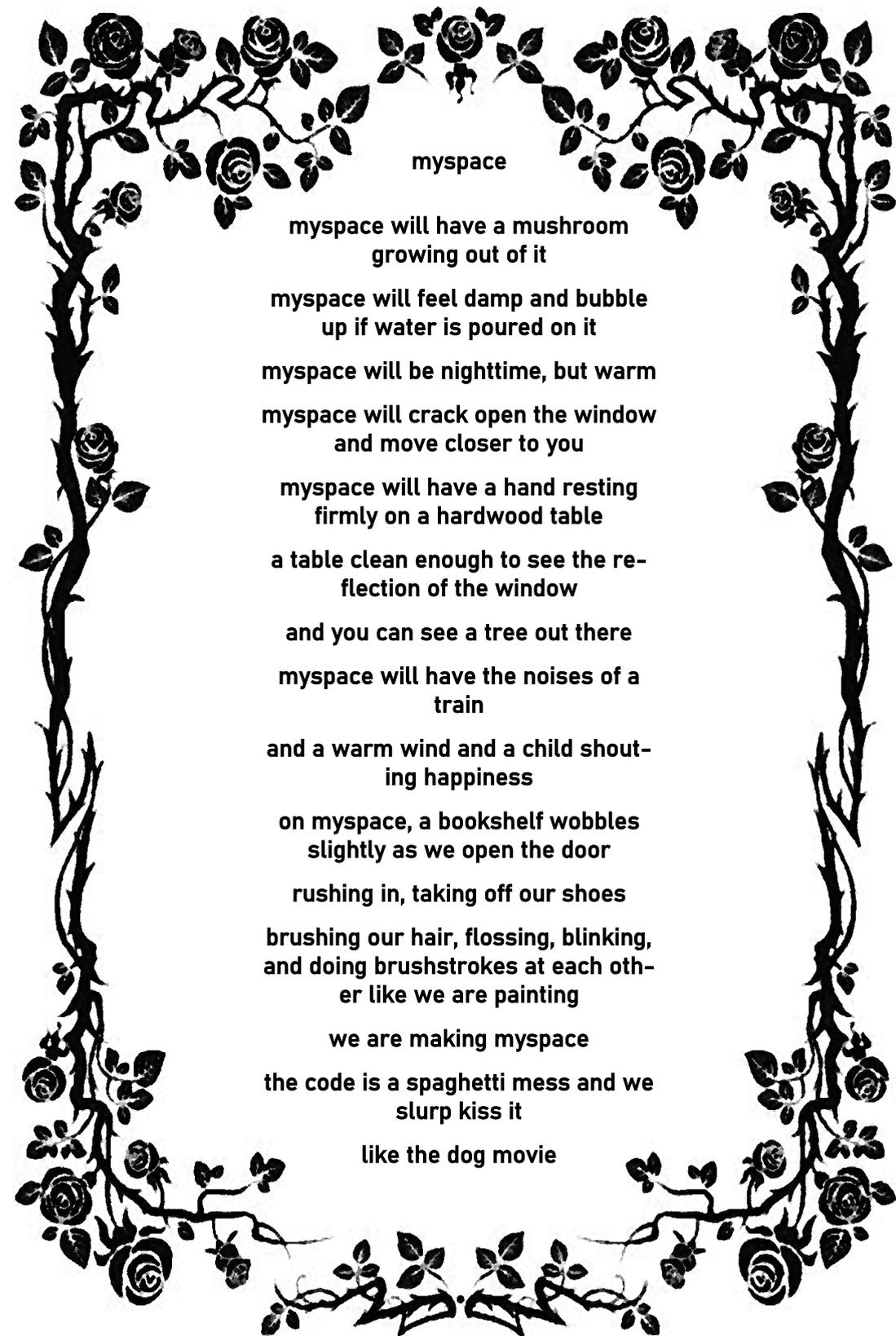
there's this little creature
that starts as an egg
this is like one of those
hello kitty cute creatures they sell
it starts as an egg
then it hatches
and the egg part becomes its face
it hatches this long thin body
a wet body, slick
with stubby vestigial wings and
dull vestigial spikes on its tail
basically a lizard fairy
with an eggshell for a head

there's this particular habit
that i have
where i am this aforementioned guy
where my head is still an egg
and i've got this lizard fairy body
and you can buy my merch at a cute store
in the mall
and in the merch my eyes are big cute and wet
but in the mirror my eyes are my normal eyes
on an egg head

i saw myself in an old copy
of a cute keychain collector magazine
in the rare section
i cut the page out and put it on my fridge
when people come over they ask what that is
i give them a stern look;
in my head i say
it's me it's me dammit!



the highway i saw the soot shadow of a gone tree smashed into the ground and a couple of branches flicked by from my car window, you have asked me my middle name enough times that it has finally hurt me, i can't smoke because i bite down hard on the cigarette, days go by and the act of driving abstracts more and more until i don't understand the steering wheel and why it relates to anything, you are talking about borrowing, the expectations behind it, how the acceptance that you might never get something back is the foundation of the trust that you will, i say just like my staple gun, you say what, i say you still have my staple gun, you say no i don't, i see the tan shadowed st louis bread company office building out of the corner of my eye, where dad used to work, i saw so many st louis bread company related powerpoint graphs back then, dad hunched over his work computer, you say i dont have your staple gun, i say i do think you do, i lent it to you for when you fixed your trim, your living room trim, my living room trim? i borrowed jacqueline's staple gun, jacqueline doesn't have a staple gun, yes she does, she had one to do her installation at the gallery in the county, mm i say, mm. mm. mm? you say, mm? i say mm. mm you say mm i say mm. the sun glints off of a beat-up saturn, it would be fun to walk and jump from car to car, to chase someone from car to car running and jumping on top of all the cars on the highway, finally catching someone, tackling them, laughing and rolling over and over each other into the ditch, making out in the ditch and then going home



myspace

myspace will have a mushroom growing out of it

myspace will feel damp and bubble up if water is poured on it

myspace will be nighttime, but warm

myspace will crack open the window and move closer to you

myspace will have a hand resting firmly on a hardwood table

a table clean enough to see the reflection of the window

and you can see a tree out there

myspace will have the noises of a train

and a warm wind and a child shouting happiness

on mspace, a bookshelf wobbles slightly as we open the door

rushing in, taking off our shoes

brushing our hair, flossing, blinking, and doing brushstrokes at each other like we are painting

we are making mspace

the code is a spaghetti mess and we slurp kiss it

like the dog movie