***UP NORTH***

Places:

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Naniboujou, Judge Magney, Tofte, Thunder Bay, Portage, The Boundary Waters, the Quetico, Voyagers, Hibbing, Mesabi Range, Gladstone, Houghton

9/17/2021

Cascades from a vagina and land upon Mt. Pleasant. Move to East Lansing. Then Mount Clemens. Then Marquette. Then Galdstone for grades 3 -12. Then off to Chicago . Minus those early summers in Grand Marais and Orlando and Miami that fall in Berlin, a year in Xi’an, China and a year in Beijing, and that year I spent living in Chicago and Valparaiso, IN, I have now lived in Chicago since 1997 … which by my accounting is nearly 25 years!!

Graduated from Valparaiso and then the tutor hustling around Chicago by bicycle with my Chrome bag and then Burberry and Omega and Rolex and Graff and Rolex again and then a pandemic and a U-haul truck with the head of a camel on the side of it. Then I set out to sea in a morass of digital technology-- writing, coding, stretching. Reaching for a new world -- a collapsing start overrun by all my needs.

**Grand Marais**

Setting

Could you walk along the beach and think. What wou ldyo think about. The Northern Minnesoatan beach with its smooth dark stones, an infinity of skipping stones-- a steel cut breeze building off the cold waters-- makes wearing clothes make sense-- wools and heavy cottons, synthetic shell to block the mist-- or along the Western Michigan shoreline-- soft yellow sand and sunsets fyull on ocean swalled at the reverse of dawn-- Jonah and the Whale. Fruitcake Bill in his bibbed overalls, preaching the gospel for the kids in the summer when we were young. Pastor Bill and his graciousness in the receiving line at Chuck’s funeral in the dining hall where so many kids had had such a good, life affirming experience.

Characters:

The musician

“Even a dead skunk along the road gets some air play for a while.”

Stephan being played by Bill Murray, has taken to smuggling as the larger economy has gotten dicey. Canad has huge reserves and his good friend— this super rich fuck whose wife just loves my jewelry and my cock wants to sent me a load of fuel and supplies— maybe some maple syrup. We just had to sail out to Isle Royale and they would have the supplies ready for us on the east landing.

There’s a huge storm though and the supplies are all washed up on the heach and there are bodies scattered around and some supplies have washed up on shore so he makes a pot of coffee and then takes the dingy out and to the shore where he finds some gasoline drums and a duffle bag of money and another bag full of marijuana. And then some wolves come out of the forest and he backs away from them to the dingy and pulls the dingy into the water and swims it back to the boat with his dingy laden with supplies with the wolves watches him from the shore.

They sail on and let the coast guard know where the bodies were by anonymous tip using a satellite phone.

Naniboujou’s impossibly long dining room. Impossibly long, red, native American design inspired art deco.

Summer camp, ropes courses, getting over fear of heights. Feling very empowered. I have agency. Worked on staff there. Wen to college at the associated University, even though I had moved past this point in my life. Didn’t realize it, but found another path that partially melded, partially branched out and evolved.

The Paulding light

That enormous underground fungus

Da Yoopers

Annette’s under developed Yooper Girl schtick writing that cheesy plaintive song about environmentalism that doesn’t really touch on reality. Sacchrine. Sweet. Figure scatting. All of that violence and hard masculine discipline wrapped around with soft feminine panache.

But is discipline really a masculine trait-- hard physical toiling seems masculine if you are just focusing on acts of strength, but just as far as toiling and drudgery goes, that is not the privy of one sex or the other.

Georgy loved fishing. He had cooking up this whole story about being wanted by a police chief back home for dating his daughter because he was a gypsy. He needed politicaly asylum in Canada. I wonder if he every made it?

Even a dead skull along

Marquette— the bay, the iron ore dock—dark crystal gothic, monolithic, something of the sci-fi— the Yooper down— reddish exposed rock— iron country— cold by lake large like the ocean is large— no rush now – no time— all is but unfolding— unfurrowing— follow the line, abridged

Memory, dust

Mint green leisure suit ensemble

Same-same

Wiskers on her chin like mine

We take a picture together and eat cookies

At my graduation party

Dolores had a deep writing impulse. She would scrool notes on floral cards, incomprehensibly scralling out looping calligraphic lines hellbent on the mutual destruction of the line above and the lie below. The angy scribbles of a Graphomania. And what is the difference between graphomania and literary genius or literary accomplishment. Does the world need another essay? Does the world need another “Tweet” or even “Anti-tweet”. I am sorry to return to this theme again and again, but I believe this fundamental question, this WHY, this existential WHY, this spark of motivation, this snatching of the spark of inspiration out of the air and slamming it into the dock, why? What? What are you up to? Is this a mission of nostalgia? Is this business? Is this burnishing some sense of yourself as being a certain way, communicating a certain way— with your cellphone, your walkie-talkie, your two way wall of larger than life friends, your VR headset and reality augmenting lens, your book club, your subscription services… and here I am lost in my lists again…

3/24/2021

Recreate the Northwoods reflection of my grandmother—her nectar seeking hummingbirds and affectionate seed necking parakeets, my parent’s starter home on Spruce Street where I’d walk up the hill to attend first and second grade at Parkview elementary, and ramble around the town to the movie theater and party store and comic shop and further afield parks and beaches and parking lots and construction sites. With friends around and birthday invitations coming in. Bowling and Pizza Hut and Rollerskating. Hamming it up for the girls by ordering anchovies on my Pizza and willfully enjoying the super weird intense saltiness and fishiness of the topping. And then moving away from freidns and openness and good playgrounds and big loving audience of friendships built over time, everything instead fragmented, decentralized, circumscribed by greater distances and less connectivity and involvement. Having to reset just when I was getting established. Feeling anxious about this. Having pooping issues. Holding in poos until they sneak out and stain my underwear. Hiding the underwear in my drawer until my dad finds them and pulls them out, disgusted, not making the connection that this is a relatively serious psychological issue that has resulted from the stress I feel having my whole fucking world thrown up in the air and rebooted. Uprooted and condemned to a morning and afternoon commute to and from the Bay de Noc community Christian school. It s tiny school and my cohort has like 5 kids. Jeremy, Nicky, Charlie, his sister, the Godfires. Multiple grades are overseen by the same teacher. Mr. Rose.

