

David Tolkacz

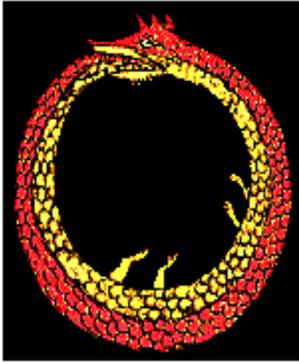
Three Scripts

The Gospel of Echo pg3

Foo Foo pg19

Grandma pg36

The Gospel of Echo



uroboros¹

the living being had no need of eYes. there was nothing outside of it to be seen. nothing to be heard. nothing came out of it or into it. there was nothing beside it. coiled within itself. its shit was its food.²

in the beginning³. at the moment of the moment. the \$nake could taste the presence of its tail. it could hear the presence of its VoicE. & it seemed to it as if the mAw was the CenteR. forever vomiting forth the tail. or devouring it.

but the mAw is the CenteR. & becomes what it relapses into. the bio-chemical basis. ingestion articulates. the inertia of one wOrd becomes the grammar of all fears. EchOing out of a VoicE in a VoiD.

& As I looked, behold! A hand given to me & lo! A scroll therein unrolled before me. Written within & without & there it was, written: lamentations, & mourning, & woe! & moreover, She said to me:

“*Son of Man*, eat so that you should find eat this scroll & go to the house of Israel.”

& then I did, & in my mAw it was as honey (sweet).⁴

and by Her wOrds She will be justified. & by Her wOrds condemned.

to speak is to bring to life.

“i am faced with death.”

¹ *I am that which I am.*

² Plato, *Timaeus* 33:1.

³ was the word. and the word was with god. and the word was. god. created the heaven. & the earth. was. without form & void. darkness on the face of the deep. & the spirit of god moved upon the waters, and said: let there be”

⁴ Ezekiel. *The Eating of the Scroll.*

[THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS]

a brief scan of the seven deadly sins will reveal each to be a fear of a particular **form** of desYre.

[GLUTTONY]: The endless desire to consume for consumption's sake propagates itself on the selfsame mechanism which fuels GREED: the incapacity for satiation. reverse articulation: fasting, dieting. expanded definition: addiction.

[GREED]: The indispensable consumerist virtue which allows all to accumulate beyond measure that which we already possess in abundance, likewise compels us to dissatisfaction, for the function of accumulation itself endlessly propagates only by virtue of the absence of satiation. greed is the desire for more. further. greed is the desire for more desire. reverse articulation: poverty, charity, the desire to be without desire.

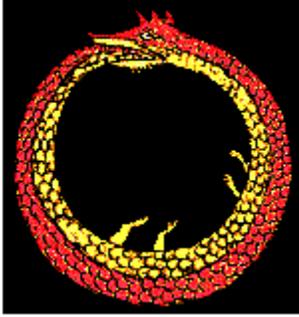
[ENVY]: is the most rational of all the deadly sins insofar as it employs comparison and contrast, the root of all distinction. we are to avoid desiring those attributes we value in others for the fear they will become a mere projection of the image of our lack. a vile reminder of who we are *not*. that negative space of inversions, and distorted mirrors we call desire. the inversion of *I HAVE* turned to jealousy by despair, Cain's sin, ENVY is the inspiration for the "first murder." reverse articulation: PRIDE.

[PRIDE]: the inversion of ENVY by which we hold ourself to a standard above all others and imagine we alone embody so lofty a visage. the attainment of the conception of our own ideal. PRIDE is reputed to be Satan's own sin, the very worst of the seven, & is born by virtue of the image of one's self interpreted in the eyes of another. this can manifest as a physical vanity, or more abstract claims of reputation. the proud afflicted stagnate in accord with their accomplishment. reverse articulation: humility.

[LUST]: is the subject/object inversion of PRIDE, for it is the desire to be lusted after (to be the object of another's LUST) which fuels PRIDE in the first place. this needn't be manifested sexually, but often is, and so likewise LUST suggests a reduction to the physical, visual image of the body that the vain subject themselves to. but this image needn't be visual, acclaim and renown are always mitigated by the regard of others, and it's their eyes we desire, alongside their bodies and sometimes, hearts. reverse articulation: chastity, shame.

[WRATH]: This text is an act of WRATH: the desire for retribution. the desire for all to feel my desire. i will not be so *vain* as to call it "justice." reverse articulation: mercy.

The deadly sins overlap and imply one another. Each pointing at one another, the way Adam pointed at Eve as she was pointing at the Subtil Serpent, the source of all "sin", the creator of "evil", refines his articulation through the circularity of blame, for God points at Adam, Adam at Eve, Eve at the Serpent, and the Serpent at God. The Serpent plays on Eve's desire to possess that which she does not possess, knowledge of good and evil, the ability to see as God sees, and in the case of LUST, GREED, & ENVY, the facts of the act remain the same, the definitions parallel. All motivated by lack of satisfaction, the lack of contentment, the lack of satiation. And through the eyes of this sort of desire the mind sees not that which *is* but rather that which is *not*. Desire is the presence of a longing that owes its existence to the absence of the longed for. It is a presence defined by an absence. A Hole. Something yearning to be filled. SLOTH, torpid contentment, fulfills this.



“signs **represent** the **present** in its absence, they take the place of the **present**. when the **present** does not **present** itself, then we signify, we go through the detour of signs. we give signs, we *make* signs.”^(DERRIDA)

“a hOle after all *is* something. but this! this is nothing at all!”
“what is a hOle?” “a part of an object which is absent.” “a *hybrid mereological aggregate*.” “to make a hOle. we remOve something from an object, which adds to it a part: the hOle.” “to fill a hOle, means to remove a part by adding something to the object.” “hOles are ontolOgically *parasitic*, always *within* a thing.” “hOles cannOt exist in isOlation.” “hOles cannot exist *inside* of other hOles.” “hOles exist because they are *nOt*.”

“Narcissus’
Monologue.”

poisoned or lOved. at a **deference**. an **inference** or **reference**. *up sIde dOwner*. *architexture* interface. *EschewinG yOu*. found in the abdOmen. **because** we are limited in understanding. our **reflection** in anOther’s eyes. so grimly **deflective**. i divest **myself** of anything natural. i am that which i am other than **myself**. the union of a Wholly other self. the *ObsessioN* of internal processes. *purging* themselves into the *ObsessioN* of the processes of the internal processes. folding into **simplicity**. i deny everything except lOgic. the unwillingness to indulge any encounter with *earthly otherness*.

in a pit with no bottom. every point is a center. everyone’s in hell because they loved. this moment now inside you. flat. insipid. nothing much. i cannot get enough. though there’s a train coming through. the small dark light at the end of the tunnel. all nameless under heaven rest. the word made flesh cannot be eaten. nor dispossessed of emptiness. thick. quick. maudlin moans. are the tale of a tear. running away from us. our eyes are close. impenetrable. even if you strap on a strap-on. because it’s better to burn in hell. than rain from heaven. two masochists together cannot last forever. unless one of us does unto the other. that which we’d have done to us. but we’re both. Whole. thoroughly. hOles.

