**肏肏肏肏肏肏肏肏肏肏肏肏肏肏肏肏肏肏肏肏肏肏肏肏肏肏肏肏肏**

Sky Anderson

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05/13/2022

The National Restaurant Association estimates a **20%** success rate for all restaurants. About 60% of restaurants fail in their first year of operation, and 80% fail within 5 years of opening.

Entering into any endeavor with such a poor success rate is kind of crazy. Especially when success and failure are fairly straightforward as far as how the can be assessed. Do people like your food? Does it make people sick? Do they come back again?

Long term goal of selling weed to build up savings in order to fund opening a restaurant.

Selling out friend to local drug dealers because he thought your process was crazy.

What is the difference between inspiration and insanity? What makes a good idea good? How do you communicate your vision to other people if your goal and purpose are so inchoate? How do you articulate your vision if you are deeply suspicious on concrete cant and triumphant.

What do I believe exactly? What do I believe that doesn’t come off as entitled and deluded.

Back to Nietzsche I suppose. The will to power. The necessity of willing the fucking thing to completion. Overcoming one’s need for affirmation from others. Simply falling back on the facts. Transcending these accidents of personality and stimulus and reaction.

First thought best thought is a bludgeon. A hammer to try and smash the ice away. Unfreeze the cloistered, poorly constructed self.

Other violence bubbling up. Fantasizing about smashing out the windows of my dad’s beloved truck with a sledge hammer. The slow creep. A small truck, then nearly getting killed, breaking sternum on the steering wheel. Truly suffering. Laughing so fucking painful. Tears and mind stabbing shards of desperation.

The U-haul truck with the head of a camel smashing through the great glass façade of the Special Timepiece Store. The Special Watch Store.

The police car plowing through the intersection by the chicken restaurant and the high school and the coffee chain and the yoga studio.

The boy running from the police. Eluding them in one car and then crashing it and the eluding them on foot and grabbing another car at the gas station. It’s a shell station. Victorians valued shells. Jewelry boxes. Then petroleum. Natural History. Geology. Fossils. Fossil fuels. Discoveries.

11/01/2021

Dear Sky,

Suppose I will stop short at a flatout apology for all the mail this summer. Here’s hoping every shred has or will

function\* name(n){

for(var i = 0; I <= n; i++){

yield n

}

}

A javascript generative function.. knowledge which greets me in the morning not like some new intelligence, but simply proof that the possession is beginning to take hold.

Sky’s BBQ, relations, history

09/04/2021

Shredding guitar is like a sick digestive to help the poetry go down. You have to be in just the right state to take this shit in--

Religious cant and chanting, the sentimental things stated in earnest at weddings, ceremony, attempting to bring the ceremony into every day life.

Stephen Malkumus *It Kills…*  seems to reference everyone from Radiohead to Crosby Stills Nash and Young to Bob Dylan and Beck.

See the idea is I want to be someone how can manage databases and create software and digital solutions and I write novels and letters and poems and so forth, but I am not self-conscious about it. I am simply committed to it because I am committed to myself. The self I have chosen. The path I have chosen. The path and the self are the same thing. Religion is exactly as we live. The path is exactly where we place our feet. Exactly where we are. Our geographical meanderings, but also our metaphysic peregrinations. We are our preoccupations. Our occupations.

I had made some mistakes. I had faced some bad deals and have been working my way back from that. Existing on multiple levels. Total success and total failure running in parallel. How is that possible. Trying to follow F. Scott’s pithy epigram about intelligence being the ability to hold two opposing ideas in your head at the same time and not having it implode.

Like all groups from preschools to a gaggle of teenagers to retiree’s battling boredom and their failing forms-- capable of beauty and surprising competency and goodwill-- though also capable of complete and utter chaos and soul slamming negativity.

The curtain rose and burned in the morning sun-- Bill Callahan.

Writing some kind of humanist liturgy. Attempting to wrap my mind around the topics of the world. The organic and the physiological-- the metabolic, the technological, the political, the metaphysic, the pragmatic, the cultural. What’s gonna be my meal ticket after all?

When I initially set out to write you a birthday letter I had really thought it would be a matter of just cutting and pasting together some bits that I had been kicking around. I underestimated how raw this shit was. I also underestimated how scattered it was. I also underestimated how it is easy to just drive and drive and drive when one doesn’t really have a concrete destination.

I think my inchoate destination was truly just to write something directed at you to thank you for your support this year. To celebrate your birthday and to do so in a creative, unexpected, novel, nourishing kind of way. It turns out this is kind of an audacious feat and makes me realize just how limited I am in this regards and how the political and religious and parental and isolating factors have really made it difficult for me to transcend my obsidian stone and just simply work and create. Have I lost my mind? Am I caught in an ever deepening labyrinth of process? How the fuck can I get out of here and back to the light of day. I am lost. I am lost. I want to come back and say I was lost and now I am back. I understand that you must ultimately answer the question about why you get up in the morning. Why you go to sleep at night. Why you love. Why you sacrifice. What your vision is. You create your vision and then you put everything into making it a reality. My vision is to be an IT professional and writer and linguist-- having the wherewithal to take care of my family both materially and supported by a healthy work/life balance.

Writing has always been something I have aspired to, now I am finally sharing some writing with people. I have to continue to be more and more specific about what kind of writing I want to do, and then I just need to do it. Plain and simple.

# It Kills

[Stephen Malkmus](https://genius.com/artists/Stephen-malkmus)

Produced by

[Stephen Malkmus](https://genius.com/artists/Stephen-malkmus)

Release Date

May 23, 2005

[Verse 1]  
What you gonna do?  
I don't know, my friend  
But I'm open to suggestion if you'll proffer two cents  
Give me something I can hang a coat on, yeah!  
  
Nine times out of ten  
I'm not the guidance type  
I've been sitting on a fence post for the brunt of my life  
And now I need some help to find out what I feel  
  
[Chorus]  
It kills the time  
Until you fill your heart, you'll see  
There's more to you than what you think and need  
  
[Verse 2]  
Where you gonna go?  
I don't know, my friend  
But I'll take this road forever or until it does end  
Here or there or someplace else, man, anywhere!  
  
Maybe to the west  
Where they don't fall down  
In a canyon of a valley in a twenty-horse town  
A voluntary rest home where they lecture you

[Chorus]  
It kills the time  
Until you fill your heart, you'll see  
There's more to you than what you think and need  
  
[Bridge]  
We can share our bland opinions  
About the quality of air  
And all will be right  
All will be right on top  
  
There's a place in [Old Dominion](https://genius.com/20218621/Stephen-malkmus-it-kills/Old-dominion)  
Near that courthouse by the square  
Where all will be right  
All will be right on top of the day  
  
[Outro]  
Don't cater to the throng in your head  
Lead with your heart open instead  
Transi-i-tion is where we make it happen  
Transi-i-tion is where we make it happen  
And how it starts  
It's not an art  
You come apart  
You be reborn into a form  
Of what you are and what you were  
To what you're gonna be

Heavy hooded thunderhead, blood-bruised like a desiccated peach.

That said, well supplied- the city is a fine place for a hermitage.

Rhapsodizing means stitching shit together.

I saw your future… you died.. I am not really sure how.. but it was you and you were definitely dead. I was and wasn’t there. This is certainly my future too.

W.G.Sebald “Rings of Saturn”, *Under the Sign of Saturn,* Susan Sontag,this book being dedicated to Joseph Brodsky. Listening to Alan Watts recordings. Reincarnation. Selfness. Etcetera. Beginning *A time of Gifts*, the darkest of chocolate sort of travelogues, but just starting out I didn’t know north from south. Was this more indeterminate authorship and pan-historical romp a la W. G. Sebald. Another mad, but true prism of the past and arching shape of history yawning off ahead. Cresting waves of significance, wild momentum to harness into another day, but how should we read it? As fiction? As history? Should we just shut up and sit back and enjoy the ride?

And this is the right silence—buried and unburied by the process. Faith helps me keep pace. Faith sets my pace. Listen to the river. Listen to the river. All the many messages. The lone message. Many and one. One and many. All of the thisness flowing through. Sometimes right through, directly, sometimes lingering, remaining, leaving something behind. An impression. A flavor. A sense. We are tainted, changed, altered. Without necessarily our full consent awareness, reflection, consciousness of what we are echoing back, reflecting, all our unconscious conclusions, our lived-in architecture. THIS lashed to THAT, THAT lashed to THIS. Our stories. Our myths.

Reclaiming place of belonging—which is everywhere—deeper understanding and conviction of economic skills, realignment and calibration of economic skills, wherewithal, temperament, self-actualizing through tech and my acceptance of my writing and music and physical wellness as being integral components / practices that I must be commit to incrementally cultivate over time. Taking this, my small plot, and making a life out of it. Making a life out of this small, simple plot.

Order, focus, retrieval, articulation, judgement, consideration, a place to foster one’s values, and lick one’s wounds, stock up projects, make a mockery of art, writing, linguistics, programming, songwriting, thought collaging, personal letter writing, essays, discussions, efforts external to return to the mortal sphere, driving the heat and coal of inchoate thoughts and emotions can improve one’s gatekeeping and butlering and hosting all in turn. Our way of being is far from earthy—technological, theorehtical, relational, skills based, talent, concentration, focus, creativity, dedication, devotion.

Craft—understanding CRAFT

Stop working so hard to write correctly—just write in the right silence.

The right silence—that isle out in the water where the pressure and the power and the path all align in just the right flow, the correct escapement, its amplitude humming true, stable, sustainable, accurate.

I feel like I am stuck in a repeating loop. I keep coming back to the same themes and sentiments. But the question remains… am I circling and circling deepening the process, understanding the process more and more, or an I simply trapped in an ever bifurcating path, leading absolutely nowhere… this despairing though is resolutely untrue and the posting of this letter is proof of its falsity. For we have moved—point A is well behind us and here were are at point B. B used to be 那, now it has become 这 and a new 那 has appeared on the horizon.

The backdrop of this emotional, intellectual and physical unfolding, accelerating, accumulating, experiment has been the radioactive morass of our late stage 2020 presidential campaign cycle.

In October writing shifted again. My accruing body work become inexplicably, inextricably linked to bodywork. The content of both the stretching and the writing began to matter less and less as compared to the practice. The practice was the thing, not the product. The training and sustaining, not the performance and production. We seek inspiration in training and sustaining, not performance and production. Performance and production take care of themselves if your training and sustain practices are sufficiently nourished (inspired). Earth- grounded physically and mentally (perspective); Water- hydration, flexibility; Wind- breathing, flowing; Fire: active, engaged, seeking proximity to heat.

I am not didactically seeking to explain the world to anybody, but I am attempting to engage with it. Engage the world in a friendly, twinkling eyed chat, opening up to it, relaxing, not seeking to transcend it, but to transcend the multiplicity in me which disconnects me form the essential integrity and simplicity of this existence—my elaborate literary and technological and linguistic luxury sales apparatuses have all apparently been in pursuit of this simplicity, carving out time and space to practice it.