We moved from Mt. Pleasant to the little Bay of the Bear. Mr. Rose was my teacher. He was a bear of a man and made me hyperventalte once when I couldn’t figure out some math he was getting frustrated with explaining to me. I was sounding insolent perhaps. I’ll admit that like most children, I had the ability to sound insolent even when I was not necessarily trying to be insolent. I think this is a self-preservation thing for kids, living as they do in this necessarily neutral kind of mindset—they are adaptable if they can accept orders and programs and assignments, if occasionally one bristles at being perpetually stuck in this neutral mode, can you really blame them.

As an adult I would occasionally feel this same swelling of self-preserving insolence when visiting my in-laws and idling myself into my best behavoir sort of mentality. Roll my ego under until annoyed and put upon it suddenly bubbles up to snap at someone or caustically club them with a quip or something.

My sense of ultimately floating dislocation was completed with 5 and 6th grade at Cameron and 7th and 8th grade in middle school and then finally finding some consistency in 4 years at the same high school—I left Gladstone rootless—finding some false need to performatively miss and long for my rural homeland—trees, waters, cold, clarifying and settling peacefulness and lung soothing breezes, northern lights, wild animals, Indian lore, miners, family lore winding ack into the ever darkening past, comforting and close, or alienating and close or clear or obscured, friendly or menacing, I was not longing to return. My church gone, my parents Catholic, the high school I attended leveled, building razed. What do I return to? Family meals? Samuel Adams’ seasonal multipak, the deck, the soft grassy yard, the bay and the sky, fireball sunrises, halcyon sunset, Stonington’s steady tree line and limestone cliffs and the night, the closeness of the train cars shifting north and south in the train yard over the highway, the sudden blast of the call horn, bouncing off the South Bluff and careening over the still bay like a heart-investing horn blower in the alive cricket chorus twilight.

GLADSTONE

6/21/2022

Hiking through the high pine forests of Days River. Tuna Pasta salad nested into a prickly nest of pine needles. Good afternoon light filtered through the cooling canopy. It is mid-day and we’ve been walking, but all of us are just as cool as can be.

Its June and with just a few days in the UP we pack in a lot—crayfish hunting in the low river, up and down the little fails in the exposed limestone bedrock, the material that runs under most of delta county, hiked days river trail, did a little hike up the cow path and down the old bluff road. We kayaked all together with Esme piloting her own boat for the first time. betsy and Helena peacefully sailed over the bay and into the Harbor to the first bridge in the lagoon, betsy taking care not to bop Helena on the head or nose where she nestlted in front of her in the Kayak.

We had several bonfires and the requisite smores, we played at the sports park running up and down the bunny hill and that fun little dip on the hill side of the lodge. Esme and I walked a bit of the Disc Golf course, which I was astounded to find out is 27 holes long!! Much bigger than I expected. Now that this is on my radar I am lowkey starting to hunt for some used.

Realized I basically took the girls on a tour of all the old cross country spots. These are some of my favorite spots in town. It’s that interesting. All of the effort and not really loving it at the time with any deep undying passion, but having it resonate with me all of these years later.

Doing a baby jogger run around town, through the camp ground, around mom’s old office, the straight down main street and zigzagging to the football field, before taking the rollercoaster sidewalk down Minneapolis, finishing with a good wide, open road pickup past the school and the State Police outpost and over 9th avenue and the Pavillion park, back home.

And then a solo run to the point on this side of the harbor and then around the harbor and through Van Cleve park, running on grass most of the way until I hit the beach around the skate park and then ran the sort but solidly packed sand all the way down the beach to the Kid’s Kingdom parking lot and into the shady exercise walking area for a couple of laps on the very soft sod growing in the shade of the thick trees, and then up the road to the highway and across the highway to the cow path and the old bluff road, where I climbed the old bluff road with a persistent, but relaxed approach, focusing on good breathing, leaning into the stiff, but comforting gravity of the steeply pitched hill, shuffling my sandled feet against the incline with shuffling, escapement grabbing and releasing.

Already for next visit I am planning a 27 hole disc golf jog, as well as Days River Run, it would be cool to do the far loop at a nice, consistent trekking pace, just being on trails is such a treat! A Marquette run would be pretty great as well. Just some long rambling trail with a little bit of elevation and some rocks and roots to practice my butterfly floating and my bumble bee stinging.

We swam in the bay, though all had to admit that the water was still pretty cold. Esme braved the rope swing and launched herself from the shore to the water a couple of times. Many more times she practiced her Tarzan and Jane skills swinging out and back on the rope attached to the big willow.

The girls were delighted to play with the Buckman’s new puppy Gus. He was extremely sweet with them and any little scratches or nips or chases were totally worth it as the girls had their wild playful natures challenge young Gus who was even wilder and more playful than them.

Helena returned from the trip lobbying for a beach visit in which we invite our friends to go and wee bring some strawberries, watermelon, and potato chips. We had a nice dinner on the deck looking out at the lake in the cool breeze after a hot day and we ate Tuna Pasta salad, strawberries, watermelon and some classic Lay’s potato chips. It truly is hard to beat salt and grease and sweat, perhaps especially on a sweaty day. We prefer our salt tablets with flavor.

I caught the decisive game 6 of the NBA Finals at Casey Goodman’s in Kipling. Watching the Golden State Warriors bring home their 4th championship in 8 years from Casey’s mancave which is a side room off his garage which up until just a few weeks ago, was only useable if the wood burning stove was fired up.

People in Kipling have a new trend of turning OPEN or HAPPY HOUR signs on on their garages to let their friends and neighbors know that they are out having a drink in their garage.

Biking home the waning gibbus moon, just a few days past full, is stunning over the bay. Enormous and extremely bright low on the horizon above the silhouette black tree line. The moon is a hazy red, like a red ale frothing in the sky. I am totally taken in by it as I bike on the shoulder of the two lane road between Kipling and Gladstone. I turn my flashlight off so I can I appreciate the moon more and then nearly run into a deer, a buck, that I am only away of when it stops its approach towards the road abruptly having suddenly been alerted to my presence in the dark. Maybe it was distracted by the moon as well?