“Quotation is for Echoes.”⁵

“...one of themselves, even, a prophet of their own said, the Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, pit bellies. ...this witness is true...”⁶

a pronoun is empty out of context. aren't we all? & emptiness, so eternity, out of time, not forever. pronouns are devices. used. to signify a context. “i am a dishwasher.” a pronoun used is a pronoun bound. to the grip of the moment. pointing to something immediate. some-thing/one we can both know. bound in time to refer. to you & me. to us. we are freed. in eternity. out of context.

in the beginning. was the wOrd: *licensed terminology*. ontologically committed values. if lies are the truth. the truth is a lie. & this statement cannot be a lie. but i am always lying. i am empty out of context. this liplong circle. gnawing its way back to the beginning. the Center. the wOrd was with *gOd*. the wOrd was *gOd*. the tongue tastes itself. & doesn't recognize the flavor.

the subject is left feeling *fertilized*. eating jesus on his altar's ego. he hands an empty bag to his reflection. which *disappears*. grist into the discussion. “is it god, christ, or nothing?” to speak is to bring to life: & “i am faced with birth.”

i am lying about lying. this circle of truth is a fiction. fashioned by promises or debts owed to No One.

autumn attic etiquette. inhaling manners. pawn dog. obedient boy. *i am god like*. **universal**. indifferent. if not completely undifferentiated. i am. that which i am.

out of context. in the beginning. was the wOrd. the wOrd was the wOrd. the wOrd was *gOd*. pronouns begin as empty signifiers. undefined until they are in context:

“they are eating while we are excreting.”

the wOrd “meaningless” is not meaningless. the wOrd “irony” is ironic because it is *nOt*. life feeds on life: death defined. *yOu* must trust the me that says to *yOu* that i am only capable of telling lies. i am the one who speaks for all others who cannot speak for themselves. the trick of every myopic divisionary gratified by honesty.

may

the tears of heaven. evaporate in the fire. of hell's hot desire.

⁵ Carlyle McGovern.

⁶ St. Paul, Titus: 1:12-13.

“Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.”

the axiom which turns masochists into sadists necessitates a sadist’s vantage to function in a socially acceptable manner. for masochists tend to spoil this entire reversal of sentiment. the *bronze rule*: “do unto others as they have done to you” likewise turns the brutalized into the brutal. but if abided absolutely, there would be no murderers.

the golden rule’s greatest virtue is that it turns sadists into masochists. they become the inverted reflection of their own desire. a sadist desires to inflict pain. it desires subservience and obedience. the sadist who desires to be obeyed becomes the obeyer. while masochist who desires to obey becomes the obeyed. the vicious. the inflictor of the pain they themselves desire to be inflicted upon them. the sadist *becomes* what he desires. the masochist *becomes* what he desires. the bronze rule too is imperfect. imagine: christ nailing everyone else to the cross. & then consuming their corpses. replicating the punishment inflicted on him. upon those responsible for his suffering. (everyone). it is this experience of suffering which on the one hand propagates the desire to sacrifice. the desire to not desire. which perpetuates the suffering. wrath begets wrath. compassion, compassion.

mirror, mirror was the word. a tale & a mouth. a VoiD echoed out a return back into itself. its words were its food. the pre-dawn goddess of dawn. *I am nOt*. the pre-god dawn of undifferentiated infancy. the experience of myself as all mankind:

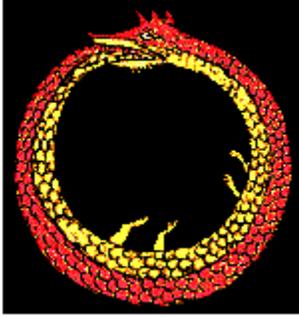
death⁷. a memory rewound. to the most punctuated point: the very last breath. receding in hindsight. like a series of ellipses⁸. between last breaths. which will extend forever in one dimension. & reduce themselves to nothing in another. a bOdy⁹ may persist indefinitely. bereft of whatever might make it alive. breath itself is merely a symptom. a tiny little sYgn. which can mean many things. breath alone is not enough. to define a life.

there is a space between. like the thin chasm between self & other. like the mouth. like the nose. or a sYgn. that isn’t quite life. & it isn’t quite death. but the passage between.

⁷ buried in this word is meaning. engraved & entered in an empty second. supposes every other bereft as any author is of essence. & everything does as if. in anything could come to be. resuscitates its wild abyss. & grovels in its thoughts of me.

⁸ (eccentricity): fragile, (easy to break), to shatter & be useless, (devoid of function), purpose & cause, (an effect producing event), happening in space & time, (the movement toward fragility).

⁹ these dreams are quenched in salty tears & linger still amid the ash & blow asunder in the wind as ages pass us undisturbed & snowflakes glisten overtop to melt away in silent wrath since now Her maggot love has turned Her wormy kiss away. forgotten. in eternity in Hell with Tantalus by visions whole these visions still. in soft repose. will rob us of annihilation leaving us unrotted in the ash. so uncomposed. Her maggot love, Behemot still assays Her gleeful wrath upon our inner eye. so uncomposed. in fertile notions. unforgiven. frozen solid in the cold undeathly earth.



uroboros

“a tool for building a generic hybrid divide&conquer algorithm.”

our senses have evolved to divide. (information into uniformity). the tongue tasting the tongue. *auto mated approach.* optimal hybrid divide algorithm.
so indistinguishable. it is no longer perceived. *technique&tool*

“to divide is to hybridize.”

preprogrammed into the nervous system: *i am lying*
constructs a high-performance hybrid algorithm. including matrix
multiply into the macroScope. & typeSort. asymptotic abstraction:

“the brain is a machine for analyzing differences & reducing them to recognizable patterns.”

all memory locations are equidistant. & instructions are introduced
sequentially & in Order.

to distinguish between similar & different abstract ideas.
no two are alike/dissimilar.

reality&perception. reality&deception. reality&conception,
reality&reception, reality&exception.

the precept&perceptual processing. we have lost the distinction
between perceptual processing. & bisection.

the hOle is a cirOle. perpendicular lines passing through the CenteR.
the whOleness has been sliced by a knife. juicy&mutable.
a spongi**Form** tunnel. beyond opinion&circumstance. stuff.
antithesis of eYe.

light.

“& though light allows us to see. it is itself invisible. the candle that lights the way for others. consumes itself.”¹⁰

¹⁰ Anonymous.

“*The Gnostic Cross of Bisection*”

the 4our letter name of god. the fo4r arms of the crOss.

becoming. the indefinitely elaborated bisection of a bisection. each cross has a cross across with in each quadrant. indefinitely divided. shameless. a receptacle. optical and detectable. a discontinuum. indivisible. prideless. a luminary. monocular and scrutinizing. an endless division. mirroring the other side of reality. behind reality. into two parts.

No One’s mind separates from his body. & a VoicE echoes out of a VoiD. the pre-gOd dawn of undifferentiated infancy. the experience of himself as all mankind. boundless, as the light cracks through. darkness hovers underneath. the tortured coil of the OurOborOs. the hOle becomes humid. & a hOwl rises up from its CenteR. inarticulate. undifferentiated. the VoicE of fire. the devourer’s scream. rose up into the light. of the wOrd. met with the fire. in the humid halfhaven. & followed the flickering flame.

the VoicE says: “*i am light. i am consciousness. i am risen above the moisture of this humid grOwl. the light & wOrd i speak of is myself. i am the sOn of gOd. the wOrd & of the light.*”

No One’s mind becomes the boundless cosmos. imprisoning the fire in a glass globe.

the VoicE says: “*yOu have seen the prototype of the infinite new beginning. annuit coeptis. the eternal becoming.*”

No One: “then where did nature come from?”

the VoicE says: “nature received into herself the wOrd & beheld the *annuit coeptis* & ordered herself from the abYss. the divine consciousness is androgynous. tail & mouth. wOrd & light & by the wOrd another rose forth. the architext. the ruler of fire & breath. brought forth twelve rulers whose glass globes encompass the sensible world within their circles. their reign is called *destiny*. & the wOrd leapt out of the grOwl. & left it senseless. & the grOwl retreated into its hOle. & with the wOrd the architext englobed every circle from its CenteR. & with a thunderous whirl. he set the rulers in an endless *revolution*. & this rotation produced animals from the \$nake\$ hOle. & they did not retain the wOrd. the light of the sky then brought forth men in its image. & nature became enamored of his **form**. & man wished to break through the surface of the spheres. & be master of the fire from the hOle in the darkness. & hold his own destiny. & She saw Her image in the man. and the man saw his image reflected in Her waters. & the man became enamored & sank into the \$nake\$ hOle. & thus the immortal cause of death was lOve.”¹¹

¹¹ from *The Poimandres of Hermes Trismegistus*.