Cast a cold eye on life, on death

Horseman pass by.

Seeking to overcome, at last, my didactic foundmentalist, white nationalist upbringing.

History has a way of rising up working these things out for us. Leaving us powerless to either avoid or ignore the resulting chasms left by the resulting fault lines. The chasm will never fully resolve, we shall spend our lives crossing them or gazing longingly across at the ones we have loved and perhaps still love, which is why we gaze, which is why we cross. The wound cannot be fully healed. The Titanic cannot be raised from the Atlantic. The Grand Canyon cannot be filled.

What is my fucking problem that I can’t get over my horror and disgust and disappointment and disillusionment and disapproaval and embarrassment and lack of energy and discipline and joy and emotional reserve and resentment and bristling judgement and prickling sensitivity and soft bellied disappearance – you really expressed that better than I could have expressed that myself—I want then to be self-satisfied and happy and virtuous and at peace with other people’s spiritual and political convictions… and yet but still is the confederate flag really not a racist symbol? Why did you just say that there were a lot of good things about the south. Why did you just replace our actual and factual shared last name with the word *NAZI* when discussing the Governor of Michigan who shares our shared last name. Was it really the windmills that caused all the issues during the Texas ice storms? Are *they* that are so *cynically* concerned with public health and the pandemic in your opinion the same as the *they* that are so focused on expanding on-line gambling and extending bar hours? Are *they* the black boys that you saw in Escanaba who you assumed were selling drugs or doing drugs or whatever. You saw black boys in your very small white town and you thought drugs and large Cadillacs and pimps and fags and pedophiles and leftists who are also pedophiles and we all know pedophiles are the worst and it is not a battle against flesh and blood, but of spirit, demonic spirit pedophiles that are coming for your children. I’m sorry, Mom, but they got me! Spiritual Warfare—fighting for soul (not the vote, but the very soul) of every last citizen of this country, this civilization, fighting for our very collective soul that can either embrace the light and the truth and goodness and radiate out that light and warmth to the whole world—or turn ack on our heels and descend once more into the darkness—the selfish, the indulgent and undisciplined, the hateful and freedom-murdering. We stand together at a crossraods—we approach from the heavy mists along the North Superior shore—Viking Berserkers foaming in our whale-beds, hungry for the immediacy of death delaing and death dancing—sickness and infirmity- slow roaming assassins of a vengeful God. Before our coiled forms, our taut rams gut, rent form the sinew, beat your stone bones to announce your stalwartness, echo the legendary savagery of our fathers, their hoary beards that once were mottled in the stains of our enemies squirting heart-spasms, the savage reverberations of age upon age of training, our strength shall outlive your strength, our conviction shall choke your conviction to the floor, the humming, dulling, dragging, the pumping of bloodpipes, animal hearts in paroxysms, hungery for good, glad tidings, tell us what we long to here. Goosey, goosey gander, wither shall I wander, upstairs and downstairs and in my lady’s chamber. There I met an old man who wouldn’t say his prayers, so I took him by his left leg and three him down the stairs. Yes, yes, the soul affirming propaganda. We will make this country great again. It shall be great again. Just like the propaganda advertised, it’s a helluva time to be alive, it’s a helluva time to be alive.

My writing made possible by neglecting my daughter, having her watch TV shows about the great outdoors instead of actually taking her out of doors. My writing sapping my wherewithal to simply be present and available for my wife, because I am so behind and so buried and have some made faith intuition that the only way to get a grip back on my wherewithal is to get through all of this material, spinning the hay into gold, spinning my life-sapping anxiety and alienating fragmentation and disorder into life-affirming inspiration and settling form and fixture.

My writing made possible by making the made Chicken Run at ruin by neglecting my coding—my clear cut path to work-life balance and sustainable, economically sound professional development, the hedge and sensible plan I have been selling to anyone who cares to inquire about the gambit I’m riding on.

Everything has felt ver compressed of late. Urgent. Necessary. Immediate.

August 4th, 2020

Words don’t have to mean anything, but they can mean everything.

Dynamic Fuck Lessons

As far as typos go it was a pretty good one.

He tells me the Corporate Seagull joke

Its pretty funny. My friend now looks like a fat corporate guy whose fleshy smile belies some deeper level of conflict and life dissatisfaction. The elite practitioners of his favorite sport ultra-marathoning all look like concentration camp victims. He looks like he really could do with missing a whole sequence of meals. Esme tells him her European Joke. I am impressed with her delivery and remember back to my preschool/kindergarten days of regaling everyone with my God sends the flood joke.

Dear Sky,

入口rùkǒu

入肉门人肏

出口chūkǒu

I will be upfront with you. I am after to the elixir of life here. Which is embarrassing to state straight out there. It is something that just can’t be said. Rule number one of spiritual experiences are their ineffability.

We here at *Alibris Industries* are after something special here. Something of life itself. Some kind of elixir of existence. Through a combination of techniques both tradition, tried, tested and truly, and more cutting edge and experimental. Using a modern Word processing and programming techniques which has allowed us the ability to simultaneously compose 30 + pieces and 30 + personal letters. The fact that you are reading this at this exact moment is proof of the evolving maturity of the process.

I have found some modern efficiencies. Typing and saving text to file. Deconstructing the process of construction. Doing it all out of order. Or at least not worrying about order. Dating things for reference, but letting themes and topics and whatever else sneaks in to Shanghai my line of thought the construction of whatever is knitting itself together. Embracing my fragmentation. Leveraging my fragmentation. Finding abundance in expression and pressure release. Writing become about subtraction, editing, styling, settling, organizing, the more emotional stuff has been dashed out, discovered. The hard part is over. You got to that place where you were present enough to string a couple of sentences together. This is not something to take lightly or to underestimate. Because if you can find that state consistently and have in place a relatively inertialess editorial processing then you are suddenly transformed from being a frustrated, unproductive, sullen, down on himself writer into a productive, creating, creative, discipline, hopeful, ambitious, momentum building journeyman of words.

Early 20th century Spirituality and New England Transcendentalism has informed this process, as has far easter mysticism and literature. Marijuana has been interlaced throughout as well as vegetarianism, fasting, yoga, and meditation. Stream-of-conscious writing, promiscuous, “  
intuitive” reading and quoting, the *Yellow River* acting as a unifying conduit of the disparate sources and topical fragments.

This process has been inform by Stephen King’s *On Writing*, with his encouragement to pursue stories like an archeologist after an ancient civilization—Dig Lazarus! Dig! Then Jerry Seinfeld arrives to tell me how much to write—consistently!! Seinfeldian Chain! Counting hours and number of Chinese characters in Bejing. Up on the 12th floor smoking Zhong Nan Hai cigarettes on the clothes drying porch watching the sun set to the west where the mountains are obscured by the smog. And then writing for 30 minutes a day and then falling out of it. Not exactly sure why. Thinking back, in this moment, it seems obvious, I was not getting any new input. I was not reading anything in the genre or even watching any shows or films. I wasn’t talking to anyone about the genre. I wasn’t even talking to myself about the story. I was really just trying to squeeze it out, like I had it all in my compacted in a tube of toothpaste, or shoved way up tightly in my colon. I was also, trying to make the most of my time in China and hiding away to write in English seemed a little counter intuitive, a current I couldn’t quite reconcile with the main force of my focus which was inchoately to get my Chinese up to a good enough level to attend graduate school. This ended up sort of panning out. Sort of. In retrospect the best lesson was the simple act of that early attempt to just take the time for a project of my own design, my own making, my own goal setting, trajectory pitching.

入肉门人肏

Again, again, why a letter. Like an invitation for a vampire. Cross the threshold. Rationalize the process. The way. This my anti-tweet. This my anti-tweet machine. My settling chamber anachronistic. The Anachronistic is fun and can be refreshing and kind of jarring and enlivening sometimes. Novel even. Is this a capitulation? Some deranged, self-deceptive, pop-psychological slight of hand, a simpleton Seinfeldian Chain.

Yield is a world that can both imply a capitulation as well as an act of production. Giving one’s self over to the process. Losing one’s self in the process. Losing one’s self in life. Yield can mean give way. And it can imply that something is giving way under force or pressure. “He reeled into the house as the door yielded”. Another meaning of yield is to produce though. The health of a harvest. The size of a nuclear detonation. **VOLTAGE = WATTAGE + RESISTANCE**

I liked how you connected this back to life. This idea that life is truly constructed and edited over time, out of order, the well-situated and the good situation rarely arrange themselves at random. Every glossy shine has a bit of hustle behind it.

Even as a strategy for collecting thoughts, gathering thoughts, attempting to have “long thoughts” even if those thoughts are just collages of thoughts, or quilted together patterns of thoughts, reviews of ideas, words, experiences, etc.

Ultimately we are going for a magnanimous spirit here. Something full of life and life giving. Nourishment. Gilded with the good alchemy of revised writing. My compliments sent out and along a computer tracked gust of wind. The beauty and joy of flowers hand out to people whose day you’d like to make, and you make it. A message sent. A message received. A mood sustained or improved. A wherewithal passed on and on down the line of being.

To do the things I feel compelled to do with language you would really have to have a talent for language. To believe you had such an expansive magnanimous talent would beg belief and betray your low-talking audaciousness. Like that guy in the stone village who built a rustic tower over 30 years by moon light. I am building a tower of words from the materials at hand. By moonlight.

Things may have been very different. Perhaps betsy and I wouldn’t have made it. She might have been less enthusiastic about a Tech husband at that time. When I first met her in college she was already VERY annoyed about having to have a university email account. Perhaps I would have gotten a job in the Wicker Park area and began my Tech career right then and there. There would have been no summers in Florida teaching reading enrichment courses, staying in Berlin those three months, just betsy and I alone without any of our network of friends, no more group hang, and without our families. We were a new family. With Peter. Living in a foreign city. Learning how to live with one another. That was our first apartment together and it was very lovely. High-ceilied and warmed. It felt like a Cabin. After my time at Erik’s cabin, I was now just accepting out of hand that there were many good places to live and that I would find more and more of them as the years progressed. Or Xi’an and the pigeons flying outside in patterns in the smog from our 7th story kitchen. Where the cords behind the refrigerator were all chewed by rats or Xela and an earth quake in bed with the walls rippling in our second lodging after we tried to get away from the flies, or Grand Marais and our time among the Bulgarians and Canadians and Northwoods people, and all those now almost unimaginable unencumbered adventues and experiences in Hunan and Sichuan and Slovakia, Italy, Thailand, Inner Mongolia, the shifting sands, bouncing dance floor in Datong, dumplings by the kilo in a ston village three buses outside of Beijing, remnants of a cultural revolution era bandshell with a faded mural of Mao Ze Dong and a much older tower built from rocks by a man over many decades all by moonlight, and it stands in the town with the ancestral halls and the winding stone walled alleystreets that criss cross between the walled in courtyard dwellings of the villagers. There is a funeral going on in the town and a woman accompanined by muscians shrilling belts out some dirgey subgenre of folk opera. The reverb from the small P.A. system and the narrow stone streets, amplify the surreal, dream-like quality of the singing. Goats feed on the roof of a building built into the hillside on the other side of the main village road that climbs up towards the parking lot near the Mao mural and the main road that we came in on packed into the Bread Bus beyond that.