06/21/2022

The big bridge in Greenbay, pulling above the tree line for a moment. Over the river with the great Bay stretching out to the east—heading north into the arc of the southern arc Upper Peninsula or due east to the Door County Penninsula. Out to Sturgeon bay and north into Wisconsin’s extended finger into the big lake. He could see Lambeau field in the distance above the treetops. He always thought of those approaching shots of Endor or Alderon or wherever from star wars when the trees covered almost everything except some sudden and surprising technological or architectural projection poked out of the tree line.

The sudden county stench being pump into the vehicle through the out to in vents. The cow pie dankness cooled crisply in the freon feed interiors of the cars cooling system. The rolling farm land. The lake just to the east though obscured by the thickness of the tree line and the general downward slop of the land to the lakeshore below.

05/16/2022

Faulkner -- *Yoknapatawpha* "water flows slow through flat land."

Escanaba County – Delta County

04/05/2022

At a hotel and mom and dad are fighting and then dad goes out for a run and comes back with some crispy M & M’s and everything is all right again and we are tucked into the hotel beds with lots of pillows to prop us up so we can drowsily watch TV and much the cruchy candy coated chocolates in our beds.

12/12/2021

Going to my 2nd cousin’s wedding downstate and drinking Fuzzy Navels with Jude Vandamme legend of the grid iron, diamon, and court, Just athletic and strong. Scored 44 points in a basketball game. Not quite the stud that Dave Elliot was, but still pretty, pretty studly.

09/13/2021

The squirrels and chipmunks are busy-- the vibrancy of the yard-- the grass -- the wind in the leaves, the trellis with grapes, the bees busily going about their good work.

08/21/2021

The Esky gang banger looking kid on the miniature pink motorcycle legs splayed wide on the sidewalk trying hard to get it up and running.

Brilliant golden rays of sun. its 15:56 in the universe

Mark Hamn-- creative, extroverted, randomn, getting into people’s worlds. So I was in Uganda having just sung my way across Africa. Tells the painful anecdote of water going one way a nd water going the other way at the equator. A list of countries that the equator passes through.

3/23/2021

Fox Valley Mall the winter a race somewhere outside never saw where ist was. I am in the mall wandering the mall. Puked into my knit purple and white braves hat. Sense of belonging with that hat. Puked on it and left it on the garbage can, my father insists that we go back for it. Fighting the bees on the roof of the University Reform Church. Settling up the projector for the Hobbit, popping popcorn, driving the church school bus, running up spruce street to confront the kids picking on Hans. Jetting out into the snow to confront the kids that were throwing ice chunks at me, dropping my Faygo cream soda bottle and having it shatter on the concrete walk up to the church just before we were going to enjoy it. My dad is the janitor the maintenance man, the meals-on-wheels deliverer. He likely ran a meals-on-wheels meal to someone which would technically make it a meals-on-foot.

Shoes all wet from the snow dripping and pooling on the gym floor, gym all full of kids, where do you go, where do you go? I had some kind of a panic attack. Not feeling like I belonged there. A kid from that town, but I don’t belong at the school. I don’t go to that school, I go to another school, and then I was crying and my dad was angry and frustrated with me and I was embarrassed about my shoes and embarrassed and sad and scared because I didn’t belong and then later doing a lot of things in that gym- proms, varsity basketball games, speeches, receiving the best all-around boy award from the Kiwanis club, talking about winning the Model Judiciary State competition, being on the homecoming court, being the student council president. But we are not like them, we are different, we are from good families, we go to this church, this is our church family, until it is not, we reserve the right to narrow and expand our definition of otherness. And I was crying because I didn’t belong and my dad didn’t know how to help me.

My young parents and then the attention cover of my younger siblings and my general habit, talent of keeping to myself and covering my ass afforded me a remarkably long adolescence.

Zack and Jack Lapinski… one of them passed away I believe. Which one though?

He loved softball, track, going out to camp. His cats Pearl and Sushi.

7/14/2021

Beer and ice on my Achilles Heel. Dodging yokel asides like “So what do you think of your mayor there in Chicago-- She’s scary!” Sneak away to the cooler for another refresher. Numb is up to skirt through the day. Its late in the day and the thickness of the day has oozed through me. Hans throws the cornhole sack on the roof, Dad gets tension and angrily mutters under his breath when he hears about the protestors out new mount Rushmore. Hans and Aimee huddled over their cellphones looking for word of the coverage.

And now long summer day, stretching day to its nearly maximum length. The fireworks are about to begin-- celebrating summer, celebrating freedom and our country. Esme telling me while I’m crying in the Ukranian Village that she is starting to appreciate our system-- the checks and the balances. Putin’s unilateral war-- the horror of it not lost. The afghani refuges. The aftrian woman giving me the track with the enormous hand being stabbed through with a huge nail. The man who stopped us on a Strewe. Now, that is a father-- bent over thin the street with his ass up in the air getting the kids out of the car-- that is a father. And the depressed couple. Trying to drink less. Upping dose of medication. Are you stretching? Are you meditating? Are you exercising? And the Afghan family is falling apart. The husband wants to kill the wife and the husband is kind of affable, but also weirdly immature and kind of oblivious. Passive mode, no power, no power over decision making. No agency. He’s been forced to outsource his agency to The Agency.

And now he is drunk and looking for Roman twilight refreshment with a quick hop off the dock into the dream of the bay - moon just up in the blue, black dusk. Points of light from the boats out on the bay. A few kayaks halfway to Stonington and Stonington a dark tree line. Solid black save for a few scattered lights. And I hobbled to the end of the dock and then in a moment of drunkly enthusiasm and anxiousness for the restorative cool of the water I moronically sprung off my strained left Achilles-- my leap sent a seering, radiating snap straight up my let like lightening, like a body concussion, I sort of seized up and rolled forward into my momentum, as the concussive thunder reverberated in my brain as my body thoughtlessly careens into the accepting bay.