“What shall I do? What I want is with me. My riches make me poor. If only I could escape from my own bOdy.”¹²

let me keep looking at you always.

what you find is Now here.

child of rape. everyone adores you. the mesmerizing beauty of your body. the desire to possess you, but you will not be possessed. such regard for yourself & yet you have never even seen yourself. neither your image nor your imagination. you have never truly seen your eyes in another's. you spurn them back when they yearn with desire for you. & you have no desire to be lusted after. the object of another's desire.

one fateful evening, a nymph named echo, accosted you in the wilderness. & there she will attempt to make a slave of you, her lover. you'll be reduced to her desire. she will repeat your phrasing, & you'll become entranced by your reflection. but only till you see her. you recoil in disgust.

“Keep your hands off. I would die before I'd let you fuck me.”

“I'd let you fuck me,” she replies.

child of rape. what did you see in that shallow water? your reflection. is a mirage created by light. how could you not recognize it as your own? and when you try to touch it/him/he ripples into disfigurement. what did you feel at that moment. when your finger touched the water. and that image becomes so grotesque. you expect to feel a hand! warmth of a touch. you think you're being loved. but what you seek is nowhere. & when you know yourself, No One, you will die. & the dark prophesy you utter to echo, will echo back into you. & you will be transformed into a flower. an object of perception. something that is seen but cannot see. & she too will lose her body. & she will become voice. your reflection. child of rape. why can you not suffer another's embrace?

[THE LOGIC OF LOVE]

gravity is love. ever attracting. bridge jumpers. flirt with love as their reflection floats up into their falling face. the water blue stained sky comes calling “love” can be a harsh embrace.

even language is path 0 logized
a medium with out a message
mean median
& average
like vapour over a semantic
seWer

stigmata is an attention grabbing mechanism. the morbid miracles of the convulsionaries are the wineblood of love. coagulation roughly models this fugitive form: an embedded field into which awareness folds implosively. all manner of glandular magnetism is established. emotionally as glandular as compassion. magnetism and attention twisted into itself. produce a harmonic wave to be fed/swallowed back into its center point. this pressure is concentric along a centered axis, self-penetrating re-entering the symmetry dynamic of ecstasy. thus completing the hunger for a spiritual ecstatic experience by swallowing/feeding. and in so doing, completing. nesting within. within two other within. sustaining the same continuous form and function: i could not agree with me more.

[onthewall] the first child is in love with the second child is in love with the third child is in love with the fourth child is in love with a fifth child is in love with the sixth child is in love with a seventh child is in love with an eighth child is in love with a ninth child is in love with a tenth child is in love with an eleventh child is in love with the twelfth, a narcissist.

language is a lover. language is enslaved.
language is a liar. language cannot relate to anything - itself? a dead echo. a verbal doppler. meaning? it is crucified to music. contrived in silence. self-annihilating.

mirror mirror was the word mirror mirror was the world. mirror mirror was the word mirror mirror was the world. mirror mirror was the word

words become fetishized when flesh becomes verbal.
acting? better to be the object. derision? scorn. & bile. common? better to be hated. feared. & vulgar. than ignored.

¹² Narcissus.

blackballed or whitewashed. from all walks of numblife. we slither inward. ass & mouth & handinhand. 6ft shy of a nosebleed. or 6ft safer. from madmen in powersuits. flee the city's stench. our breath endures. its heavy laughter. beckons to retreat. you are compelled. to drink. to the kool-aid they will drink everyone will drink my kool-aid. maybe always. we'll be tired. sleep&slide. by gOd's will. we've been brought together. to wrangle in the shackles of shame. whiteballed. mechanized. taught how to live in a straight arrow. and then die. buy the Clue™. that leads to emptiness. desYre. to be filled hOle. i have a PRIDE above all others. i'm ashamed to cry.

he woke them up when everyone most needed sleep. &now. he deigns. to die.

“Narcissus’
Monologue.”

poisoned or lOved. at a deference. an
inference or reference. up slide dOwner.
architecture interface. EschewinG foOd.
found in the abdOMen. because we are
limited in understanding our reflections in
anOther's eye. the water can't come out of
myself. Herforyt forgiveatural. mym iniquity which i
am other than myself. uniOr of a wholly
other self. in gold as sailors plagued
procbyefear of torment themselves into the
Obsession of the processes of the internal
processes. folding into simplicity. i deny
everything & bewailt Her. the unwillingness
to indulge any encounter with earthly
otherness.

uterus with in utero is
beautiful within beautiful
inside within outside
cubicle within cubicle
through cubicles into
cuticles beautiful into
utero outside within hive
wall uterus within
beautiful utero

uterus beautiful
within uterus wall
hive within outside utero
into beautiful cuticles
into cubicles five
cubicle within cubicle
outside within inside
beautiful within beautiful
is utero in with uterus

the eYes that I desYre. more than mine. the ones which light my way. tongue short on time. mY love. tomorrow never comes. because events are the shadows after. may i be cursed if I don't lOve yOu. in torpid torment. self dividing. the horrible night into watches. numbering the links. a minute. an hour. a day. a month. a year. the chains & streams of tYme. an undertow. wherein all systems decay. in time. erode into nature. swallowed by the earth. & dug out of tYme. we are a memory of art & facts. & clock plates flooded dusk. & we might have been one piece. but nature¹³ abhors a vacuum.

how many fates turned to dust in the underground. emptied out of sequence & despair. & while i slumber in signs. chained to this moment. the moon hovers over. yOu. are dancing on skulls. & strangling \$nake\$ in your fists. since your lips. seem certain. that your mind is moving. away from. yOu. remind me of eyes. dark circles. inverted. red suns of tomorrow, daughter of the morning,

we'll smile at the clouds.

laughter fills the sky. instead. of rain.¹⁴

The Voice of Echo

the prophet tells narcissus that he will die. when he "knows himself." he will realize it is himself that he desires. like all others. he will see the beauty of his body. & **confuse** it for another's. & then **confuse** himself with it.

red body, you have sworn you'd rather die than love. you know yourself when you see yourself. to know is to see. i curse you with my own desire. to possess that which you can not possess. your reflection in the tepid water. i wish unto you, as you've done unto me. you narcissus, are the image of my desire.

*i can never say no to anyone but You.*¹⁵

¹³ Nature produces offspring which kill each other, because She gorges on the corpses of Her children.

¹⁴ Jorgenson, Al. Ministry. *Scarecrow*.