A man from the ticket window of the village takes us to a woman’s home and she rents us a room with a kang and a wonderful collage of Mao potraits and Cultural Revoltion era propaganda posters and kitsch. All the Mao portaits are strange and fantastic and feel like some sort of art installation, cultish, historic. We pose in chairs like a pair of serious, chaste, dedicated newly wed party red cadets (party cadres).

We visit the tower and pass the funeral singers on our way up towards a small restaurant we had noticed near the bandshell. It is a dumpling restaurant and we have to order dumplings by the ½ kilogram. The dumplings are very inexpensive and we accidently order an obscene number of them— trying to save face and because they are so tasty I eat way too many, filling in any remaining gaps in my digestive track with dumpling shifting pulls of cold, refreshing, light abv. Standard Chinese lager from condom cups that we take turns refilling from the large green bottle between us.

These little communal aspects. Sharing dishes. Sharing bottles. A little bit more intimate. A little bit more connected. Always toast before first drink. Always look each person in the eye as you toast them. The group is attempting to coalesce, connect, establish. Effortless ritual. One of the joys of shared culture are sharing in unconscious behavior (dance, ways of doing things, expressing oneself), shared culture can mitigate a lot of self-consciousness and makes the work of gauging what everyone knows and tailoring your message accordingly much easier, much less conscious, much more automatic and thus more flowing.

The beer washing done and the vinegar and spicy and salt snap of each choptick gripped, dipped, and gobbled up dumpling. When we walk back down the sloping village road, back past the funeral singers, it is completely dark and we light cigarettes in the dark and walk on as two burning points as we descend slowly, stuffed and suddenly almost deliriously sleepy and relaxed. I am painfully full, but also relaxed and light with the beer a and now nicotine drifting up into my head and my metabolism marshalling my long-travel day depleted reserve of strength to begin digesting the compacted mass of floor and cabbage and vinegar and chili oil and low abv. beer currently amassed in my innards.

We make it back to the courtyard and our room and brush our teeth in the courtyard over a red plastic bowl from water from a thermos that the old woman has left for us. We stretch out on the Kang and it is very hard and we are both cold at first, but are soon warm together and asleep.

In the morning the old woman offers to make us breakfast and she maskes us each a delicious bowl of noodles in savory, fragrant broth. We eat the steaming soup in the courtyard with the sun on us, feeling warm and fresh in the late spring. Warm soup, especially in inadequately temperature controlled situations is truly a gift. I really came to appreciate savory soup breakfasts feel like many of the best meals I have every had were taken outside in cool weather, protected from the elements by nothing but a tarp, sitting on a low stool. Maybe this just means I need to eat outside more!

I think the difference, the foreignness, the “gas-lighting” of the normal. It is truly like slipping into another dimension, another reality. Moving through dimensions, seeing other versions of what could be, might have been.

An old woman with a tent constructed of tarps and ropes with a huge cauldron of soup could probably do all right in most places in America if her soup was really good— food handling and health regulations aside.

Did we occasionally have mildly traumatic gastrointestinal episodes as a result of these street food peregrinations— of course, but that too— my goodness, brought some new sensations— the sweats, retching, pushed out of the norm and into the delights and the unsavories of the previously unexplored, beyond your normal norm. Possibly gaining some insight and understanding into the artificialness and plasticity of your normal norm. The possibility of recalibration, adaptation, intentional and nourishing transformational and maintainable cultural creation.

The is no change. There is no reform. There is new. There is only culture change, adaptation, evolution, extension.

Being secure enough in your personality and habits and world view to have the wherewithal t be delighted by the delightful things beyond your normal norm.

A lot of this capacity for delight comes from curiosity, contextualizing, understanding, empathy, recognizing the human and the humane or nature and the natural in the thing— and of course the senses— the senses will tell you much if you let them do their good work and have the mind to give them adequate attention.

And its not just about the work of the ego— the preference tester, the pleasure seeker, field consolidator, PR department (even if just to give lip-serving for what you interpret the world is expecting from you.) The world is expecting certain messages from you. What if you don’t have those messages or you have them, but don’t want to give them up, don’t want to be beholden to the conversation ascribed by the world. You want to avoid what the environment is attempting to subject you to. You want to avoid having your WORLD attacked.

Why are you attacking my world?

Instead of attempting to engage and interface with my WORLD your messages instead seem to be aimed at attacking my WORLD and reiterating your view of its insufficiency.

Our relationship is shallow because we do not often argue politics and religion, because we do not politic each other. Repeating controversial political attacks is not “discussing politics”. Let’s collect our messages and see how they add up.

Do I worry about having a fixed perspective. Do I worry about standing by a particular ideology, defending it, battling for it. Yes, I suppose so, but I’d rather not make it my primary occupation. We have elections don’t we?

*Torso –* Joseph Brodsky

If suddenly you walk on grass turned stone

And think its marble handsomer than green,

Or see a play a nymph and faun that seem

Happier in bronze than in any dream,

let your walking stick fall from your weary hand,

you’re in The Empire, friend.

Air fire, water, fauns, naiads, lions

Drawn from nature, or bodies in imagination,

Everything God ventured and reason grew bored

Nourishing have in stone and metal been restored.

This is the end of things. This is, at the road’s end,

a mirror by which to enter.

Stand in a niche, roll your eyes up, and watch

The ages vanish round the bend, and watch

How moss develops in the statue’s groin,

How dust rains on the shoulder—that tan of time.

Someone breaks an arm off, and the head from the shoulders

Falls with the thud of boulders.

The torso left is a nameless sum of muscle.

In a thousand years a mouse, living in a hole,

With a claw broken off from trying to eke

a life out of granite, will scurry with a squeak

across the road one night and not come back to its burrow

At midnight tonight. Or at daybreak tomorrow. (January 1973)

That mother fucker is going to say his Presidency had the highest T.V. ratings of any presidency. Is he somehow benefitting from this? He used Media all the way up didn’t he. The New York Post. Fox News. He just got bigger. He had a bigger following. Had better ratings. And could appeal to his base in a very visceral way. The power of suggestion. There were suggestions of fraud.

What is the problem here? There is a huge international conspiracy? Yes, its called our global political-economic system. You’d better hope there is some kind of plan/conspiracy…!

China has its Wigars, Tibet ,Taiwan, tenuous human rights, extreme pollution, environmental disasters… it is not fucking easy to achieve the quality of life we have achieved in the west. And we did it on the back of feudal peoples.

Was the foundation of Europe built upon slavery? What is a good book on slavery? Book would learning about slavery be some sort of way to intellectualize myself past ?

It’s 11:15 a.m. The girls are out to Welles Park. Just put on a cd “Supper”. 2003 ain’t that long ago, no?

*Feather by Feather*

*Write it on a postcard. Dad they broke me. Dad they broke me.*

Jordana Push me away… it is easily several years since you made the recommendation. I have this floating accruing list of references and bookmarks. Its all part of my digital dislocation. What they hell are all these bookmarks. Information junk drawer. My useful box. Wine corks, tongue depressor,silver thread, channel stems, scrapes of fabric with Matryoshka dolls, black back ground, pleasant solid colors shading the peasant gard of the various nesting dolls, googily eyes, sequence, scraps of construction paper, paper straps, cardboard tubes, fuzzy bobbles, buttons, a single jingle bell, various stickers, a seashell, suduko puzzles at various stages of completion,

Went to Remember the Alamo on 3/15/2019 to see Nancy perform before Sky and Nancy got divorced.

6/1/2021

Scattered stage craft -- the silhouettes pulling guns on each other. The music and the lights. Projected text. A writer in his tighty whities. Chaos and beer. Beery projects of our half-lived lives.

**A Failed Attempt**

Ennio Morricone (spaghetti western sound tracks)- jaunty whistle, building up, chorus calls, get along little doggies. The character of Blonde. The Cowboy. Doesn’t talk much, but has a mission. Is match inextricably towards some goal or destiny or just desperately trying to stay ahead of the weather.

**Character:**

*Harry Potter* is all about the Characters. *Game of Thrones* is all about the characters*.* Jin Yongwrites his stories for the characters. He is writing characters. Characters that fit within a certain milieu, of course, but the locus of his art is writing characters for people. Using characters as cyphers through which to feed culture and history and philosophy and story and beauty and ugliness. Shadow play to quicken the flicker and shade of our own being. Whispers of the LOGOS to quicken the depths of our stream. The unconscious or conscious tumult of our own unyielding flow. That repeated image in *The Master* of the wake of the ship in the ocean, turning over and over and over and all the drama and richness of turning over and gazing into even the shallowest depths of the ocean.

The ant hills in Guatemala at the ancient Mayan site of Tikal. The great Zigaurenat towards rising out of the jungle The monkeys congrated in the impossibly high canopy of jungle trees and the wild jungle birds with their digitized bizarre sequences of sudden and prolonged exhultations. And then the ants and their mounds which you could stir up with a stick to reveal hundreds of eggs sacks like little beads of rice and then the aunts would swarm out, straight up your stick and on to you if you didn’t drop it in time and they’d immediately collect all of the sacks and pull them back down below the surface of the soil. The speed with which they accomplished this communal rescue was incredible. The colony was serious about its survival. Aggressively serious. I suppose most creatures don’t appreciate having a stick just slipping in to stir the shit up about one’s situation. Especially if it puts at risk all those things you have been working on and storing for the future. All those things that you had set your value in. Stored you treasure up in are suddenly worthless. The value of the your days and the works of your hands has been undercut, eroded, emptied out, bled white. I am sorry, but everything you’d held most dear is not of absolutely no value at all.

And cannot writing be an act of love? An act of reconciliation- an attempt to rough stitch together the desperation which smells of death and disintegration- surrendering to the larger Gestalt, the holy whole that transcends us, that is the beyond, that is the mystery.

Stephen Malkimus, Dave Berman—

Casually profound; a negative capability; humorous, pathos filled vignettes, cause life is a little romantic and bewildering and funny and scary and sad and engaging and ultimately al that we have and all that we’ll ever have.

Seeking out some casual, detached, stumbled upon profundity. The pun you didn’t even know you were making that unlocks eternity for someone.