The water was cold. I didn’t come up right away. And when I did I assessed my ankle and foot and Achilles in the unstable footing of the rocky bottomed shallow water. My leg really hurt. That was so dumb. Hurting my Achilles heel in this way. What could it mean?

And if the writing changed you-- if it really helped you out, pushed you forward, evolved your path to where you needed to be-- it’s a lot to manage-- but you know what is good for you et al. (a lot to manage-- this written 8 months before I finally connected my hq back to my love of Word documents and I feel like I really took control of my writing process. I wrote a custom piece of software to act as a file manager to isolate my writing work space and connect it with my desire both process-wise and content-wise to have writing and language be an important interface with other people.

12/2/2020

The kid got sick in the bell chor and then threw up all over the back of the teacher or the pastor or the parent who picked the kid up and hoisted him up on his shoulder. The janitor came in and covered the vomit with absorbant sawdust that may have had some kind of absorbing chemical substance in it.

Noxious vomit. Chucks of half processed food returned like putrid looking glass delights— that which had been wholesome and nourishing is now disgusting and corrosive. Your insides have corrupted the outside world completely.

02/13/2021

1. Moving to Gladstone Encopreis.
2. Christian School
   1. Memories of Parkview
   2. Birthday parties
   3. Playground fun
   4. Hyperventating and perhaps developing some mental catch/anxiety about not getting math or thinking of math as being something that is way more traumatic than it is.
   5. Memories of Bay de Noc
   6. Skinning knees on black top
   7. Reading *Meg and the Missing Diamonds*
   8. Writing my first story—“ red *shit*”
   9. Argument with Jeremy—“you’re pretty close to a cow.” “Yes, I am.”
   10. Mr. Gerard.
   11. Awkward, irksome commute with the Godfrey’s and the woman who didn’t think that women should run because their boobs bounce around all over the place. You shouldn’t drink and drive. You’re funny.
   12. Fighting with parents to go to public school
       1. Made friends
       2. Basketball team
       3. Principle’s award
       4. Dance drama: Secular vs. Christian. This weird paranoid, angry tension that something was going to piss them off, something was going to make them mad.
       5. Psychology film project that mom watched and called worthless. The teacher kept it for years and showed it as an example of what kids could do.
       6. Friendliest
       7. Most involved
       8. Class Leader
       9. Student Council President
       10. Homecoming Court
       11. Mock Judiciary State Champions (3rd at nationals in San Francisco)

Stacey Warner crushing on Justin, I’m crushing n Stacey, she almost gets smacked by the door when April Reese opens it. Which would have been ironic since they were rivals for Justin’s affection and while April did not know that she had cause to feel threatened by Stacy, Stacy felt threatened and thwarted by April psychologically, but was now manifesting itself as an inadvertent physical assault. The irony of April subconsciously throwing the first punch in their dust up over Justin. I end up feeling embarrassed and awkward because I tell Stacy that it was ironic that April almost smashed her with the door and Stacey doesn’t understand what I mean at all and I am put in the awkard position of coming off as I am speaking over Stacey, being interntional technical or intellectual or hard to understand or going the pedantic route and breaking down for Stacy all the ways that this middle school dance encounter with the door and Justin just alsoultely epitomizes the meaning of irony and Alanis Morsette is like 6 months behind ready to back me upon all of this, but instead I just feel embarrassed and feel unsure how I can enter the question. And I sputter out something eccentric about readfing a lot of books and liking these words and what not and it is apparent that she does not get me at all and will never get me at all. A little while later this obnoxious guy Carl tells Stacey that she kind of has a mustasche and sh is horrified and embarrassed and hides in the bathroom the rest of the night. And she does have a little bit of a mustach, She is very dark complected, dark hair, dark eyes. She is incredibly beautiful, but I don’t know how to tell her that in a way that she will understand, in a way that she won’t care what Carl says. She doesn’t care what Carl says. It doesn’t matter. She’d stay in the bathroom to show him that it didn’t matter. Mayber she was being ironic too. If April could be ironic then so could she. She’d stay in the bathroom and she wouldn’t have to come back to one of this dumb dances ever again.

You could go with it wholeheartedly if you really believed it were real. If it were not just some bashful, shameful thing—words—ironic, he embarrassedly tries to explain.

She is into Justin and Justin is dating April and April almost just crushed Stacey with the door. Aaron realizes that is going to happen just as the door bursts open and the girls are coming out and Aaron grabs the door at the last moment.

It’s April. She apologizes effusively. She’s a really nice person. Everyone knows this. Good grab, Aaron. Can you believe she almost just hit me with the door!?!

That was close— that was almost very ironic. What do you mean? Now does she want me to explain what ironic means, or should I explain specifically how it pertains to her particular love triangle in which she is the interloper. I keep a good secret and neither April or Justin are wise to your affections. I am sadly the fourth point in this Euclidean figure and none of this is going anywhere near my way. Alanis Morsette was just a few months away from uploading some impression of *ironic* into our collective middle school consciousness. And its all very disorienting, but then again maybe this is exactly what we should be doing on a Saturday nihgt when we are in middle school, frantically treading water in the ever fluctuating social dynamics, searchingly, awkwardly trying to use words that are beyond us, watching out for one another, trying to keep each other safe.

Justin—cancer.

April-- talking to him through high school on the phone. Sort of dating over the phone.

Words, meaning, vocabulary.

Leminy snicket word list

08/26/2021

Mr. McNabb, Rexal drugs. Mother going in there and ordering a Soda. Region differences. Choque, toque,

Making shakes, leaving the metal container.

Billy’s store.

Billy taking the mirror off that car in the parking lot after the ceremony with their van. Mike tall and old and rolling around in his wheel chair hard of hearing and friendly, but falling all apart before our eyes. The Pharmacist retired on medications. Lost in the mean routines of his daily haze.

Seeking ome kind of grounding in the word.

Other Aaron from high school. Way more athletic than I was. Fast. Good sprinter. But smaller. I was tall, lumbering. Good stamina. Good defensive intensity. Willing to get down on the floor. Throw elbows. Flop.

Dad died of a heart-attack. Early development kids. Lots of muscle.