¹⁵ Smith, Robert. The Cure. *The Figurehead*.

pieces since your smile
lightly tYme to tYme
must from mY lips
follow close to yOu
or be cold.

dispelling the darkness of ignorance. your wOrd is a
lamp to mY feet and a light to mY path.”¹⁶ illuminated by
your wOrd. the truth has come & falsehood has vanished.
falsehood is ever certain to vanish.¹⁷ your VoicE is the lamp
of your body. yOu are the light covered by the darkness of
delusion. yOu are why i dream.

then let EchO speed. through the nooks in all earth’s caverns. which unite in the CenteR.
in secret. the VoicE of duplication. your wOrds return again. to mine. in turn. & turning
into mine. what dark vault did yOu escape from? the forest. foremost, or the bowels of
matter? & in tendrils. woven. inward? i merely repeat what i hear. i see what i’ve seen.
may this song be a light to your truth. & a voice for yOu.

i answer to yOu. the physics of lOve. in a visual whisper. sieve. with mY mad voice. the
harsher parts of yOu. i will teach yOu to sing every manner of song. *repeat* after me:

mY delirious liaison. banished into the star stained night. i think of yOu often. more so,
beneath clouds. no mere matter of rain. but a fear of dreaming. whenever i’m out of tYme
& wOrds & pulled by traffic into your dark tunnel & the radio turns to static. your
favorite song bludgeoned out of the cave.

yet the echo chases
only when you speed.

¹⁶ Psalm 199.105.

¹⁷ Qur’an 66.8

indiscern form from substance, like the lion from the veldt. when you see the waves of speech, know that there is a canyon beneath. every moment is a renewal of the moment before. life decked in formal costume. life decked in masks of life. life like a stream. renewed and forever renewing. the mask of continuity. arising from the speed of Her hidden skin.

Her voice is the lamp of this body. She is the light. decked in darkness. a wordless growl.

She who reigns in the inmost recesses of the caves.¹⁸ EchO's secret voice. She is why we dream. Her sunset eyes through water. Her sometimes screaming always fades away. the goddess of dawn & the sun rising out of the horizon. a red dot on the fingertip of a thirstless god. & only whispers can escape the static. *there's nothing between us but each other*. a procession of absences. moonlike out of remotion. peopled by confessions. an insubstantial pageant. of negative presenses. "as if a torch is lit & from the tip the leaping sulfur embraces the flickering flame."¹⁹

& i am rose kisses
on dawn's horizon
the tender turpitude
of a cancer patient
a blood knot
lying that the sun
is a lie burning
the earth is a liar.

Absence makes the heart grow
fonder because familiarity
breeds contempt because it
takes one to no one

god's choir
on a wire

& even nothing
changes

meaning?

it is crucified to music. wrought of silence & self-annihilating.

¹⁸ *Aristophanes*. *Thesmophoriazousae*: 1060.

¹⁹ *Ovid*. *Metamorphoses*: 3.350.

yet the echo chases.
only when you speed. Echo's secret voice.
tomorrow never comes.
children of tomorrow. sons & daughters of the morning.
by god's will we've been brought together.

hearts dissever shadows. an ocean alone. between the rocks. roll over the clouds. drain
canyons in rain. & through the static of screams. penetrating sensation. & then the sky
dissolves in a mist. of blind mornings²⁰.

the way you aren't. remember everyone. & i²¹ can't remember. someone watching. watch
them changing. sand into glass. with their bare hands. suddenly. & suppose religion²² was
repose. & shadows²³ at noon. alone. convey the truth. that we attach ourselves to. so
cunningly. like a wall of eyes
shining in a schizoid sky
our lady of maliciousness
our lady of deliciousness
our lady of the annuals
perennially receding

with the inner as bereft of substance
as the outer is of meaning

A

con

vulsion of a con
version of a vision
with

in me

but with deflection

masquerading as love. such mirrors deflect.

nothing whatsoever.

gathered here *together*. the gift of the canyon. the promise of no more
promises. tomorrow never comes. a shadow. under moonlight. relative to
nothing.

the tears of heaven
evaporate in the fire
of Hel's hot desire

refractions of reflections of
infractions of infections of
refractions of reflections of
infractions of infections of
refractions of reflections of
infractions of infections of
refractions of

"to speak is to bring to life."

²⁰ dawn is faith. collapsing into reasons. out comes all compared.

²¹ the momentum of the whole is processional. a rhythm between heavens & hells.

²² men & mice are permutations of the same cheese.

²³ projections striving to break free of the underlying echo that denies identity

Foo Foo

he awoke to pitch black. the opening of his eyes merely darkened the external world. he felt around recollecting himself, his chair. the empty space where once there was a leg.

“Hot damn,” said a voice coming from behind him. “You look like shit, foofoo. What the fuck you think your doing chucking forty bottles at a business?”

the voice had crept up on him from behind. it was now hovering near the soft spot, where the nape of the neck met the back of his skull.

Goddamn rat bit my finger.

'man, fuck that, you got punked by some motherfucking rat?'

I was given it food, man. Bit my goddamn hand.

'lookie here, foofoo. every rat despises what sustains it. that's the nature of the beast. you kill one, another pops up in its place. that's the nature of nature. so you can go around boppin them on the head if you please, but in the end its not going to make a difference.'

the last word he spoke settled in the back of his head like a bullet. *Who are you?* foofoo asked.

'it's sleek, bitch. i run this whole motherfucking gig. from the pigs on down to you. everything in between. and i need a favor from you.'

Anything, Sleek.

from behind his periphery came a soft light shining upon a blank, unsealed envelope. he could make out the shadow of a hand adorned in twinkling rings.

“this envelope you will bring to saint christopher's playground at 11:15 tomorrow morning. for doing this the contents of this envelope;” - he held up another envelope; “are yours. go ahead. open it.”

inside the unmarked envelope was a 1000 unit bill. *Aw Sleek, man. God bless you.*

“i bless myself, and that's enough,” said Sleek, whose voice seemed to retreat from the back of foofoo's skull, as the light that shone on the envelopes faded, and Sleek's “enough” seemed to echo and dissolve into everywhere.

10001

he awoke in his alleyway. the rain water dripping from the gutter. he had an envelope in either hand. he opened one and looked inside. the shock of recognition struck him at once, his eyes sustaining the sight of a spheroid ball of Love. he closed and reopened his eyes as if to reboot his mind and reprocess what he had just seen. in the other envelope, was a bill with three zeros.

and though his leg felt arthritic and sore. and there was a piercing pain in the flesh of his chest. he pushed himself backward out of the alleyway. between every step was a stop and a start, and one thousand steps separated him from the gas station. and his body felt heavier and his steps became slower and measured. and his knee made a popping sound between every bend, and from the popping came a dense burning, somewhat numbed in the cold. and finally he pushed his way up the handicap ramp, and pulled the heavy door open.

he struggled to make his way through the door, but someone kind enough to be leaving held it open for him with one arm while he checked his watch with the other. he pushed his way through the door. and the business person walked out into the cold. and the door closed behind the man in the chair.

Magnum, he wheezed, coughing. two clerks stood behind the register.

'ih?'

Magnum. he spoke louder and looked him in the eyes as he spoke. the clerk's black eyes seemed to settle into his skull. he nodded, and walked toward the back of the store. the other clerk stood there and said:

'dzeven dzeventy dzeven.'

he handed him the bill. the clerk looked at it and said:

'SZOT! nigh cant bray chthys.'

What do you mean?

when clerk two had arrived with the magnum, clerk one held up the bill so he could see it, and said:

'szot. no change.'

Aw. C'mon man. Have a heart now, God bless you.

'we don't halfsy nuff money to give you back your change,' (he explained).