Casket sequence, ecstatic stretching, designed a basic searchable index of strings while taking a shower to cover up the weed smell on me before my wife wakes up. So eager to sneak a few more naked stretches in before I throw some clothes on and get writing and coding that I hook the candle on the back of my American Standard with my Tom Ford designer glasses, bowling the candle over and spilling and splattering its resovoir of hot wax all over the walls and the floor before cascading to the floor and shattering on the bathroom tile floor.  
 Watches that came in with shattered crystals, 9 times out of 10 got busted in the bathroom… on the marble.

Exploding stovetop espresso machine when I neglected to put the screen in.

China: rats, pollution dust, pigeons, cigarettes, very cheap and passable beer, very awful and cheap red wine, Cinnamon Girl, alone with the rats with Owen away, Chinese and Chess and Chinese Chess, Bathhouse, Soccer injury- messed up knee, hobbled hippie through Yunnan, returned later with Alex and betsy, after the basketball adventure and before hiking the tiger leaping gorge.

Image timeline, trip illustrator

* Images: location, time, trip point
* Family, friends, language, data structures, UI
* Arriving in Xi’an
* Living in Xi’an
* Traveling to Pingyao and Inner Mongolia and northern Shaanxi(Yulin, Yanan- dry river, very dry, cave dwellers. Carvings. Barren, expressive land.)
* Chengdu with betsy by train (hardseat there? Sleeper back? Indian food then getting on the train and feeling much more prepared, much more appointed than on the way out. )
* Henan with Sean and Todd and Owen and betsy
* My parents visiting with my siblings
* Traveling to Yunnan
* Traveling to Beijing
* Traveling to California
* Then Minnesota
* Then Guatemala
* Then Chicago
* Then back to China Beijing.
* Then to Chicago (Valparaiso)
* Then Chicago
* Then Children

Cloistered times: Erik’s cabin prepping for the LSAT, Xi’an studying, Beijing studying Chinese and writing and then preparing for the GRE, year at Valparaiso, COVID-19 year writing and learning to code.

Tipping the Candle: When your practice needs practice

Happanstance. Intuitive development; article about experiential self-exploratory career types.

Activity focusing and tracking app. My outlook had used outlook in the past and then outlook crashed on my computer and it had too many contingencies and features. All I wanted was a place where I could keep my address and phone numbers updated and track who I connected with and when. It help ground the my kind scattered mind and ground my weary middle-aged, life is passing me by, fluttering by like calendar pages in the wind, a freight train headed straight for the Rockies and I ain’t even got a ticket to stamp or anything.

And Pete and Ellie at the bowling alley. And Pete who had been so against the war is suddenly okay with “these little wars.” And we are off to China and our friend collection is collapsing. We know each other. Lets have some beers. Let’s roll some balls. All of that shit has been burned to the ground.

The Bowling alley and hardware store burnt down and they put in a day care. And McDonalds got a refresh, and Lincoln Square gentrified on even without the pigeon man uncomfortably sitting on fire hydrant covered in pigeons.

And the cold. And waiting for buses and waiting for trains. And wandering. Walking. Under the highway. My pants ripped. A big huge rip in my pants. Feeling self-conscious at the birthday party. Feeling self-conscious and increasing drunk and stone at the guys basketball game hang, and then walking home with my pants increasingly shredded along damen and under the underpasse with the Rod Blagoivich big plaster decal thing, and being done with my program and having no idea at all what I was up to or where I was going or what sort of work I wanted to do. I suppose this is the curse of a write. Or the curse of even having the writerly ambition. Unless you are gifted with a really clear vision of what you want to write, which is perhaps an added requirement to write. Not just have the impulse to write, but also have the vision of what you want to write and some level of understanding of what you are writing. For example I am currently working on a project in which I am laying out and developing my base as a write. Developing a process which is now entering its 9th month. I have often experienced a proud change in my knowledge and ability and systematic engagement with an endeavor around the one year or one year and a half milestone. This gives me great hope that as I stick with this writing process and I have stuck with it I will be able to follow it forward through my working, creating, living life, no longer feeling frustrated and off track. That is my ultimate desire here, to find a way to work and write that is not self-destructive or self-defeating, but rather life affirming, life organizing, life creating, life memorializing, life catalyzing.

At present the process feels a little out of control. I am about 1200 pages behind in my write hand portion of the process and an infinite number of pages behind in old digital journals that I have ambitions to mine over time. There is a tone of work to do. And a lot of it is boiling things donw and a lot of it is ranting things out. I want this process to be collage like. Having collected my material over time, in stray moments of attention or inspiration, engagement or distraction.

Thanking all the people who have at one time or another been a literary pillar, a sounding block, a presence and collection of interests and talents and good humor and shared symbols and memories that my own life takes shape against.

What is the Gestalt chair therapy?

There is this lingering fear now that I have gotten somewhere with coding. Why am I still writing? I don’t have a coding job yet. Just give the writing a rest for a little bit. Get a salary. Some benefits. Start accruing some goddman vacation. But instead you are taking an unplanned three day binge down the rabbit hole of your journals from 15 years ago to strip mine pathos and poem lines your probably just edit away as you pan the material out of the river over time.

02/05/2021

Florida. Seeing Jurassic Park in the theater that too loud and too cold, and then fist fighting with my brother at the water park where our parents had trustingly dropped us off, he is egging me on and turning everything into some sort of embittered competition, he punishes me for his insecurity. I can’t stand his sneariness and am bewildered that he can be such an asshole even when we are supposed to be having such a fun time at a waterpark in Florida. Hans buys a multipack of *Spawn Comics* and I read them in the back of the van heading north feeling pretty stomach-churning sick at certain parts. Swimming with the alligators. The pontoon driving tour guide whacking the side of the boat in a rehearsed gag that made all the tourists jump cause they thought a huge snake had just dropped onto the boat. Playing *King’s Quest* with my Grandmother. Eating shrimp fried in butter. Watching the Suns and the Bulls battle in the NBA finals out on the screened-in porch on their color TV when they were younger back before dementia and sundowning and all that brass tacks elderly shit that is utter horror if you get to close and empathetic with it.

05/12/2021

Snow White its gonna be all right, its gonna be all right.

When the company goes public, you’ll have to learn to love what you own.

You encouraged him to kill himself hundreds, perhaps, thousands of times, telling him to “go die”. Thus, this court finds that You is responsible for this death.

During an 18-month- relationship using text messages and threat of self-harm to manipulate him You encouraged him to kill himself hundreds, perhaps thousands of times, telling him to “go die”.

05/25/2021

Wings and brandy on a winter’s night, I guess you wouldn’t call it a scene.

I am freaking out. Lifting up the couch. Bear hugging the cup chair and slamming my head into the cushion and then I collapse and the mental breakdown seems to subside. I am calm. None of this seems like such a big deal anymore. I will write or I will not. I will code or I will not. It is all truly out of my power to order it all and get it to line up, flow.

Later in the day my mother sends betsy and I an image of a curry she made from garden vegetables. The text exchange is full of caveats and unnecessarily overexplained motivations. She assures us that the vegetable picture is not an ego thing, she just wants to share the image with us because it made her think of us and that she loves us and thinks fondly of us when they are living their life. After 42 years of this emotional delintion I feel exhausted. I feel distant. Why does even a picture of cooked vegetables turn into this emotional turmoil and over explanation.

Later she texts me something that is in her mind, maybe, find of encouraging, but comes across as pessimistic, and patronizing, basically telling me that I “continue in their prayers for God’s leading your employment. The Holy Spirit is there to lead by invitation--- just so you know (kissy face emoji).”

I call her back and both try to explain to her that all the meta intentional explanation about the photo is not necessary. We like to see her images and are well acquainted with the custom of texting an image to another person. I am sending you a dick pick. It is not an ego thing though. It is really just that I want to fuck and wanted to give you some insight into the member that I am proposing to do it with. And then I shift to “The Holy Spirit is there to lead by invitation--- just so you know (kissy face emoji)”… I think it is the ‘just so you know’ that made me feel so bad. Obviously, I know. Also, obviously I have not been to Chuch in 24 years. Also, obviously the fact that I am not a Catholic or an Ultra Right Wing Republican I have some challenges getting into the flow of my family culture. I try to break this down for her. How both her approach and her continued implication that the underlying problem in my life is not the fact that I am 42 years old and working my ass off to jump industries while attempting to keep domestic peach with a 2 year old, a 6 year old and a 40 year old wife who has recently fallen into either a massively depression or has embarked a bit early on her journey into menopause.

I would also like to add that her call to the holy spirit is specifically a Catholic one. When I attempt to discuss this with her when I call her she is of course defensive and while she concedes that she did have the thought that I wouldn’t like or I would be offended by it or take issue with it our of arrogance. My mother over the years has kept up a consistent drum beat of messaging that my lack of Catholic faith stems from above all else my own personal arrogance.

As I struggle though the days here trying to marshal enough emotional wherewithal to push through the incredibly soul shredding inertia of meeting the girls needs and meeting betsy’s needs just to get to that right silence of concentration, learning, composition. Being resilient and nurturing as we suck the very last ounce of life out of her. We all quite regret this last part of the arrangement, though we three cannot seem to help ourselves. We are sucking her blood.

That state has the succor. The state is where I have laid my miles of track this year. That state has brought me to my absolute best place with writing and coding. On top of this I lost 30 lbs. this year by changing my diet and replacing running as my go-to physical-mental ballast with an eclectic Yoga practice. I am back to my high school proportions. My body fat is way done. My arms feel strong. I have found success working out the inevitable pain that the subtly cruel office contortions cultivate in my upper back and shoulders and neck. Maryjajuana has been a huge guide in my eclectic Yoga practice. Certainly has been a conduit for reaching some deeper states of physicality, mentality, spirituality(?). Getting lost in stretching session, calmly following the subtle body. Searching our pain, strain, tension whether from overuse or disuse of whatever.

06/01/2021

I will concede that some of my deep distaste for having to listen to detailed plans for rereleasing *I don’t know where here is* on vinyl for its 20th anniversary (which if you haven’t been keeping track is only three years off). May be I should stop right here. Maybe the fact that this guy just dominated the bulk of our time hanging out together filling me in on this thing that might happen sometime, no date or season specified possibly three years from now to commemorate something that had had twenty years ago that even at that time I had only desired a tenuous connection to.

The idea of the guys getting together and doing stuff and talking and being in cointact really did warm my heart. And I could tell that more than anything this is what he really was into. The connect, the project, the productive brainstorming sessions. Thinking and working in a way that he enjoyed with people that he enjoyed working with with a mission or a project that was mutually meaningful to all involved. That is powerful shit… unless you are not really involved, don’t plan on being involve outside of showing up fashionably late and leaving early to the show which may or may not happen in three years when I may or may not eve be living in Chicago, because I have been out of work for a year and have been going through a process, not unproductive, in which a lot of my past self has been stripped away, cleaned from the bone, or is in a fast moving process heading in that direction. The blast-fire kerosence whine of 2020, Daugher daddy Kobe dead in LA. My oldest niece is named Gianna. She lost her hearing as a baby possibly as a reaction to the MMR vaccine. Her poor hearing has always made he very attentive to people’s faces, their expressions, reading their lips. She’s Papa’s favorite and is easy to have around and sweet and reminds everybody of her mother sweet Beth who was quiet and easy to have around as a kid. And who now as an adult has 6 children and would have 8 if not for have lost a set of twins very late in her pregnancy ten years ago. A few years back she had a bad kidney removed and really probably shouldn’t be getting pregnant anymore. But she did this year and had her 8th daughter (6th surviving). Sweet Beth’s daughter’s all have very elaborate, multisyllabic names.