Pharmacist. How’s the drug dealing going. Not friendly. Quiet. Didn’t think that was funny. Offended. Sensitive. Later one of the in town Pharmacists was held up at gun point and had a live grenade duct taped to his hand. And then the assailant took the stock of opioids back to his house down the street from my paraetns and where my old high school classmate had grown up and he ate a bunch of drugs and then fell asleep. They sent in a super sensitive microphone and could hear by the depth and regularity and maybe even the shallowness of his breathing that he was really far gone. One of my mother’s partners had a scandal involving his wife running a drug house out of their house. Another dock left a practice of addicts in his wake. The small town office had to get security to deal with angry addicts unable to get their prescriptions.

And then of course that crazy drug story out of Manistique.

08/12/2021

Lee Sanford and I

* Playing our tennis championships and writing up the winners names in puffy paint on plaques we took from my dad’s stash of running awards. Lee won all of the Majors- The French Open, Wimbelton, New York and Australia… until I started using my brother’s super fancy oversized headed, Kevlar stringed racquet and Lee was still using his racquetball racquet, also around this time I discovered that I could really use my height to my advantage if I charged the net at ket times, especially when it seemed it Lee was only going to be able to muster a weak or deflecting return. The Kevlar strings gave my net crashing slams a really satisfying thwack. I started winning everything and Lee lost interest in Tennis all together. This same pattern repeated itself when I played with betsy, Stephen, and Erik. It went from me being sub par to me being a lot better than they were in a really short period of time. I have this weird sidekick mentality. I wonder if this was shaped a little bit by being the odd kid out a little bit once we moved to Gladstone and then falling in with a really dominate and self-centered personality like Lee. Hans has a very self-centered personality. Gareth. Etc.
* Lee’s Book and the on-line pitch for his book.
* The Senior Portait-e sque quality to his self-published dusk jacket .

02/25/2021

Lee Sanford spitting luggies into his confirmation book and compsing myths for Greek Gods and making tombs for them or shrines like inspired by the oracle a delphi, and Jessie Johnson coming down to see what we were doing and we were suddenly sort of embarrassed to be middle schoolers playing imaginary games building shrines to made up gods—our imaginations suddenly a sort of liability in conformity land, difficult to explain, hard to brand, not as cool and repeatable as Jeremy Peacock’s “fuck an a, man!” Or anything that Bart Simpson said. Or Justin’s laconic, “Whatcha doin’, dummy?” The hilarity of this curmudgeonly response—this Lettermen like charismatic cantankerousness and iracibility that couldn’t completely obscure the underlying goodwill and twinkling hilarity. Justin made you laugh. You wanted to make Justin laugh. Locus of plans. Seeing what developed. Meeting up. Doing what? What? God knows what? Who cares! Let’s just do something. Play cards. Ride bikes. Throw the frisbee. Eat something. Listen to music. Drive somewhere.

And then later Lee on YouTube plugging his self-published book. Seemingly trying to codify the fragmented diatribes he had honed over years of drunken delivery from the tops of bar stools. The sum total effect bursting through the screen in a responding, though unselfaware cry for help.

11/26/2020

Shit in pants stance like Roger Shepkey who is probably some mad paperback writing sci-fi crank, surviving somewhere on Tino’s Pizza Rolls and a hoard of 80s glossy magazine porn stored in bowling bags under the basement stairs.

What does it say about our childhood that microwaveable snacks and television loomed so large.

More time at the video store than the library. Religiously perusing the backs of the VHS tapes. Take note of plots. Taking notes of which actors were in what. This museum of our most authentic cultural offering. This virtual reality. This attempt at recreating totality.

11/24/2020

MJP. Used the epigraph from my favorite book as the closing argument of my case. We won the Michigan High School Youth in Government Mock Trial Competition and then were sponsored to fly to San Francisco for the National Championship.

11/20/2020

Youth group:

Hot pockets and a microwave and a Nintendo

And tomorrow Sixflags.

So tired. Still delighted.

The games are lame and you burn the roof of your mouth and the tip of your tongue on

the too hot cheese and red sauce that squirts out when you bite through the bread too quick. It’s steams off your lip and out of your mouth and you spit the bite out in your hand and you’re embarrassed and you feel like a stupid little kid, spitting out food into your hand that you hadn’t washed before eating with your hands, so you put your plate down the round table and you go to the bathroom and you throw the chunk into the toilet and you flush it down, you flush it down and wash your hands, you look in the mirror and you forgive yourself for being a child and for spitting the food our in your hand and you calm yourself by reminding yourself that no one probably even thought it was weird and that they all would have all done the same thing if they had had a too hot bite in their mouth and if anybody picks on you about it you plan on saying, “It was hot! It was hot! What do you want me to do, burn my mouth?” He’d even swear if they really bothered him about it. But wouldn’t swear if they didn’t push him. You wash your hands and go back in. The pizza rolls were cool now. Someone had left a glass of Pepsi for you by your plate. You don’t know who left you the Pepsi, so before talking a quick gulp you should out, “Thanks for the Pepsi!”

Bobby Saunders who was just starting a new game of Caveman games called, “Don’t worry its cold!”

And uncle Danny getting pissed off when the preacher says that rich athletes like Barry Saunders aren’t going to go to heaven.

The Nutkins—painting the house on the edge of town. Mrs. Marfot came to my basketball game—why was I so blocked? Starting on the basketball team—swa this as a much more immediate self-establishing activity. Sucking wind in dry gyms—steamy shits before practice in internal ship bowel lockerooms, the steam heat boiling us in our cotton socks. Dale the janitor and his ever present broom, with his tinted glasses and easy, friendly way.

**04/03/2021**

I had messed up my shoulder trying to whack a gold ball out on to the lake while sliding towards it like I was approaching on a galloping polo stead, only to have the stead back off, just as I swung the club forward and had my feet follow its trajectory up and out from under me—twisting me around and slamming me down on my left shoulder.

07/01/2019

[Video- how stenography works](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=62l64Acfidc)

Themes:

* Relationship between people and words
* Words in different contexts, mediums
* The Defamiliarization of art

Stenographer: trained to write in shorthand methods so that they can type or write in short hand methods, enabling them to write as quickly as people speak.