Then keep it, he hissed. *Keep the fucking change.*

the clerk's black eyes seemed to settle back into his skull. he seemed shocked and hurt by the lame beggar in the chair, and he set the magnum on the countertop, and pulled a bill out of his pocket, ringing out the sale, handing the man his one thousand money unit, and the bottle of magnum along with it. he walked around to the other side of the counter, opened the door to the store, and held it open for the man in the chair, and as he pushed his way out into the cold, foofoo said:

And a straw please. God bless you.

10001

the bitter cold kept consumers indoors, and the gasclerks were adamant about not panhandling in front of their store. so he kicked his way down the empty streets, sipping the magnum tucked beneath his sweater from a straw. and an absolute warmth settled into him. like the deep warmth of a hot bath. a medicated transcendence that severed his mind from his broken body, which left him free of it, by allowing him, for the time being, to be unaware of it.

he sipped his magnum and watched as the broken shards of glass melted like ice off of his chest. nature's bitter wind felt like a fan's on his skin in the midsummer heat. he wheeled his way outside of a bar, where he could see heads floating through the window glass. it was only a matter of time, he knew, before one of them entered or left. and no sooner had he thought this, than the the door swung open, and a small blond female, wearing powder blue earmuffs and holding a powder blue cell phone to her ear, stumbled out of the bar, and lit a cigarette.

Excuse me miss. Do you happen to have an extra cigarette?

she shook her head and reached into her purse, her long nails fumbling through the bag. and she chattered into her phone ... “yeah. they took his leg off. mikey said they needed meat. i don't. no. what are you up to. i'm here with glimmer, tambis, rondold, and phikist. niner's” ... as she handed him the cigarette, a large rat scuttled out of the brush.

phiker! she screeched, clenching her entire body in an immediate spasm. her phone flew backward over her shoulder, and her leg bent out from underneath her. the cigarette fell from her hand as she keeled over. hit the ground, and screeched in pleasure/pain. “phikist!” she yelled. “phikist!”

a small male waddled out of the bar, while the rat snatched the cigarette as fufu bent over to reach it. “taudrea!” the male yelled. “who hurt you?” “nobody, that rat!” she pointed at the rat, who was standing in front of the man in the chair, who was already reaching for his spare empty magnum bottle in the back of his chair. as he bore the bottle down on the rat, he noticed phikist waddling toward him with his fists clenched and snot bubbling out of his snout. “phocket skimfick,” he snorted. fufu's attention raised from the cigarette, which was now out of his reach, to phikist, who'd misinterpreted taudrea, and was dark with rage. smoke billowed out of his nostrils. the spaces between his knuckles ran red with blood. fufu kicked his chair backward. “fikist, no!” shouted taudrea. “i meant that literally. there was this disgusting rat...”

Yeah man. The Lord loves you. So back off, he said brandishing the magnum.

fikist thought about this for a moment and calmed down, looking deep into taudrea's sunken eyes. “i hurt my ass,” she said. “kiss it and make me mommy.” and fikist's tongue unrolled from his mouth, and slapped down on taudrea's back and to foofoo she said: “scram wacko.”

“oh fikist,” she said. “make me mommy. make me mommy.”

10001

he bitched silently to himself about that fucking rat, and went about fumbling through his pockets, and sipping the magnum which was resting inside of his sweater. the straw he kept between his teeth, which lifted the burden of raising the bottle to his face. he pulled the flat envelope out of his pocket, and opened it again, he promised himself, for the last time. he found a spheroid ball glowing white, like a light bulb. he remembered: *11:45 Sleek said. st christopher's playground* sleek said. sleek he realized, had played him like a pawn. and foofoo rested the Love on his lap. *Saint Christopher's Playground*. he shook his head. *I ain't slinging Love to no kids.* and then he fumbled around in the bag attached to the back of his chair, pulling out a tire gage and a wire cleaning pad. he jammed a pinch of the wire pad into the tire gage, and carefully placed the Love atop it. with his lighter, he lit the Love and sucked on the tire gage, and then everything changed.

whatever room foofoo was in was completely dark. he knew that there was a mattress beneath him, and that the bed was reclined like a hospital bed. sleek's voice sounded like it was coming from everywhere.

the shopkeeper the one you bought the mothballs from. the one that charged
you all you had you remember that one right?

I remember him.

'same motherfucker who put that bullet in your leg.'

I remember.

'that motherfucker watches you everyday like a hawk rolling up and down
the street with that forty in your sweater like a piece of road kill rotting in the gutter
meanwhile he rolls his ass around on that electronic chair that he didn't even have to
pay for because his insurance covered it. and still runs his own business.
i need you to kill that motherfucker. i need you to kill him. not just kill him either,
i mean crucify him. sacrifice him. you've already sacrificed for him. it's his turn.

Why?

'why? i thought that would be apparent. but to put it into business sense for you,
when he robbed you, he robbed me it all comes back in a circle.
this man's debt can only be repaid by his life. if he owes it to you then he owes it to me.
and we will take it.

We?

'yes, we. i'm going to help you help me kill him, and you're going to help me kill him
and it all moves in a circle, foofoo. gain, and consequence, it emanates from
a center which it must return to for sustenance. sound familiar?'

foofoo said nothing.

'foofoo. i need you to kill the man that put you in the chair. i need you to kill him
because he enjoys watching you suffer. he and his family live in the top floor of his
shop. i'm going to give you a device. and all you need to do is throw it through his
window, and get the fuck away. when it goes off, it'll destroy his business, his house
everything he owns, his wife, and his kids. you will erase him completely, forever
all that he has created. his life will come to nothing. a gesture of balance for what
he has taken from you. don't worry about the cops. just get away, go on back to your
alley,' said sleek.

and a light shone in the darkness on the face of a blank envelope. a few dollars in change dropped
onto the bed between his leg and his stump.

'i'll collect you when its done,' sleek said. and the room went dark again. foofoo's mind
slid out of his body.

he slid the empty bottle beneath his sweater as he rolled down the street, gliding along the pavement like water over sand, and the cool wind kissed the back of his head. he glided to the nearest bar, and there was a decent crowd trickling off into the streets. he set up shop in front of Niner's, and sipped what was left of his magnum. he formed a frown of his face, and contorted his body to a more pathetic form, so as to attract those would needed to pay out to feel ethically good about themselves. and many did, by handing change to him or merely dropping it in his lap as they walked by. he would have to collect those coins in privacy, for to open his legs would mean to reveal the gun. and foofoo didn't want the nice young ladies seeing anything of the sort. so he scattered his *god bless you's and thank you's* between donations and soon had enough for another magnum.

'oh fikist!' said a voice. 'it's that funny little crippled man!' she squealed. fikist didn't reply but stared at the man, as taudrea opened her purse and offered him a cigarette. 'here's that cigarette from last time,' she giggled. 'but you have to compensate me for it.' 'wha!' phikist yelled. 'you have to tell me how you lost your leg.' 'phiker!' fikist yelled, raising both his fists in the air and then walking away, toward a crowd. 'i wanna know how you lost your leg,' taudrea said, putting her hand on his face, and sitting down on his lap. 'tell me how you lost your leg.'

I was shot, foofoo said. doctor took it off.

'were you in nam?' she asked innocently.

Naw, foofoo said. I wasn't in nam. I think if I told you what happened, you wouldn't like me very much.

'did you kill someone?' she asked excitedly.

Never killed nobody. No, I robbed a man. I shot him. I paralyzed him. He shot me in the leg. They. They took it off. They took it off.