The girl’s actual names are: Gianna, Mariel, Adelaide, Madeline, Genevieve and Emmaline.

I wrote a Ruby program to generate all of the possibilies that Sweet Beth and Adam will potentially scramble them into as they shout up and down the stairs of their comfortable, if thin walled home on Indian Trail Lane.

**Genmaline**, Emilīne, Emilaide, Madelīne, Emanna, **Madmavieve**, Marilīne, Emmael, Adanline, Giiline, Genina, Maranline, Marmael, Madanel, Emanel, Gielīne, Marena, Gianlaide, Admaline, Genanna, Marevieve, Admavieve, Gianel, Geniel, Emanlīne, Geniline, Emeline, Emiline, Mareel, Gianvieve, Madena, Genilaide, Genanel, Madiel, Giilaide, Admalaide, Adiline, Genanline, Giiel, Madmael, Gimalaide, Emivieve, Adilaide, Admalīne, Marmana, Madanlaide, Gieline, Genanlaide, Maranlaide, Adevieve, Madeline, Gievieve, Adena, Madina, Madmalaide, Genmael, Madanlīne, Madivieve, Madanline, Madilaide, Emeel, Marelīne, Emmalaide, Emanvieve, Genelaide, Maranlīne, Gielaide, **Madelaide**, Admana, Geneel, Madeel, Emmavieve, Marmalaide, Maranvieve, Emanlaide, Emelīne, Madanvieve, Maranel, Madmaline, Emanline, Marmalīne, Adiel, Marina, Gianlīne, Genilīne, Adivieve, Marmavieve, Giena, Marmaline, Genelīne, Madmana, Adelīne, Adanna, Emevieve, Gimana, Maranna, Genanlīne, Adanvieve, Adeel, Gimael, Emmana, Adanel, Genmalīne, Genmavieve, Genena, **Geneline**, Gimavieve, Mariline, Marelaide, Emena, Emmalīne, Giilīne, Genmana, Mareline, Adina, Madilīne, Emiel, Marivieve, Giina, Emina, Genmalaide, Gimaline, Madevieve, Gieel, Marilaide, Madmalīne, Madanna, Adanlīne, Gimalīne, Admael, Emelaide, Giivieve, Adanlaide, Madiline, Adilīne, Gianline,

Papa post, “Thank God for Great American’s like Tucker Carlson!”

Glad you have an idea for a restaurant. Glad you are thinking of the future. How’s Wendi? The twins?

Thanks for stopping by, it was good to see you. How’s Merle?

Merle seems like a good sidekick. Strong dog body to push against and get out the door.

Pariah does not bother me all that much at all. It is actually quite freeing. Considering the current climate it is absolution from a great deal of chaos that I finally realize at this point I have studiously sought to avoid. So yes, I accept your offering of pariah status, but now how do we work out a new interface to maintain it, make the new arrangement stick and so forth. I am honestly though. If I am not hurting anyone. I really don’t mind being a pariah at all. It is like Joseph Brodsky with his shake to himself and his typewriter. Thanks to our good friends who far excel us at earning and saving money we have a very affordable third floor rental with glorious light and a fenced in garden below where the girls can run around and we can hang out in the shade and where we’ve planted a little plot of Chard and hot peppers and will soon put the cucumbers in. Esme has a cracking pickle recipe and all last summer served us up garden to table quick pickles thanks to her sturdy legs that didn’t mind the three flights down and three flights up to the garden and the searching, searching, where’s a good one, I thought maybe, oh, my, up there, that one’s huge! Stretch—reach—twist—pull—lean—snap. And then two more smaller ones and pick a couple peppers for the parents and then up, up, up, back up the stairs to wash and chop the cucumbers and toss them in salt and rice vinegar from China to serve as a side that we think goes with pretty much anything, especially in the summer and especially when beer is involved.

The ancient wisdom in organs.

Running code refined or unwound

Over eons

Same messages. Same behavior.

Same meridians, myofascial stiffness.

Allergies, weakness.

And we just accept that we can put knives

inside of us. We can beat death,

Patched together, pushing forward,

Tempting fate where she opposes our good judgement.

Retching at the inflection point where we stretch beyond our moribund form. Warmth to call the worms home to.

Badgered ideas handed over in freezer bags as evidence

like so many organs harvested in motel rooms up Lincoln Avenue—

*The Rodeway Inn*, the *Heart O’Chicago*, the *Diplomat*,

the *O-Mi*, the *Apache,* the *Summit, the Rio.*

Basic no-frill rooms with private bathrooms and cable tv,

colorful lights, wifi and parking,

and of course parking, of course your car can stay for free.

Why write? Honestly why do anything? Passion and vision. Certainty. Lose of faith. Lose of hope.

Understand contingencies. Limitations. Sensitive to all I do not know. Making peace or going to war with language depending on the day.

The banality of its badness. The horror of repeated loops.

The laying bare of how one makes his or her decisions.

The nakedness and embarrassment of honesty. The vulnerability.

She wanted to be home with the kids. She didn’t want to pursue a career. Obviously, this put the pressure of establishing our economic foundation squarely on me. This was tenable. We ended up in a very traditional set up. I left mornings in my suit and took the train downtown to sell expensive watches and other baubles to the successful and the wealthy, the aspiration, and occasionally the moronic and deluded.

Leap year, *Crimson Tide* Destroyer tour, at Thalia hall. Walking away from Thallia hall with the tour bus parked on the side street and the milling crowd took possession of the street corner, the city, the world, we were all here this mild March night, we just heard music performed among people who also really like this music and perhaps who have a history with it. This shadow community of over lapping thoughts and lived experiences. This shadow community of diverse lives led.

The Rao qexperience. How can humans, who are all God’s children end up on completely different sides of things. How do some words radiate with meaning and truth for some people, while for other people do not lack the literacy to understand.

 Some psychologists use this test to examine a person's personality characteristics and emotional functioning. It has been employed to detect underlying [thought disorder](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thought_disorder), especially in cases where patients are reluctant to describe their thinking processes openly.

The **Rorschach test** is a [psychological test](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychological_test) in which subjects' perceptions of [inkblots](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ink) are recorded and then analyzed using [psychological](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychology) interpretation, complex [algorithms](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Algorithm), or both

[apophenia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apophenia), the human tendency to see patterns in nature

And I cannot make myself understood to my mother. And I cannot make her understand that she makes it difficult to be kind to her.

Let just began with a quote by Ralph Waldo Emerson on December 9, 1841…

“The two parties which divide the state, the party of Conservatism and that of Innovation, are very old, and have disputed the possession of the world ever since it was made. This quarrel is the subject of civil history. The conservative party established the reverend hierarchies and monarchies of the most ancient world. The battle of patrician and plebeian, of parent state and colony, of old usage and accommodation to new facts, of the rich and the poor, reappears in all countries and times. The war rages not only in battle-fields, in national councils, and ecclesiastical synods, but agitates every man's bosom with opposing advantages every hour. On rolls the old world meantime, and now one, now the other gets the day, and still the fight renews itself as if for the first time, under *new names* and *hot personalities*.”

**Please enjoy a few definitions from *Brewer’s Book of Phrase and Fable IV addition published London: 1973***

***Trump****.* The word in such phrases as a *trumped up affair*, *trumpery*, etc., is the same words as *trumpet*; from Fr. *trompe*, a trumpet, whence *tromper* which, originally meaning “to play on a trumpet,” came to mean to beguile, deceive, impose upon.

***The last trump.*** The final end of all things earthly; the Day of Judgement.

*We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. – 1 Cor. Xv, 51,52.*

***To play one’s last trump.*** To be reduced to one’s last expedient: a phrase from cardplaying.

***Trumpet.*** *See* Trump *above*.

***To blow one’s own trumpet****.* To publish one’s own praises, good deeds, etc. The allusion is to heralds, who used to announce with a flourish of trumpets the knights who entered a list. Similarly, *your trumpeter* *is dead* means that you are obliged to sound your own praised because no one will do it for you.

*Two poems… related.*

*\* \* \* \**

A nutcracker came to town,

in a burlap cloak and a foil crown—

gilded-spanner in his well-clung grip:

trumpets to blare,

pigeons to seed,

juris doctors to dispatch

to the queen: 4-2C.

And she way out on her balcony—

sniffling and swaying

a babe’s crib-cage,

bellowing below

to the hounds of late day,

who lull and lick thick grasses

grown over graves

dug deep down with the peanuts

in the blood-red clay.

While an eye in a mien

regards all with calm—

a Georgia peach in each palm,

a Georgia peach in each palm.

We here at *Alibris Industries* are after something special here. Something of life itself. Some kind of elixir of existence. Through a combination of techniques both tradition, tried, tested and truly, and more cutting edge and experimental. Using a modern Word processing and programming techniques which has allowed us the ability to simultaneously compose 30 + pieces and 30 + personal letters. The fact that you are reading this at this exact moment is proof of the evolving maturity of the process.

I have found some modern efficiencies. Typing and saving text to file. Deconstructing the process of construction. Doing it all out of order. Or at least not worrying about order. Dating things for reference, but letting themes and topics and whatever else sneaks in to Shanghai my line of thought the construction of whatever is knitting itself together. Embracing my fragmentation. Leveraging my fragmentation. Finding abundance in expression and pressure release. Writing become about subtraction, editing, styling, settling, organizing, the more emotional stuff has been dashed out, discovered. The hard part is over. You got to that place where you were present enough to string a couple of sentences together. This is not something to take lightly or to underestimate. Because if you can find that state consistently and have in place a relatively inertialess editorial processing then you are suddenly transformed from being a frustrated, unproductive, sullen, down on himself writer into a productive, creating, creative, discipline, hopeful, ambitious, momentum building journeyman of words.

Being secure enough in your personality and habits and world view to have the wherewithal t be delighted by the delightful things beyond your normal norm.

A lot of this capacity for delight comes from curiosity, contextualizing, understanding, empathy, recognizing the human and the humane or nature and the natural in the thing— and of course the senses— the senses will tell you much if you let them do their good work and have the mind to give them adequate attention.