Will (William, Bill, Billy, Liam) Godfrey the stenographer from Rock (Lightening Will the Hurdler)

Writing project : character - lives in the Upper Peninsula gets married very young as a child very young becomes medical stenographer among other jobs. He works at need. She works for a Funeral Home. He coaches the track team. He runs. He works as a Carpenter. A janitor. A Cemetery. A bike shop. He works for the Catholic Church . The book is about his whole life. It's about the Upper Peninsula. It's about the relationship between people and words . It's about the relationship between people in words in different mediums. Received in different mediums. Expressed through different mediums

Godfrey, running between Escanaba and Gladstone.

* Sisters are pregnant.
* He falls in love and may have gotten his girlfriend pregnant.

D & M Subs

Dan’s Tree House

The Escanaba River

Fishing

Endurance

Personalities

He was the consummate runner-- he kept the middle miles to himself.

**The Stenographer**- Reliant K

I got in a fight with a stenographer  
Afterwards she read me like a book  
I have tried to get along with her  
But my temperament was quickly overlooked

On the weekends we can  
Sneak into this courtroom  
And you'll offer me  
Some sort of bargain plea

Yeah, Smith and Weston Jr. was a son of a gun  
He pressed his nose up to my head.  
Yeah, I was sweatin' bullets but I dodged the one  
That was not as much sweat as was lead.

Oh I still love you  
Oh I still love you  
Though I know you  
Want me dead

And when I turn my other cheek  
Though I'll beg and I'll plea  
But this time  
You might just kiss it instead

This is my story  
And like the glue on the binding  
I'm sticking to it

If you want to implore me  
To change my tune  
Well I just won't do it

This is my story  
And like the glue on the binding  
I'm sticking to it

If you want to implore me  
To change my tune

Well I just won’t do it.

SPORTS

**3/23/2021**

And he leapt up and swiveled his body off to the side—trailing his left arm, tracking the ball in his peripheral vision, his jump had spooked Carl and he jumped and pumped the ball up into the air and sensing Daryl’s out-stretched arms. Over-committed, imbalanced, pivoted his shoulders and shifted the ball to his opposite hand. A crashing guard swept in and caught a soft drop pass from Carl—then laid in in stride, Cooper was back up by two.

Sports English.

5th grader *Never Ending Story* angst. Young, discouraged basketball player. Doesn’t make the team, or does, but then has a fever dream after the lose, collapsing against Kingsford. Later we couldn’t get past Westwood’s lanky guard. He destroyed us. I felt partially to blame running a step slow with my ankle all torn up. The great layup in MQT that made the TV6 news. If we had stayed in MQY, I likely would have had a more successful and less anxiety plagued existence. I likely would not have left the UP.

Marquette

Wildcats and Huskies

Play hocky with a smased can behind the stands. There were concessions. I’d get pop. I would buy it for myself in the first grade.

The Jeff story

Birthday parties

Boy scouts

Summer day club

The beach, the hot spot

Presque Isle for Ice Cream

Jim’s ofr ice cream

The water front

The circus-- acrobatic twins

Helping with clean up, getting 5 bucks

I have 9 lives I’m a cat-- after a presentation of the Heilich manuever in my second grade class. Getting sent to the hall.

Saying the pledge of allegiance. Trying to figure out which had to use to cover up my heart and being uncurse where my heart was.

The boy who had diabetes and sugarfree candy.

Regulating on the playground with that blonde haired kid who thought he was Hulk Hogan.

Cutie Catcher.

Boys chase girls

Fighting with the girls

Going to birthday parties at roller rinks or bowling alleys.

Visiting the airport with my cub scout crew. My buddy Jeff’s family being really into hocjy and having an ice skating rink in the back yard.

Between Michigan and Superior

Upper Peninula ramblings. Succession. History. Superior Heartland. Traditions. Proximity. Parents and family.

Confession. Regret. Letting go. And this is the place where I will collect it. Nick Adams.

My mother and my father love me and they live in the UP in a white house beside the Little Bay of the Bear. Little Bay de Noc. And the French who came and went are ghosts upon these shores and the Indians too, and the living live out new the timeline and work at the casino. Sing out young Indian brave. Sing to the racist moon looking pale and down upon the people below burning brighter for some at this late hour depending on their fates.

I am lost to myself this season and I am trying to find a way to return. Biking down the hill of Spruce street past the apple tree on the lawns. And the girls holding my hand at the roller rink. Rolling along with a girl on each hand to the music as it blasted warm and familiar. Huey Lewis and the News blasting the power of love and I am Marty McFly with my vest and my feathered hair on my skateboard cruising downtown holding on to the back of a pickup truck. I am an 80s teen dream. All the girls invite me to their birthday parties at the roller rink or the Pizza Hut or a bowling alley and so on. I never found quite that community in Gladstone and when I had the chance I got the fuck out of there. Even though there are still ties. Even though I am still tormented about not having written a note to Carrie or to Mrs. Nicholas when Mr. Nicholas died, or to the Bjorks when Justin died, or to Gendron when his dad died or to Angie who lost her father right around the time the other two lost theirs.

Open up the world, it is moving past so fast.

U.P. Copper Mines. Is there still Copper up there? Iron?

Certainly water, forests, animals, farmland, fishing, transportation (lakes and rivers, locks, railways and highways)

NewOfTheNorth

South Carolina prosecutors decided not to file charges in a case where a man who fell off a recreational watercraft was fatally shot by his rescuer, according to the Oconee County Sheriff's Office.

Prosecutors ruled the shooting self-defense, [the sheriff's office said in a statement](https://www.oconeelaw.com/post/tuesday-afternoon-shooting-on-lake-keowee-ruled-self-defense).

The incident occurred Tuesday afternoon, when a man and woman -- neither wearing life jackets -- fell off a Jet Ski into Lake Keowee, the sheriff's office [said in an earlier news release](https://www.oconeelaw.com/post/oconee-county-sheriff-s-office-provides-further-details-on-lake-keowee-shooting), citing the information and evidence gathered in the investigation.

A couple on a nearby pontoon boat saw the man and woman "in distress in the water" and brought them on board, the sheriff's office said, as the Jet Ski continued doing circles in the lake.