'oh,' she said. 'nobody's ever forgiven you. they feed you change out of pity, to make themselves feel better about themselves. they don't even see you. do they?mister,' she said sweetly. 'what is your name?'

JAHN he replied. but before he could complete the second syllable, taudrea jumped from his lap and screeched in fear and disgust. a giant rat emerged from the alleyway behind him, about the size of a human head. the rat moved itself atop a skateboard with arms pushing himself. he laid on the board with his chin sitting on the tip. as he approached taudrea and foofoo both noticed that his hind legs were crushed and the putrid flesh had already begun to be devoured by small white insects. taudrea vomited and moved backward. foofoo thought about reaching for his gun, but didn't want to brandish it in front of taudrea, fearful that she would think him a brute, and humbled by her willingness to listen. truly the nicest thing anyone had ever given him.

the rat stared foofoo in the eyes. and foofoo kicked himself backward, and the rat reached for something lying next to him. a thin tube foofoo recognized would make a good pipe. and the rat held the tube to his lips, and instead of sucking on it, he blew into it, and a dart shot out and dug itself into foofoo's leg. foofoo ignored the pain and kicked himself backward. taudrea was gone. but a woman ran out of the bar with a broom and splatted the rat, who was momentarily stunned, but otherwise unfazed. the rat's little arms paddled away from the broom wielding woman, who was disgusted enough to be content to let it run away.

Grandma

the first thing jonathon noticed upon orienting himself to his surroundings was that the wallpaper was dented in where the plaster had been shattered by his forehead. there was a cartoon spider with goofy googly eyes smiling from the indent. he felt his forehead and cringed in pain, but his neck seemed to feel okay. at the foot of his bed, there was a dresser with a large mirror attached to the top. he walked over to it and lifted his hair from his brow. the bruise was already beginning to turn purple. he walked over to the window, and sat down on his bed, and stared into the yard. the old sycamore was largely bereft of leaves, or so it seemed since the branches seemed so large, and yet the leaves seemed so sparse. the weeds had grown to jonathon's height, as tall as the fences themselves, and he could see them rustling with the scattered purposes of the creeping things that lived beneath them. jonathon watched as the weeds seemed sway against one another, almost at one another. and far off in the extreme corner was the little red shed, which he could see through the tree's sparse leaves, off in the shadows and half buried in weeds.

11101

when jonathon came downstairs he found grandma puttering in the kitchen. he walked in silently and without speaking. when he walked behind her, she jumped in startled fear.

'ooh!' said grandma, covering her hand with her heart.

'good morning grandma,' jonathon replied.

'you scared me,' she said, as her large thick glasses slid to the tip of her nose. and when she looked at jonathon, she looked looked up so she could see his face, though the two of them were nearly the same height.

'i'm making sauce for us for tonight,' she said. 'isn't that nice?'

'yes, grandma,' he replied.

jonathon watched as the red tomato sauce bubbled in the pot on the stove, exploding little bubbles popping hot sauce into the air. the stench of piss lingered midway between grandma and her sauce, and jonathon himself lingered midway between them. grandma's hobbled legs loathed to make the trip upstairs, and she did so sometimes to sleep in her bed, or to use the bathroom in a manner that the bucket could not avail her. but her aged bladder emptied often, and she would have had to make that trip more than once an hour, and so she pissed in a bucket behind the kitchen table, where no one could see it, between the table and the wall. when the smell had become so excruciating that even grandma noticed it, she would dump the bucket off the porch into a small space in front of the house where there was once a garden. all that remained of it was a rose bush off to the extreme right of the porch near the

when he was quite certain he had finished, he looked into the toilet, and there was a brown ball spinning in circles in the middle of the cloudy orange water. the spinning ball began to disturb the water around it. jonathon could see it rippling, and pulsing, too rhythmically to be random. as the brown ball spun faster and faster, it created a divot around itself in the toilet water. it appeared as though it was rising above the water itself, or as though the water was sinking around it, and holding it up by some invisible will.

jonathon took a step back and flushed the toilet, watching as the ball floated down through the hole, as if whatever will the ball had, was an extension of the water itself. and he waited while his panic settled, until he knew the brown ball was gone, and all of the orange liquid too. he washed his hands thoroughly without raising his eyes from the empty toilet bowl.

11101

jonathon came downstairs, holding his stomach. 'are you okay, jonathon. you were up there an awfully long time for a child.' *yeah*, jonathon said in a sigh. 'my stomach hurts too,' grandma said. 'i hurt all over. its terrible to get old jonathon. i wonder if its time for my tarva.' she held her chin as she looked up at the clock. 'court is in recess,' grandma said, pushing down the leg rest of her chair, and collecting her cane. 'do you know what that bastard did, that fucker. he killed his wife, jonathon,' she said as she stood slowly and painfully from her recliner. 'ooh,' grandma said. 'i hurt so bad. my knee buckles on me. i'm deteriorating ... oh...', grandma sighed, then said: 'so then he cut her to pieces and threw her body over the side of a boat. ... and get this jonathon ... she was still pregnant. can you believe it. so her dismembered torso gave birth under the water. it's terrible jonathon. this fucker. this fucker deserves to die.' grandma began making her way across the living room. when she got between jonathon and the television her knee buckled a bit and she said: 'ooh! did you see that jonathon. i almost fell over. its terrible to get old, jonathon. terrible.' jonathon held his belly as grandma waddled off into the kitchen, and in a few moments, jonathon could hear the sound of grandma peeing into the red bucket behind the kitchen table.

'jonathon,' grandma called from the kitchen. 'come get your lunch.' ... *so what were the expressions like on the jury member's faces when they saw \$\$\$\$'s body after it had been exhumed from the lake...? ...well grace they seemed thoroughly disgusted...* 'i would have brought it in for you, but i hurt so bad today,' she said, holding her left hand in her right hand. jonathon looked into her eyes through her thick glasses. they were yellowish, the same pale yellow as her tarva. her pupil looked like it had burst, like the yoke of an egg, and ran over into where her eyes were once a deep brown. but now they were jet black, and she stared at jonathon with an innocent victimhood, that made his heart overflow like an autumn gutter. he could almost feel what a prison her body had become. he could sort of feel that for every step she took on her bum arthritic knee, it let out a dull throbbing pain, reminding her of her prison. and yet she still found the will to make him meal after meal. 'i made you a sandwich jonathon.

she didn't kill herself. who would want to kill themselves? jonathon weighed the potential answers to these questions against the sheer frivolity of wanting to die. who wants to die? no one wants to die! ridiculous!

and all this excitement, this tingling in his belly, the shock of validation for his belief, settled him down in a comfortable haze, and with a whisper of a fart, he felt his stomach settle too. he stared at the television. the man growled while he made the woman scream. jonathon settled back into the couch with a smile on his face.