Early 20th century Spirituality and New England Transcendentalism has informed this process, as has far easter mysticism and literature. Marijuana has been interlaced throughout as well as vegetarianism, fasting, yoga, and meditation. Stream-of-conscious writing, promiscuous, “  
intuitive” reading and quoting, the *Yellow River* acting as a unifying conduit of the disparate sources and topical fragments.

This process has been inform by Stephen King’s *On Writing*, with his encouragement to pursue stories like an archeologist after an ancient civilization—Dig Lazarus! Dig! Then Jerry Seinfeld arrives to tell me how much to write—consistently!! Seinfeldian Chain! Counting hours and number of Chinese characters in Bejing. Up on the 12th floor smoking Zhong Nan Hai cigarettes on the clothes drying porch watching the sun set to the west where the mountains are obscured by the smog. And then writing for 30 minutes a day and then falling out of it. Not exactly sure why. Thinking back, in this moment, it seems obvious, I was not getting any new input. I was not reading anything in the genre or even watching any shows or films. I wasn’t talking to anyone about the genre. I wasn’t even talking to myself about the story. I was really just trying to squeeze it out, like I had it all in my compacted in a tube of toothpaste, or shoved way up tightly in my colon. I was also, trying to make the most of my time in China and hiding away to write in English seemed a little counter intuitive, a current I couldn’t quite reconcile with the main force of my focus which was inchoately to get my Chinese up to a good enough level to attend graduate school. This ended up sort of panning out. Sort of. In retrospect the best lesson was the simple act of that early attempt to just take the time for a project of my own design, my own making, my own goal setting, trajectory pitching.

I liked how you connected this back to life. This idea that life is truly constructed and edited over time, out of order, the well-situated and the good situation rarely arrange themselves at random. Every glossy shine has a bit of hustle behind it.

Even as a strategy for collecting thoughts, gathering thoughts, attempting to have “long thoughts” even if those thoughts are just collages of thoughts, or quilted together patterns of thoughts, reviews of ideas, words, experiences, etc.

Ultimately we are going for a magnanimous spirit here. Something full of life and life giving. Nourishment. Gilded with the good alchemy of revised writing. My compliments sent out and along a computer tracked gust of wind. The beauty and joy of flowers hand out to people whose day you’d like to make, and you make it. A message sent. A message received. A mood sustained or improved. A wherewithal passed on and on down the line of being.

To do the things I feel compelled to do with language you would really have to have a talent for language. To believe you had such an expansive magnanimous talent would beg belief and betray your low-talking audaciousness. Like that guy in the stone village who built a rustic tower over 30 years by moon light. I am building a tower of words from the materials at hand. By moonlight.

Things may have been very different. Perhaps betsy and I wouldn’t have made it. She might have been less enthusiastic about a Tech husband at that time. When I first met her in college she was already VERY annoyed about having to have a university email account. Perhaps I would have gotten a job in the Wicker Park area and began my Tech career right then and there. There would have been no summers in Florida teaching reading enrichment courses, staying in Berlin those three months, just betsy and I alone without any of our network of friends, no more group hang, and without our families. We were a new family. With Peter. Living in a foreign city. Learning how to live with one another. That was our first apartment together and it was very lovely. High-ceilied and warmed. It felt like a Cabin. After my time at Erik’s cabin, I was now just accepting out of hand that there were many good places to live and that I would find more and more of them as the years progressed. Or Xi’an and the pigeons flying outside in patterns in the smog from our 7th story kitchen. Where the cords behind the refrigerator were all chewed by rats or Xela and an earth quake in bed with the walls rippling in our second lodging after we tried to get away from the flies, or Grand Marais and our time among the Bulgarians and Canadians and Northwoods people, and all those now almost unimaginable unencumbered adventues and experiences in Hunan and Sichuan and Slovakia, Italy, Thailand, Inner Mongolia, the shifting sands, bouncing dance floor in Datong, dumplings by the kilo in a ston village three buses outside of Beijing, remnants of a cultural revolution era bandshell with a faded mural of Mao Ze Dong and a much older tower built from rocks by a man over many decades all by moonlight, and it stands in the town with the ancestral halls and the winding stone walled alleystreets that criss cross between the walled in courtyard dwellings of the villagers. There is a funeral going on in the town and a woman accompanined by muscians shrilling belts out some dirgey subgenre of folk opera. The reverb from the small P.A. system and the narrow stone streets, amplify the surreal, dream-like quality of the singing. Goats feed on the roof of a building built into the hillside on the other side of the main village road that climbs up towards the parking lot near the Mao mural and the main road that we came in on packed into the Bread Bus beyond that.

A man from the ticket window of the village takes us to a woman’s home and she rents us a room with a kang and a wonderful collage of Mao potraits and Cultural Revoltion era propaganda posters and kitsch. All the Mao portaits are strange and fantastic and feel like some sort of art installation, cultish, historic. We pose in chairs like a pair of serious, chaste, dedicated newly wed party red cadets (party cadres).

We visit the tower and pass the funeral singers on our way up towards a small restaurant we had noticed near the bandshell. It is a dumpling restaurant and we have to order dumplings by the ½ kilogram. The dumplings are very inexpensive and we accidently order an obscene number of them— trying to save face and because they are so tasty I eat way too many, filling in any remaining gaps in my digestive track with dumpling shifting pulls of cold, refreshing, light abv. Standard Chinese lager drunk from extremely thin plastic cups that we take turns refilling from the large green bottle between us.

These little communal aspects. Sharing dishes. Sharing bottles. A little bit more intimate. A little bit more connected. Always toast before first drink. Always look each person in the eye as you toast them. The group is attempting to coalesce, connect, establish. Effortless ritual. One of the joys of shared culture are sharing in unconscious behavior (dance, ways of doing things, expressing oneself), shared culture can mitigate a lot of self-consciousness and makes the work of gauging what everyone knows and tailoring your message accordingly much easier, much less conscious, much more automatic and thus more flowing.

The beer washing done and the vinegar and spicy and salt snap of each choptick gripped, dipped, and gobbled up dumpling. When we walk back down the sloping village road, back past the funeral singers, it is completely dark and we light cigarettes in the dark and walk on as two burning points as we descend slowly, stuffed and suddenly almost deliriously sleepy and relaxed. I am painfully full, but also relaxed and light with the beer a and now nicotine drifting up into my head and my metabolism marshalling my long-travel day depleted reserve of strength to begin digesting the compacted mass of floor and cabbage and vinegar and chili oil and low abv. beer currently amassed in my innards.

We make it back to the courtyard and our room and brush our teeth in the courtyard over a red plastic bowl from water from a thermos that the old woman has left for us. We stretch out on the Kang and it is very hard and we are both cold at first, but are soon warm together and asleep.

In the morning the old woman offers to make us breakfast and she maskes us each a delicious bowl of noodles in savory, fragrant broth. We eat the steaming soup in the courtyard with the sun on us, feeling warm and fresh in the late spring. Warm soup, especially in inadequately temperature controlled situations is truly a gift. I really came to appreciate savory soup breakfasts feel like many of the best meals I have every had were taken outside in cool weather, protected from the elements by nothing but a tarp, sitting on a low stool. Maybe this just means I need to eat outside more!

I think the difference, the foreignness, the “gas-lighting” of the normal. It is truly like slipping into another dimension, another reality. Moving through dimensions, seeing other versions of what could be, might have been.

An old woman with a tent constructed of tarps and ropes with a huge cauldron of soup could probably do all right in most places in America if her soup was really good— food handling and health regulations aside.

Did we occasionally have mildly traumatic gastrointestinal episodes as a result of these street food peregrinations— of course, but that too— my goodness, brought some new sensations— the sweats, retching, pushed out of the norm and into the delights and the unsavories of the previously unexplored, beyond your normal norm. Possibly gaining some insight and understanding into the artificialness and plasticity of your normal norm. The possibility of recalibration, adaptation, intentional and nourishing transformational and maintainable cultural creation.

The is no change. There is no reform. There is new. There is only culture change, adaptation, evolution, extension.

GO

And its not just about the work of the ego— the preference tester, the pleasure seeker, field consolidator, PR department (even if just to give lip-serving for what you interpret the world is expecting from you.) The world is expecting certain messages from you. What if you don’t have those messages or you have them, but don’t want to give them up, don’t want to be beholden to the conversation ascribed by the world. You want to avoid what the environment is attempting to subject you to. You want to avoid having your WORLD attacked.

Why are you attacking my world?

Instead of attempting to engage and interface with my WORLD your messages instead seem to be aimed at attacking my WORLD and reiterating your view of its insufficiency.

Our relationship is shallow because we do not often argue politics and religion, because we do not politic each other. Repeating controversial political attacks is not “discussing politics”. Let’s collect our messages and see how they add up.

Do I worry about having a fixed perspective. Do I worry about standing by a particular ideology, defending it, battling for it. Yes, I suppose so, but I’d rather not make it my primary occupation. We have elections don’t we?

That mother fucker is going to say his Presidency had the highest T.V. ratings of any presidency. Is he somehow benefitting from this? He used Media all the way up didn’t he. The New York Post. Fox News. He just got bigger. He had a bigger following. Had better ratings. And could appeal to his base in a very visceral way.

What is the problem here? There is a huge international conspiracy? Yes, its called our global political-economic system. You’d better hope there is some kind of plan/conspiracy…!

China has its Wigars, Tibet ,Taiwan, tenuous human rights, extreme pollution, environmental disasters… it is not fucking easy to achieve the quality of life we have achieved in the west. And we did it on the back of feudal peoples.

Was the foundation of Europe built upon slavery? What is a good book on slavery? Book would learning about slavery be some sort of way to intellectualize myself past ?

It’s 11:15 a.m. The girls are out to Welles Park. Just put on a cd “Supper”. 2003 ain’t that long ago, no?

*Feather by Feather*

Went to Remember the Alamo on 3/15/2019 to see Nancy perform before Sky and Nancy got divorced. **A Failed Attempt**

Ennio Morricone (spaghetti western sound tracks)- jaunty whistle, building up, chorus calls, get along little doggies. The character of Blonde. The Cowboy. Doesn’t talk much, but has a mission. Is match inextricably towards some goal or destiny or just desperately trying to stay ahead of the weather.

**Character:**

*Harry Potter* is all about the Characters. *Game of Thrones* is all about the characters*.* Jin Yongwrites his stories for the characters. He is writing characters. Characters that fit within a certain milieu, of course, but the locus of his art is writing characters for people. Using characters as cyphers through which to feed culture and history and philosophy and story and beauty and ugliness. Shadow play to quicken the flicker and shade of our own being. Whispers of the LOGOS to quicken the depths of our stream. The unconscious or conscious tumult of our own unyielding flow. That repeated image in *The Master* of the wake of the ship in the ocean, turning over and over and over and all the drama and richness of turning over and gazing into even the shallowest depths of the ocean.

