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ZERO\_SUM

Does my good health lessen your good health.

Is my love an affront to your love?

My strange name. My culture.

Freezing China town. Cualtemoc. The cigar smoking god. Gold teeth like rappers. A weird way to display wealth. Dad’s sideways belt. Blue beetle with big gold star and fuzz buster painted on the side of it. Middle finger patch sewed on the side of his jacket. Asshole brother. Army MP. Factory Worker. Prison guard. Farmer. Battling those raccoon fuckers from killing his ducks. His ex-wife with a farm too. Both gift us pickled beets.

Does my love lessen your love. We are doing it the right way. At scale. In a van. Microwaveable broccoli and big Olive Garden sized silver pots of pasta. Ample phone time. Each college football season weaving new story lines to follow over time. Shallow breathing. Deep breathing. Slow pulse. Obliviousness to the chaos. The disgusting condition of the kids bathroom. There is always a bigger screen. There is always a screen. Kids talk like they were taught to talk by a screen.

Does the way I talk damage the way you talk. Have a deleterious effect.

We care so much, we care so much, about our careers. About our status. About the square footage of our home. We make a TV kitchen to cook and get fat in. We take pills for our heart. For our attention deficit disorder. Once was rescued from a tree by my father who just happened along in a pontoon. Might not have made it. Leg wedged in a branch, tiring. Flagging. The Pastor came two. The one with the sister Marthar and the brother-in-law Peta, who’d been to Vietnam. Rob and I waiting to order fish at the table with them all reading the local adds on the paper placemate. The travel agency with trips to Sunny Vietnam and the barroom fans whipping round over head life in that opening scene of Apocalypse now and Martin Sheen’s bloodied hand from punching the mirror, which wasn’t in the script, which he just did because he was so deep into character, and *Mr. Kurtz* *he dead*, and Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, and T.S. Eliot’s The Wasteland and George Eliot’s Middlemarch which Caleb’s friend had re-edited into an 8 volume more portable set which he lovingly called Little March and was now working on Moby Dick, and Little Dick is a funny name to me, even though I know its puerile. I know it’s puerile, but it can still be funny. I can laugh, as long as I don’t laugh too loudly, too long. Does my sense of humor take away from yours. Does my pleasure in the puerile diminish your existence.

Cant, cant, Kant. My older brother-hero-mentor-bully-rival-psychological sparing partner become a mawkish church lady obsessed with his weight and his old buddies weight. Telling me on a loop that if he really wanted to lose more weight like his old buddy he’d have to get used to being hungry for a while. My older brother-hero-mentor-bully-rival-psychological sparing partner has a well trodden record of being a real big dick when he is hungry. Low blood sugar or whatever. We all suffered under his hangryness even before we knew that hangryness was a world.

Does naming a condition forgive it. Does my obhmbrpsp get a pass for not adequately seeing to his body’s needs before it revolts against the people around him. The body is the mind. The mind is the body. A big dick is a little dick.

Does my height disparage your shortness. I stoop, get low. Crane. My rib cage collapses. My sternum feels tight, I breath shallowly and try to disappear into the walls. I have died. I am dead. Does my dying offend your sense of life?

Religion is “merely just” exactly how you live your life. Religion and the religious life is a practice. It is love in action. And this is God. God is a practice. Religiosity is a culture. By definition mutable. The conservatives drag it out, sentimentally clinging to a “way-of-life”, a life that is replaced by each generation, who glean and good and wheat and leave the chaffe behind, morphing, morphing, changing, becoming. Does my change challenge your remaining?

“I want Brexit, I want Brexit,” two year old Belle Belle with her wild morning Boris Johnson hair belligerently demands as soon as she emerges from her bedroom.

06/10/2022

Without a job, without income, bleeding savings, tapping into your shallow 401k, you are bullshit. You are precarious. You are endangering the future of your children and your wife. Mommy and Daddy are not coming. You are abandoned. You are free. Exile on main street. My family lost to me as it were. Disaster. Miracle. Turn around. Around turn. Set the fire. Watch it burn. Burning the ships in the harbor.

06/21/2022

Now this is where I write – above the CURRENT bookmark.

Approaching things as an amateur. Allowing one’s self to suck and be open to the process. Attempting to release old blocks and approaches. Attempting to be present and mindful. Ritualistic forgiving. Ritualistic pain assessment and acknowledgement.

My talent is not an attack on you. Your talent is not an attack on me. We fall into these cheesy, canned rhythms. You can tell she is easily annoyed and so you subtly or not so subtly try to annoy here.

Where are your palm of the hand stories.

6/26/2022

We are achievers – we understand each other by our achievements. Mom saying that Emily isn’t fast. Mom saying she would pay money to hear those guys play.

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