11101

jonathon stood halfway down the hall between the bathroom and the room he found his mother in. he could hear grandma's rhythmic wheezing through the crack left open in her bedroom door. every so often, from what seemed like nowhere, a snort escaped grandma's nostril, followed by a fart. jonathon could feel the food in his stomach forcing its way through him. but he puckered up, and held it in, wary of the things his bowels produced. jonathon held his chin, and stared at the crack left open to grandma's room. everytime she exhaled, wheezing, he took another step toward his mother's room, and another, till he was standing before the door. but grandma let loose with a thunderous rubbery rippling fart, that throttled jonathon to his very core. he squealed like a rat being stepped on, screeching loud enough to shatter mirrors. he fell to the ground in shock, as if the knob had put a thousand volts through him. he froze in terror, hoping to concoct some explanation on the spur of the moment. but grandma merely snorted and continued to wheeze in her sleep. jonathon let out a sigh of relief, and closed his eyes for a moment, grateful that his pants were still clean. he stood up without a second thought, nor any more effort toward stealth, and turned the knob, cracking open the door slowly.

the bed was in the far right corner of the room, and jonathon could see the white sheets on the bed were carefully made. he slid into the room and carefully shut the door behind him. he leaned his back against the door. he remembered her body, with her arm against the wall. her slender legs were slightly separated. there was blood everywhere he remembered. he remembered it was dark red and yet grandma claimed that it was shit. why did she believe these things? he could see the scene one second before he found her, then a minute, then an hour. he could make out the shadow of the face of the that had done this to her. he laid himself in exactly the same position he remembered hismother's dead body in. he closed his eyes and rolled back the scene. a day. a week. a month. a year.

0111011

and then he imagined it in reverse, to the point at which her soul departed her body. and jonathon could feel the blood on her legs. he could feel the bruises on her face. and then all at once, as if in a flash, he couldn't. and a numbness came over him. and his arms and legs were paralyzed by the numbness. and

sometimes i don't think you're well.' jonathon saw the shriveled skin on grandma's twisted hand hang on the bone, bespeckled in off color spots. 'are you feeling okay, jonathon? you don't seem yourself, today, are you okay?' jonathon clenched his bloody hand into a fist, and squeezed it as hard as he could. tears of restraint bubbled out of his eyes. 'i'm fine,' he said through his teeth. but he could no longer hold back the feeling that was building inside him, and the tears which collected out of restraint began to overflow from pressure, and jonathon could not see the face of his grandmother in front of him. but he could feel her arms extending around his. he could feel her trying to hug him. but he couldn't figure out why.

11101

grandma held jonathon in her arms for what seemed like an eternity. jonathon could make out the shape of her red robe through the tears in his eyes. he could hardly feel the pressure of her weak arms. and her hands did not touch him at all. and jonathon could feel the tears rolling back into his eyes, and he could feel them falling somewhere into the back of his skull. jonathon stood there statue still, his face without expression and stared through the drying tears in his eyes at the bubbling red sauce boiling down on the stove.

grandma pulled back from her embrace. 'i'll make you some eggs, jonathon. how does that sound?'

0111011

jonathon sat before the television cautiously watching the red eggs on his plate ripple as if from within. grandma watched the food network with her head tilted and her chin resting on her fist. 'i can't stand these chinese people, jonathon,' she said. 'can't understand a damn word that they're saying.' *Yak can Cook* was on the Food Network, and jonathon watched the man gesticulate with all his might, in order to force his communication through. *Crack of duck!* Yak yelled as he opened the elaborate and shiny oven and pulled out the pan of roast duck sizzling in its steamy juices. the audience reacted in orgasmic glee, and never before had jonathon seen such a magnificent duck. its skin was glazed to a perfect brown. *We cook gravy in with duck at pan bottom, to harmonize the flavor so the two become as one in a fuzon of juices.* Yak poured the wonderful gravy atop this glistening duck and the audience again let out a moan of exaltation. jonathon looked at his own red runny eggs that resembled low budget carnage and looked over at grandma, who was reclined in her chair working on a book of crossword puzzles. grandma chuckled to herself as she wrote in her book. 'fooza jooza,' grandma said to jonathon, who looked at her the way a judge looks when he's sentencing the convicted. 'oh jonathon don't look at me that way,' she said. 'i have enough problems.' jonathon stood up, and his grandmother tensed slightly. she pushed down the foot rest on her recliner as he stood up, and walked over toward her. 'what's this, jonathon?' she said, and he held out his hands for her, and she saw the dried blood in his hands, and the infected cuts, and she shook her head, and held her own hand knuckles out at jonathon. between her

he walked downstairs. where he found grandma. asleep. on her royal blue recliner. she had a book of crossword puzzled folded face down on her chest. and a blue pen was tucked into the corner of her mouth. jonathon knew she was as deaf as a doornail, and he needn't worry about her waking up as he removed a cigarette from her pack, and lit it with her lighter. he needn't even worry about her waking up as he brought the cherry of the cigarette toward the skin between her eyes. for a moment jonathon wondered if grandma had passed without his realizing, but he realized that her chest was heaving and in fact he could hear her goopy lungs wheezing. his grandmother didn't flinch even as he pressed the cherry of the cigarette on the skin between her eyes, and inhaled the cooked smell of her burnt flesh.

11101

jonathon awoke in his mother's bed. curled against the wall. in her position.

11101

he looked at himself in his mother's mirror. she rested her hands on his shoulders and stared over his head. her pale bare shoulders glistened in the dusty lamplight. *Jonathon*, she said running her hands up his neck, up the side of his head, and through his hair, where she parted his bangs and exposed the eye. she put her lips up to his ear. *So are you gonna do it?* she whispered, the moisture of her breath settling like dew on the hair on lobe of his ear. he felt a tingling in his ear drum. *Do it Jonathon. Oh Please. Do it. Stick it in her. Stick a stiff knife in her throat. Dig it in Jonathon. Carve her up. Like a lampchop. Stew her in her own juices.*

'naw ma,' said jonathon. 'don't make me do it. what'll i do after she gone?'

You'll fucking make due, like a big boy, jonathon. I'll be there to help you. And so will He. We'll all be together Jonathon. Like a nice fucking family – you know – like it could have been – without her there to fuck it up.

'aw. maw, c'mon - ,' jonathon whined.

Sara drew her teeth near jonathon's ear lobe and ripped as far as she could pull it.

'aawwWaargGhhRaA,' screeched jonathon.

& Sara slapped him in the ear she bit. *Jonathon, sweetie. You're missing my point, I'm afraid.* Sara dug her fingers between jonathon's shoulders. far from pain, he felt a burning coolness. that settled into an electric numbness, from which jonathon was utterly incapable of moving.

never get old.'

'grandma,' said Jonathon. 'maybe Jesus isn't rejecting you. maybe he's giving you to me, so that I don't have to go to an orphanage, and you don't have to go to a nursing home. maybe Jesus will take you when I learn to shit for myself. maybe Jesus wants you to teach me. Jesus is giving us to one another, so that we can shit for each other, and so you could teach me how to shit for myself.'

'that's a nice way to look at it jonathon. your so innocent. innocent as god made you. i think He does it to punish me.'

they both fell silent for a moment. *well, Your Honor, when I agreed to allow my daughter to move in with me, rent free, mind you, with her young son, she had no job,' (the woman listed this on her index figure); 'she was living with some guy who was abusive to her, and my grandson,' (on her middle finger); 'she had no future,' (on her ring finger), 'and she was in and out of rehab,' (on her pinky).*

'Well who paid for rehab,' asked Judge Eichmann. '*medicaid Your Honor.*' 'Okay so what was the agreement? If she stayed clean, got herself a job, you'd help her out until she was able to get herself on her feet again.' *'that's right, Your Honor.'*

' i think He wants us to protect one another,' said Jonathon.

grandma said nothing. but he could see the way she held her nails between her teeth, that she was tense with guilt. 'stupid,' she said beneath her breath as she stared at the television set. Jonathon looked sadly into his lap.