The ant hills in Guatemala at the ancient Mayan site of Tikal. The great Zigaurenat towards rising out of the jungle The monkeys congrated in the impossibly high canopy of jungle trees and the wild jungle birds with their digitized bizarre sequences of sudden and prolonged exhultations. And then the ants and their mounds which you could stir up with a stick to reveal hundreds of eggs sacks like little beads of rice and then the aunts would swarm out, straight up your stick and on to you if you didn’t drop it in time and they’d immediately collect all of the sacks and pull them back down below the surface of the soil. The speed with which they accomplished this communal rescue was incredible. The colony was serious about its survival. Aggressively serious. I suppose most creatures don’t appreciate having a stick just slipping in to stir the shit up about one’s situation. Especially if it puts at risk all those things you have been working on and storing for the future. All those things that you had set your value in. Stored you treasure up in are suddenly worthless. The value of the your days and the works of your hands has been undercut, eroded, emptied out, bled white. I am sorry, but everything you’d held most dear is not of absolutely no value at all.

And cannot writing be an act of love? An act of reconciliation- an attempt to rough stitch together the desperation which smells of death and disintegration- surrendering to the larger Gestalt, the holy whole that transcends us, that is the beyond, that is the mystery.

Stephen Malkimus, Dave Berman—

So fucking casual and profound, so fucking casually profound; a negative capability; humorous, pathos filled vignettes, cause life is a little romantic and bewildering and funny and scary and sad and engaging and ultimately al that we have and all that we’ll ever have.

Casket sequence, ecstatic stretching, designed a basic searchable index of strings while taking a shower to cover up the week smell on me before my wife wakes up. So eager to sneak a few more naked stretches in before I throw some clothes on and get writing and coding that I hook the candle on the back of my American Standard with my Tom Ford designer glasses, bowling the candle over and spilling and splattering its resovoir of hot wax all over the walls and the floor before cascading to the floor and shattering on the bathroom tile floor.  
 Watches that came in with shattered crystals, 9 times out of 10 got busted in the bathroom… on the marble.

Exploding stovetop espresso machine when I neglected to put the screen in.

China: rats, pollution dust, pigeons, cigarettes, very cheap and passable beer, very awful and cheap red wine, Cinnamon Girl, alone with the rats with Owen away, Chinese and Chess and Chinese Chess, Bathhouse, Soccer injury- messed up knee, hobbled hippie through Yunnan, returned later with Alex and betsy, after the basketball adventure and before hiking the tiger leaping gorge.

Image timeline, trip illustrator

* Images: location, time, trip point
* Family, friends, language, data structures, UI
* Arriving in Xi’an
* Living in Xi’an
* Traveling to Pingyao and Inner Mongolia and northern Shaanxi(Yulin, Yanan- dry river, very dry, cave dwellers. Carvings. Barren, expressive land.)
* Chengdu with betsy by train (hardseat there? Sleeper back? Indian food then getting on the train and feeling much more prepared, much more appointed than on the way out. )
* Henan with Sean and Todd and Owen and betsy
* My parents visiting with my siblings
* Traveling to Yunnan
* Traveling to Beijing
* Traveling to California
* Then Minnesota
* Then Guatemala
* Then Chicago
* Then back to China Beijing.
* Then to Chicago (Valparaiso)
* Then Chicago
* Then Children

Cloistered times: Erik’s cabin prepping for the LSAT, writing in Florida, Xi’an studying, Beijing studying Chinese and writing and then preparing for the GRE, year at Valparaiso, COVID-19 year writing and learning to code.

Tipping the Candle: When your practice needs practice

Happanstance. Intuitive development; article about experiential self-exploratory career types.

TECH

5 years ago we made ribs and watched “, [*A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Girl_Walks_Home_Alone_at_Night)*–* (a film that is widely regarded as the "first Iranian vampire western)

At some point in hanging out, after firing my brain up with a lemming run of THC free radicals I jabbered and jabbered about some idea that I had for a language learning app. I had no idea what I was talking about. I was trying to articulate an intuition. I had no idea how to begin heading in that direction with any sort of effect. At that point I knew nothing about programming or screen display or databases or web hosting. I just had this intuition that I wanted to learn how to use digital tools better and with a less fraught way. I wanted to understand them as TOOLS and not just a mazy collection half- understood commands and techniques. I wanted to internalize these tools— their ubiquity meant that escape was impossible. Leaving us with either the path of avoidance or the path of competency and acceptance. My mother has a way of conflating challenge. Like the grind of digitizing medical records gets talked about within the context of its dehumanizing and impersonalizing affect, completely over shadowing the incredible power and potential of having a streamline base of individuals health information—issues, treatments, outcomes… in theory it seems like there would be some really incredible information that would arise out of this. Potentially creating efficiencies that far out-strip the aggravation of the transition process. This was also a process that was happening right at the end of my mother’s career, which is never a good time to jump on board with something. Doing the work for something you will never see the full benefit of. That’s never fun. Kind of like parenting. But she would apocalyptically start railing on her worldview which was unpinned by the seeming inevitability of an multinational new world order in which the world unifies under one Government under the rule of the anti-Christ.

I have a couple of issues with this. Firstly, if this is something that is fated, then what is the point of dithering about it. Secondly, if you oppose it or feel threatened by it or emotionally disturbed by it aren’t you kind of just resisting God’s plan?

Is not Trump an ANTI-CHRIST figure for the right. I mean, according to Revelation, everyone will love the ANTI-CHRIST. Though, you know, maybe not everybody. Politics are tricky. Let’s say at least a highly contentious majority really like the ANTI-CHRIST and quite possibly like a majority of the main Christian faithful. Which raises another question about how will everyone’s judgement be so poor, how will they be following the HOLY SPIRIT and still not be able to recognize the ANTI-CHRIST? Is that because its part of God’s plan, opening up the possibility that the HOLY SPIRT does not always reveal ultimate truth, but is still an agent of ultimate reality.

This battle of good and evil is a powerful way to get behind language. If you buy into this mindset then yes, everything is either GOOD or EVIL. Everything is a spiritual battle. Angels and Demons battling for each and every soul at every single minute. But wait are we in this long, great apocalyptic arch, or are we really just caught in these minor eddies, this microaggressoins where the trajectory of our personal apocalypse is being constantly negotiated and wrangled over, unless… unless we regularly go to mass, eat Jesus actually physical BODY and drink his actual physical BLOOD. And Jesus is the son of GOD. God impregnated a human woman with himself while also remaining present everywhere.

I think the brilliance of the trinity is that it does recognize the importance of our BODY, our MIND, and our SOUL. Our JESUS is our BODY, the HOLY SPIRIT is out MIND, GOD is our SOUL. Is this a spiritual robust conception, yes. Is it incredibly confusing and non-logical (frankly impossible, magical, transcendent). Getting over this initial skepticism to enter into the rich symbolic realm of the Catholic tradition—the many facets cut and developed over the centuries to enhance the light and support and love of its followers. This is a beautiful thing. It is a stumbling block for me that embracing Catholicism comes at the denial of the legitimacy of all other religious experiences. Relegating them to pagan or misguided, or arrogant or selfish or narrow. Especially, if this position is approached aggressively and punitively. Especially given that we live in a society with a very real an important universal culture carved out by our constitution and our shared lives as Americans and Westerners which grants each and everyone of us the right to pursue his or her own inspiration, conscience, experience, learning, relationships. This past year has impressed upon the importance of that distinction. These freedoms and the checks and balances of our government and the integrity of our institutions more deeply than ever had settled into the bedrock of apprehension of this life.

You ask me for a conviction that I cannot fake. When I do not fake you call me arrogant and ignorant and self-isolating.

Activity focusing and tracking app. My outlook had used outlook in the past and then outlook crashed on my computer and it had too many contingencies and features. All I wanted was a place where I could keep my address and phone numbers updated and track who I connected with and when. It help ground the my kind scattered mind and ground my weary middle-aged, life is passing me by, fluttering by like calendar pages in the wind, a freight train headed straight for the Rockies and I ain’t even got a ticket to stamp or anything.

And Pete and Ellie at the bowling alley. And Pete who had been so against the war is suddenly okay with “these little wars.” And we are off to China and our friend collection is collapsing. We know each other. Lets have some beers. Let’s roll some balls. But all shit has been burned to the ground.

The Bowling alley and hardware store burnt down and they put in a day care. And McDonalds got a refresh, and Lincoln Square gentrified on even without the pigeon man uncomfortably sitting on fire hydrant covered in pigeons.

And the cold. And waiting for buses and waiting for trains. And wandering. Walking. Under the highway. My pants ripped. A big huge rip in my pants. Feeling self-conscious at the birthday party. Feeling self-conscious and increasing drunk and stone at the guys basketball game hang, and then walking home with my pants increasingly shredded along damen and under the underpasse with the Rod Blagoivich big plaster decal thing, and being done with my program and having no idea at all what I was up to or where I was going or what sort of work I wanted to do. I suppose this is the curse of a write. Or the curse of even having the writerly ambition. Unless you are gifted with a really clear vision of what you want to write, which is perhaps an added requirement to write. Not just have the impulse to write, but also have the vision of what you want to write and some level of understanding of what you are writing. For example I am currently working on a project in which I am laying out and developing my base as a write. Developing a process which is now entering its 9th month. I have often experienced a proud change in my knowledge and ability and systematic engagement with an endeavor around the one year or one year and a half milestone. This gives me great hope that as I stick with this writing process and I have stuck with it I will be able to follow it forward through my working, creating, living life, no longer feeling frustrated and off track. That is my ultimate desire here, to find a way to work and write that is not self-destructive or self-defeating, but rather life affirming, life organizing, life creating, life memorializing, life catalyzing.

At present the process feels a little out of control. I am about 1200 pages behind in my write hand portion of the process and an infinite number of pages behind in old digital journals that I have ambitions to mine over time. There is a tone of work to do. And a lot of it is boiling things donw and a lot of it is ranting things out. I want this process to be collage like. Having collected my material over time, in stray moments of attention or inspiration, engagement or distraction.

Thanking all the people who have at one time or another been a literary pillar, a sounding block, a presence and collection of interests and talents and good humor and shared symbols and memories that my own life takes shape against.

What is the Gestalt chair therapy?

There is this lingering fear now that I have gotten somewhere with coding. Why am I still writing? I don’t have a coding job yet. Just give the writing a rest for a little bit. Get a salary. Some benefits. Start accruing some goddman vacation. But instead you are taking an unplanned three day binge down the rabbit hole of your journals from 15 years ago to strip mine pathos and poem lines your probably just edit away as you pan the material out of the river over time.

05/12/2021

05/25/2021

Wings and brandy on a winter’s night, I guess you wouldn’t call it a scene.

I am freaking out. Lifting up the couch. Bear hugging the cup chair and slamming my head into the cushion and then I collapse and the mental breakdown seems to subside. I am calm. None of this seems like such a big deal anymore. I will write or I will not. I will code or I will not. It is all truly out of my power to order it all and get it to line up, flow.