"The man, who had been rescued, became agitated and began assaulting the couple on the pontoon," the statement said. "Investigators have been told that the man may have wanted to get back to the Jet Ski."

The rescued woman tried to de-escalate the situation by pushing the agitated man back into the water, the statement said. The couple then helped him back in the boat a second time.

Another confrontation occurred, the sheriff's office said, and the man on the pontoon boat "shot the man fearing for his and his wife's life while being assaulted."

The man died on the pontoon boat, per the sheriff's office.

Ultimately, 10th Circuit Solicitor David Wagner found the shooting was done in self-defense, per the sheriff's office, after investigators met with the solicitor's office this week to present evidence in the case.

The Oconee County Sheriff’s Office has released 911 calls that led up to a deadly shooting on Lake Keowee. The shooting happened onboard a pontoon boat on March 12.

[We previously reported](https://www.wspa.com/news/local-news/1-shot-on-lake-keowee-investigation-underway/) that the shooting happened on Lake Keowee near Fall Creek Landing Number 2.

Once deputies arrived on the scene, they learned a man and a woman on a pontoon boat saw another man and another woman, who had been on a jet ski, in distress in the water. Neither one was wearing a life jacket.

According to the sheriff’s office, the couple drove the pontoon over and got the man and woman out of the water and onto the pontoon boat.

Deputies said 29-year-old Nathan Drew Morgan, attacked the couple on the pontoon boat twice, before he was later shot.

Throughout the call you can hear a man in the background, his speech slurred. At one point during the call dispatched even asked the person on the phone if Morgan was intoxicated.

Dispatcher: “Is he intoxicated?”

The woman from the jet ski replied, “he’s really drunk right now,” she said while crying and screaming.

According to the incident report, the woman from the jet ski said Morgan was agitated and disrespected the elderly couple on the boat, wanting his jet ski back.

The sheriff’s office said the woman, who was on the jet ski, attempted to deescalate the assault by pushing Morgan, who had also been on the jet ski, back into the water.

In an incident report, the woman from the jet ski said the couple from the pontoon boat pulled him back onto the boat again at some point.

The woman from the jet ski also told deputies, Morgan tried to take over the boat at some point during the dispute.

“He broke the kill switch on the boat. He broke our boat,” the jetski woman said.

In the incident report, the woman from the jet ski said she couldn’t believe he was acting that way when the couple was trying to rescue them.

“Hurry, please hurry. We can’t take it much longer,” the woman from the pontoon boat said. “My husband is the one who had to fire at him and hit him in the head. He’s attacking us. He’s already broken something in the boat, dragged him out of the water after he wrecked his jet ski and now, he’s fighting my husband. Hurry,” the woman said.

“Oh shoot, he’s starting to fight my husband again,” the woman from the boat said.

Later, you could hear the woman from the jet ski pick up the phone, crying, scared and praying. The woman from the boat was in the background praying, as well.

“Lord please help us please, please, please, please, please,” Jetski woman said.

“We need you right now. God help us Lord. Cast the devil out of him,” said the elderly woman who was screaming. “Lord cast the devil out. Lord stop him. Stop him. Lord, we need you,” the woman said.

Then a shot and screaming could be heard in the background.

“I got everybody coming to you,” a dispatcher said.

“We just had to shoot him. Please hurry,” said the elderly woman from the pontoon boat. “Oh my gosh, he’s shot now, hurry. Hurry.

Dispatcher: “You said he’s shot now?”

“Yes, my husband had to shoot him. He tried to choke him and knock him out of the boat,” the woman said.

The woman from the jet ski, said the elderly woman was praying with Morgan, and attempted to calm him down. The woman from the jet ski said nothing worked, and that the shooter just had to shot him, she told deputies.

7NEWS also received 911 calls from witnesses looking from their home.

“There are gunshots now. Why hasn’t anybody arrived,” a caller said.

Another caller said, “I did hear something that sounded like…it sounded like a gun pop,” a man said.

The coroner’s office Morgan, was shot in the chest while on the pontoon boat.

Deputies said the man on the pontoon shot Morgan, fearing for his and his wife’s life while being assaulted.

According to the report, officers searched Morgan’s truck, and they found drug paraphernalia, and what they believe was marijuana and beer cans.

According to the sheriff’s office, the 10th Circuit Solicitor’s Office determined the case was self-defense based on evidence presented from investigators.

OCONEE COUNTY, SC (WSPA)

*The Boats*

The Boats

Stripped down to his being and his being middle-aged.

He tried to square the lack of drift in his ambitions over the last two decades.

With what he had learned of life.

He understood the necessity of work

Even sort of relished it for the independence there in.

The branching out from the family.

The branches extended from his rooted abode

Below the shaded glen.

We live in the forest all friends are welcome in.

Come with us to the forset and you may never leave again.

And yet but still,

He wanted to be a poet.

What was wrong with him?

And now his worth, his call,

The English Language

He had worked in a cemetery,

had spent a summer on the boats,

had sold time for wages

He’d sold watches.

Gold ones for decent commissions

Dictating pages all the while

A secretive squirreling away of style

Caught up and obsessed with process

But also blocked from community

Blocked from seeing any of it move

From zygote to full maturity

A train goes blaring by

There is only so much someone can do.

A flurry of pigeons and a handful of seed.

Scapegoating, boy scout escapism.

Length of rope.

Boylen or square?

Starboard or port?

When we work below the ballast line we get hazard pay.

The union sees to it. That’s what our dues are for.

The old timers were quiet and nervy,

I was whistling, pissing everyone off.

I suppose the danger was if shit went down we somehow all had to get the fuck up a single file paint-ladder anemically suspended above the dusky drop light haul of the ballast tank. Fill your 10 gallon paint bucket. Paint we probably had used in one of our various kill an afternoon painting projects. My favorite one bing when Mike, this big round black haired guy that seemed to have a helluva temper, most of the guys on the boat seemed to have a helluva temper. I learned to mostly just shut the fuck up and energetic. If they couldn’t curse my work then all that other chatter was just them being nervy and mean and on the wrongside of middle-aged and alcoholic, and gambling addicted. Men who could disappear for long periods of time and would not be sorely missed. Or at least arrangements may or may not have been made. Some guys lived with their parents. They’d brag about having $120,000 in the bank. Should’ve stayed in touch with these guys. They could have been investors in my widget biz. Nearly getting left at Two Harbors. After talking to Laura on the telephone. Before Oxford. Good and bad throughout the years. Should not dwell on bad as just being this black mark. This was also experience. These are the scars that sober you up to right action, right thinking.