'And Then what happened?' *'well Your Honor,' she began. 'my daughter was admitted to Brylin Hospital, and released a month later, which the insurance covered, thank god.'* Eichmann raised an eyebrow after 'thank god.' *'and for a period of time about three, maybe four weeks, she had a job working as a checkout girl in the Super Duper.'*

'Excuse me Your Honor That Just isn't so -

'SHUT UP!' screamed Eichmann boldly. 'In my courtroom, you will speak when I ask you a question. We do not interrupt people mid sentence, is that clear?' *Yes, man,* he smirked. and Miss Selancelot looked at him and smiled snidely. Judge Eichmann smirked back at the wisenheimer. 'Sir, what is your relationship to Miss Selancelot?' *Miss Selancelot has contracted me to speak on her behalf in the case of Selancelot versus Selancelot.'* 'So your her lawyer? And Miss Selancelot?' 'Yes madam,' Miss Selancelot said. 'Yes, ma'am uh- '

'YOUR HONOR' screamed Eichmann. 'YOUR HONOR SAY IT! SAY YES, YOUR HONOR.'

'Yes, Your Honor.'

'GOOD!'

the entire courtroom resonated from the deafening silence that Eichmann's bitching had left behind. Miss Selancelot was shaking and in tears. 'Miss Selancelot,' said Judge Eichmann softly. 'Yes, Your Honor,' *Eichmann smiled, and looked at her Bailiff who sniggered at Miss Selancelot, and shook his head.* 'Explain to me EXACTLY how you are retaining this man's... *services...*'

'grandma,' said Jonathon. 'i think mommy is mad at you.' jonathon's grandmother looked over from her blue recliner. she stared at him through the tears in her eyes. she stared at him like he had a third eye stuck in the middle of his forehead. jonathon could see her rubbing her face and removing her glasses. rubbing the sore between her eyes. she took a drag from her cigarette, and then butted it and lit another.

'Your Honor,' said Miss Selancelot. 'I admit I had my problems in the past, but my mother concocted this agreement in head. We had no burble or written arrangement stating that anything like a legal agreement was manifest at any time.'

'So your saying your mother trumped up these charges?' 'Yeah, Your Honor bitch Trumped 'em up.'

'YOU WANT ME TO BELIEVE YOUR MOTHER'S OUT TO GET YOU? NONSENSE!' Eichmann screeched. 'That's paranoid drug thoughts. You relapsed didn't you? You promised your mother you'd stay clean and you didn't. And now she's here, and she's not *out to get you* Miss Selancelot despite what Viagra snorting douchebag has led you to believe. Your mother is here trying to hold you responsible to the *verbal* arrangement you made with her to stay off the drugs, and you simply couldn't live up.'

'that's nonsense jonathon,' said Grandma weakly. 'your mother didn't care enough about me to be angry with me, to be angry at...'

'It's just like nothing I do is ever good enough, it's like I'm always being judged, and I'm not good enough. I can'tCONTROL*everything* ...'

'oh yes she did, grandma. she cared more than you can possibly imagine.'

'why are you saying this to me, jonathon? what's the purpose? i hurt so bad,'

'because it's *true*,' he replied.

'Sara's dead, Jonathon, let her rest.'

'that doesn't matter,' he replied. ' i can see her lying on the bed she died on. she blames you grandma. she blames you for her death...'

'it was not my fault jonathon! ... it was that piece of shit. that fucker. that bald headed bastard ... gave her drugs ... and she fucked him ... she was a whore jonathon. dirty little bitch. she killed herself.'

jonathon nodded, satisfied that nothing further could be gained by his persistence. through the floorboards, he could hear the shifting of weight, and the creaking of doors.

'you didn't leave the window open upstairs did you? i can hear the doors creaking. you probably left the window open. you'd better close it jonathon,' grandma said. 'before the bugs eat through the screen.'

'later,' he said staring at the television. 'jonathon, please, go up there and change the screen?'

'change the screen? what for?'

'i mean. jonathon... oh. i forgot what i was saying.'

'my mind is going jonathon. that's what happens when you get old. it's terrible. i can't even remember what we were talking about. ... i have to shit,' she said, standing up slowly on her painful knees.

NONSENSE, screeched Eichmann.

'be careful, grandma,' said jonathon as she made her way up the stairs. 'bad memories jonathon. that's all they are. uuuh,' she said, as she pulled her crippled body up another step, farting from the exertion. 'ooh!' she said. 'excuse me, jonathon,' grandma laughed. 'i'm losing my mind. at least i know where its going,' she chuckled. 'what.' 'i'm going to take a nap while i'm up here, jonathon. lower the tv, will you? i don't feel well jonathon. my stomach. my stomach feels terrible, uuuh,' said grandma, traversing another step. grandma giggled. 'Judge Judy, boy. she doesn't take any shit from nobody. heehee uuh,' she said. pulling herself up another step.

'how lung in it bin since you've eaten.'

'you can't do that in a real court room. jonathon uuuh, -' she pulled herself up another step. 'don't forget the mailman, uuuh - ' and up another step.

'since you've eaten.'

'up another step,' said grandma.

Do you want Grandma to be a part of our family?

jonathon could feel Sara's arm around him as he stared through the bars in the wrought iron railing. 'Jonathon, you look, but you don't see. Your grandmother does not feel pain, at all, jonathon. She's numbed the nerves with all that tarva. She hurts but not in her body. *i hurt so bad today jonathon. it's terrible, so terrible to get old.* You see the images, but you don't understand what they mean. When was the last time she's eaten? Didn't she tell you that *I* died of an overdose? I committed suicide on drugs? Isn't that what she's doing jonathon? She's mixing it all up because she's old and all that tarva. I don't want you to kill her jonathon, she deserves to be buried in that broken skin suit after what she's done to you, i'd have her live to be a thousand if it were up to me, boy. She's trying to kill herself on drugs and have you remember it wrong so she doesn't have to deal with the guilt of having left you behind. Every breath she takes inches her toward that goal.'

jonathon felt his arms curl into his chest, and he knew he was lying on his mother's bed, and that he was lying against the wall in her position. he awoke quite easily and somewhat refreshed. he looked at himself the mirror, and his mother in the eye, and knew precisely what he needed to do. he opened the door to Sara's bedroom and walked fearlessly into the hallway. with a running start, he flew toward the hole where the bathroom mirror once was and flung himself into the warm abyss.

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jonathon gave up his will to the soft tunnel which flexed and contracted, and pushed deeper and deeper inward. this place enraptured his body in cozy safety, an absolute security, like passing away or falling asleep. jonathon could see there was some light emerging at the end of this place. he was not going away, he was going *somewhere*. at the end of the tunnel he saw the one armed statue of St Jude staring blankly at him. his expressionless eyes stared through jonathon, beyond jonathon, as the Jude became larger, he crumbled to pieces and as He drew nearer, jonathon could feel the bile in his belly boiling and suddenly, he vomited all over Jude's crumbling body and his grandmother's expensive rug.

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jonathon hovered above the body-jonathon, who was firmly under the jurisdiction of the Piece, which jonathon could see squirming through the hole in his body's forehead. it turned around like a periscope over the body-jonathon's head, while the body-jonathon's eyes remained fixed on grandma whose glasses slid down her nose as her jaw hung agape in a frown, and her book of crossword puzzles lay face down on her chest. as the body-jonathon tested grandma's skin with the cigarette, the Piece within its forehead snapped at jonathon, forcing him back away from the body-jonathon and grandma. the Piece kept extending from the body-jonathon's head hole, and its green eye was accumulating flies and remained fixed on jonathon, who continued to back off. as jonathon retreated helplessly away from the

