

Matthew Bruce Harrison

Has Appeared, Is Forthcoming

When a to-do list Post-it  
read *Cancel Hair, Make*

*an Announcement.* Who  
boasted seatmate hand

jobs on international  
flights? Red-eye, fake

sleep, face in Garbo tilt,  
likely. Worshipped sexy

French. One guy never got  
past getting gimlet-slurred

in his ex's white childhood  
house. If the lost witching-

hour cab had found him  
soaked in the cul-de-sac,

no return to the pillared  
colonial then, no blame

for Alabama Thanksgiving.  
Another mulled over ways

to narrate the invention  
of cinema so long he only

viewed a century of slapstick.  
Screwball forgot his benzos

and allergy meds and black  
mold attacked with visions

of angry angels dubbing  
judgments in the mouths

of Buster and Fatty Roscoe.  
Was it really six years since

my last dental appointment?  
Still planned to hunker down

and conquer French. Who  
shredded whose villanelle

to feed koi fish? Rhetoric  
and Composition: our duty

to bitch about them. Erupted  
my Irish Car Bomb on a PhD

who declared his focus Theory.  
And who mocked stud earrings

on men to seem a stud, cocked  
his image repeating *Mother-*

*fucker, Smash* and *What, what?*  
Fancied himself the medium

for dead American slugger  
scribes who lived on boats, train-

hopped and got misconstrued  
as misogynists when *Hey now,*

*wusses, these were true lovers  
with knuckled hearts and war*

wounds. Those improv bonfire  
days aloof to meteorologists.

Symbolic stubble. Moody road  
trips and Marco Polo nude

in faculty pools. Accidental  
talents battled purposeful hacks

on bad apartment carpet, not  
actual fighting but rough play

to force a fate of remembering  
each other as broke lightweights.

Car-wash and litter-picking gigs  
in supermarket lots hardened art,

made good fodder for biographies  
on forthcoming back flaps. Sole

time a room wished spontaneous  
combustion, one of us of obvious

upper-crust upbringing shrugged  
off a coveted fellowship—smug,

curd-cheeked gall. The future *New  
Yorker* twenty-under-forty Oprah

pick Barnes and Noble discovery  
laureate swallowed our budget

wine saying *I've always been  
lucky*, and the real shit meant it.