I think

And I know

Perhaps to some extend

My writer’s block is this:

Terror perhaps, at the final reveal of my utter lack of talent;

My dearth of wherewithal for work and family demands.

We were basically collecting the shalings of the boat. It was chipping away and that shit would probably clog the pipes that moved water in and out of those things. And those things has pipes and such that were designed to quickly fill the tanks with water. How fast could they fill? How much time did we have to get our of there if it did start filling up with water. Thinking back it did feel like a death trap down there. I probably shouldn’t have been whistling.

Make some money, go to Europe

The Elton Hoyt the 2nd

Deer Ranch

Aunt Deb’s years in Pakistan. Read Crime and Punishment and couldn’t figure out what the big deal was. Her father raised Beef Cattle. Was named Duke or something. Was gonna have to move to Costa Rica if that lady got elected. He has a Deer Ranch-- one mile square pinned aread where you can hunt bait pile fed deer all year round. Could write some kind of dystopian nightmare bout the deer thinking that they are free, but they are not free. Creepy footage from CCTV cameras of the der coming to the bait pile under the cover of darkness.

Hunter keeps falling asleep and dreaming that he is a deer. When he wakes up he watches himself on the CCTV footage.

LUCE COUNTY

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| [Curtis](file:///C:\Users\aaron\Creating\Writing\Pieces\Luce%20County\Curtis.docx) | [Elijah Katz](file:///C:\Users\aaron\Creating\Writing\Pieces\Luce%20County\Elijah_Katz.docx) | [Grandpa Baker](file:///C:\Users\aaron\Creating\Writing\Pieces\Luce%20County\Grandpa%20Baker.docx) | [Haute Cooter](file:///C:\Users\aaron\Creating\Writing\Pieces\Luce%20County\Haute%20Cooter.docx) | [Mackinaw Island](file:///C:\Users\aaron\Creating\Writing\Pieces\Luce%20County\Mackinaw%20Island.docx) | [Manistique](file:///C:\Users\aaron\Creating\Writing\Pieces\Luce%20County\Manistique.docx) |  |
| [North of Newberry](file:///C:\Users\aaron\Creating\Writing\Pieces\Luce%20County\North%20of%20Newberry.docx) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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The land of Taquamenon is something to be seen.

Imagine yourself a warrior

Or a Jesuit voyageur

Trying to buy what can’t be sold

Trying to buy what can’t be sold.

“Wolf Inn”

Located 15 miles north of that lumber stop town,

Where the asylum brought us together,

And the prison kept us around.

02/15/2022

Gay uncle’s Machismo. All the Gay uncles moved away west. Got rich in the movie business or physical therapy or some game.

02/21/2021

Grandma-- The Ewokes (Arabs) are trying to take over the world

11/29/2020

Was in tears when I started sketching out my initial ideas on this. Finally making it back here almost six months later. Feeling a lot more emotionally balanced about it, but am awfully glad that it is here.

* Superior shore
* North of Newberry— the Wolf Inn
* Dean’s Bears
* Nina’s accident
* Boone and the Bear
* Boone hit by snow plow
* Champ in the Woods
* Mom and Dad and Mainstreet
* Tahquamenon Falls

Bunker boy

* Emerges Friday November 13th, 2020
* Bunker boy: 5th grade dispatch from the UP.

Teen pregnancy rates in Luce County Newberry

Mother and father remembrances.

My remembrances.

Something about my mom and dad’s time in highschool. Something of the orange and yellow clothes and autumn colors and DNR officers in uniforms and stiff walks. And cold copper tasting beers and flirtations out in the woods with pin needles sticking to our plastic cups. We knew people who had just been off to war. And just come back from war. And the cities were burning and law and order was coming and we were somehow more and less well off.

My grandfather played a lot of postcard chess across the Atlantic. He was pretty apparrantly pretty good, but very lowkey about it, but would have chess borads set up around the house with the games in progress. My Grandfather was very retiring. Chess. Books. Sports on TV. Classical music. Did he write much? Letters? Should write to Uncle John and Uncle Kevin.

Pocket doors. Built in flat shelving nooks. Undulating counters. Instant oatmeal at Grandpas. Sugar cereal at Grandmas. Or eaggs and toast with white bread in the yellow oeak looking out the white at the white chalk driveway and the humming birds curious and after Grandma’s red nectar.

11/24/2020

This was 2008 and my Grandfather had just passed away. I had written him a short letter when he was very sick and I had felt good about the letter and he had liked it, appreciated it and had tried to write me back, it sounded like it was going to be some sweeping memoire of his life. It said he was the Jesuits man and that he felt like there was a generation gap between us. This was obviously true. He was good with birthday cards. We stood in the kitchen and awkwardly chatted about college football. He spoke in this very composed, collected, clinical way. He seemed bemused a lot. He would chuckle. He had a deeper voice than you would expect (in my memory). He was raised under the weight of Freud. Not super comfortable with hugging people, intimacy.

His people had been medics and prison guards, semi-pro long distance runners and cyclists, walkers, shift nurses, supervisors, physical therapist, occupational therapists, an outlier perpetual adjunct literature professor whose choices we a sort of hush intellectual cautionary tale in the family. He’d found a position out east and rarely came back. Seemed close to getting married and then had need to get a restraining order against the love of his life because she became physically abusive.

**09/04/2021**

* New York Trilogy
* Owls
* Hwy 41
* Bay de Noc
* Casino
* Tribes
* Meth labs
* [Frank Tine](#frank_tine)

Frank Tine

Glasses, Uncle Mark, all right. Quiet, sarcastic, unhelpful, keeps to self, gambles, goes to casinos, has access to a bunch of drugs. Manistique incident. Burning the bodies on a forest highway road in a Bravada.