Later in the day my mother sends betsy and I an image of a curry she made from garden vegetables. The text exchange is full of caveats and unnecessarily overexplained motivations. She assures us that the vegetable picture is not an ego thing, she just wants to share the image with us because it made her think of us and that she loves us and thinks fondly of us when they are living their life. After 42 years of this emotional delintion I feel exhausted. I feel distant. Why does even a picture of cooked vegetables turn into this emotional turmoil and over explanation.

Later she texts me something that is in her mind, maybe, find of encouraging, but comes across as pessimistic, and patronizing, basically telling me that I “continue in their prayers for God’s leading your employment. The Holy Spirit is there to lead by invitation--- just so you know (kissy face emoji).”

I call her back and both try to explain to her that all the meta intentional explanation about the photo is not necessary. We like to see her images and are well acquainted with the custom of texting an image to another person. I am sending you a dick pick. It is not an ego thing though. It is really just that I want to fuck and wanted to give you some insight into the member that I am proposing to do it with. And then I shift to “The Holy Spirit is there to lead by invitation--- just so you know (kissy face emoji)”… I think it is the ‘just so you know’ that made me feel so bad. Obviously, I know. Also, obviously I have not been to Chuch in 24 years. Also, obviously the fact that I am not a Catholic or an Ultra Right Wing Republican I have some challenges getting into the flow of my family culture. I try to break this down for her. How both her approach and her continued implication that the underlying problem in my life is not the fact that I am 42 years old and working my ass off to jump industries while attempting to keep domestic peach with a 2 year old, a 6 year old and a 40 year old wife who has recently fallen into either a massively depression or has embarked a bit early on her journey into menopause.

I would also like to add that her call to the holy spirit is specifically a Catholic one. When I attempt to discuss this with her when I call her she is of course defensive and while she concedes that she did have the thought that I wouldn’t like or I would be offended by it or take issue with it our of arrogance. My mother over the years has kept up a consistent drum beat of messaging that my lack of Catholic faith stems from above all else my own personal arrogance.

As I struggle though the days here trying to marshal enough emotional wherewithal to push through the incredibly soul shredding inertia of meeting the girls needs and meeting betsy’s needs just to get to that right silence of concentration, learning, composition.

That state has the succor. The state is where I have laid my miles of track this year. That state has brought me to my absolute best place with writing and coding. On top of this I lost 30 lbs. this year by changing my diet and replacing running as my go-to physical-mental ballast with an eclectic Yoga practice. I am back to my high school proportions. My body fat is way done. My arms feel strong. I have found success working out the inevitable pain that the subtly cruel office contortions cultivate in my upper back and shoulders and neck. Maryjajuana has been a huge guide in my eclectic Yoga practice. Certainly has been a conduit for reaching some deeper states of physicality, mentality, spirituality(?). Getting lost in stretching session, calmly following the subtle body. Searching our pain, strain, tension whether from overuse or disuse of whatever.

06/01/2021

I will concede that some of my deep distaste for having to listen to detailed plans for rereleasing *I don’t know where here is* on vinyl for its 20th anniversary (which if you haven’t been keeping track is only three years off). May be I should stop right here. Maybe the fact that this guy just dominated the bulk of our time hanging out together filling me in on this thing that might happen sometime, no date or season specified possibly three years from now to commemorate something that had had twenty years ago that even at that time I had only desired a tenuous connection to.

The idea of the guys getting together and doing stuff and talking and being in cointact really did warm my heart. And I could tell that more than anything this is what he really was into. The connect, the project, the productive brainstorming sessions. Thinking and working in a way that he enjoyed with people that he enjoyed working with with a mission or a project that was mutually meaningful to all involved. That is powerful shit… unless you are not really involved, don’t plan on being involve outside of showing up fashionably late and leaving early to the show which may or may not happen in three years when I may or may not eve be living in Chicago, because I have been out of work for a year and have been going through a process, not unproductive, in which a lot of my past self has been stripped away, cleaned from the bone, or is in a fast moving process heading in that direction. The blast-fire kerosence whine of 2020, Daugher daddy Kobe dead in LA. My oldest niece is named Gianna. She lost her hearing as a baby possibly as a reaction to the MMR vaccine. Her poor hearing has always made he very attentive to people’s faces, their expressions, reading their lips. She’s Papa’s favorite and is easy to have around and sweet and reminds everybody of her mother sweet Beth who was quiet and easy to have around as a kid. And who now as an adult has 6 children and would have 8 if not for have lost a set of twins very late in her pregnancy ten years ago. A few years back she had a bad kidney removed and really probably shouldn’t be getting pregnant anymore. But she did this year and had her 8th daughter (6th surviving). Sweet Beth’s daughter’s all have very elaborate, multisyllabic names.

The girl’s actual names are:

I wrote a Ruby program to generate all of the possibilies that Sweet Beth and Adam will potentially scramble them into as they shout up and down the stairs of their comfortable, if thin walled home on Indian Trail Lane.

Gianalaide…

Papa post, “Thank God for Great American’s like Tucker Carlson!”

Glad you have an idea for a restaurant. Glad you are thinking of the future. How’s Wendi? The twins?

Thanks for stopping by, it was good to see you. How’s Merle?

Merle seems like a good sidekick. Strong dog body to push against and get out the door.

Pariah does not bother me all that much at all. It is actually quite freeing. Considering the current climate it is absolution from a great deal of chaos that I finally realize at this point I have studiously sought to avoid. So yes, I accept your offering of pariah status, but now how do we work out a new interface to maintain it, make the new arrangement stick and so forth. I am honestly though. If I am not hurting anyone. I really don’t mind being a pariah at all. It is like Joseph Brodsky with his shake to himself and his typewriter. Thanks to our good friends who far excel us at earning and saving money we have a very affordable third floor rental with glorious light and a fenced in garden below where the girls can run around and we can hang out in the shade and where we’ve planted a little plot of Chard and hot peppers and will soon put the cucumbers in. Esme has a cracking pickle recipe and all last summer served us up garden to table quick pickles thanks to her sturdy legs that didn’t mind the three flights down and three flights up to the garden and the searching, searching, where’s a good one, I thought maybe, oh, my, up there, that one’s huge! Stretch—reach—twist—pull—lean—snap. And then two more smaller ones and pick a couple peppers for the parents and then up, up, up, back up the stairs to wash and chop the cucumbers and toss them in salt and rice vinegar from China to serve as a side that we think goes with pretty much anything, especially in the summer and especially when beer is involved.

The ancient wisdom in organs.

Running code refined or unwound

Over eons

Same messages. Same behavior.

Same meridians, myofascial stiffness.

Allergies, weakness.

And we just accept that we can put knives

Inside of us. We can beat death,

Patched together, pushing forward,

Tempting fate where she opposes our good judgement.

More accurate than polls

Quicker than cancer

A Charlatan with his compelling calls to come to the cabinet and collect the breaths of the callers from where they call in from in the far-off night— there are goods and there are bads.

And he writes with the confidence of *yes, we too shall know something of the other*.

Father’s sternness, mother’s storms.

Retching at the inflection point where we stretch beyond our moribund form.

Warmth to call the worms home to.

Badgered ideas handed over in freezer bags as evidence

like so many organs harvested in motel rooms up Lincoln Avenue—

*The Rodeway Inn*, the *Heart O’Chicago*, the *Diplomat*,

the *O-Mi*, the *Apache,* the *Summit, the Rio.*

Basic no-frill rooms with private bathrooms and cable tv,

colorful lights, wifi and parking,

of course parking, your car stays for free.

Why write? Honestly why do anything? Passion and vision. Certainty. Lose of faith. Lose of hope.

Understand contingencies. Limitations. Sensitive to all I do not know. Making peace or going to war with language depending on the day.

The banality of its badness. The horror of repeated loops.

The laying bare of how one makes his or her decisions.

The nakedness and embarrassment of honesty. The vulnerability.

She wanted to be home with the kids. She didn’t want to pursue a career. Obviously, this put the pressure of establishing our economic foundation squarely on me. This was tenable. We ended up in a very traditional set up. I left mornings in my suit and took the train downtown to sell expensive watches and other baubles to the successful and the wealthy, the aspiration, and occasionally the moronic and deluded.

Leap year, *Crimson Tide* Destroyer tour, at Thalia hall. Walking away from Thallia hall with the tour bus parked on the side street and the milling crowd took possession of the street corner, the city, the world, we were all here this mild March night, we just heard music performed among people who also really like this music and perhaps who have a history with it. This shadow community of over lapping thoughts and lived experiences. This shadow community of diverse lives led.

The Rao qexperience. How can humans, who are all God’s children end up on completely different sides of things. How do some words radiate with meaning and truth for some people, while for other people do not lack the literacy to understand.

 Some psychologists use this test to examine a person's personality characteristics and emotional functioning. It has been employed to detect underlying [thought disorder](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thought_disorder), especially in cases where patients are reluctant to describe their thinking processes openly.

The **Rorschach test** is a [psychological test](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychological_test) in which subjects' perceptions of [inkblots](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ink) are recorded and then analyzed using [psychological](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychology) interpretation, complex [algorithms](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Algorithm), or both

[apophenia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apophenia), the human tendency to see patterns in nature

And I cannot make myself understood to my mother. And I cannot make her understand that she makes it difficult to be kind to her.

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Phlegmatic

Mete out punishment

“With what measure you mete, shall be measured to you again.

Yield is a world that can both imply a capitulation as well as an act of production. Giving one’s self over to the process. Losing one’s self in the process. Losing one’s self in life. Yield can mean give way. And it can imply that something is giving way under force or pressure. “He reeled into the house as the door yielded”. Another meaning of yield is to produce though. The health of a harvest. The size of a nuclear detonation.

Words don’t have to mean anything, but they can mean everything.

Dynamic Fuck Lessons

*\* \* \* \**

Was awoken

by a snarling visage—

would be remiss

not to admit

that I don’t miss him.

But if you do

just happen to

run into

you know who…

Take a kiss for me,

or more explicitly—

my ass.

In fact,

don’t ask—

just grab hold of his genitals.

Then! Dive right in all lecherously fumbling.

Shove your old Gene Simmons

directly down his gullet!

Savor the moment in full,

then blissfully, drooly let go.

Thank him for his service,

his oh-so-precious time,

for whipping up a miracle—

salad dressing from ancestral wine.

Insert the notes on the rest of the letter… this should pull together pretty quickly. I feel like if I can just get a couple of letters completed. Pull the arch all the way around on a few of these projects I will feel much more solidly with my feet beneath me.

This is the personal part where I could pull out some of the best bits from the notes thus far…

North Center, Chicago neighborhoods, home place names, glad suburban generic development names were not a big part of my childhood linguistic mise-en-scene. They probably wouldn’t seem so mysterious now—titles anointing very special places, trumpeting their specialness by the resplendency of the name.

A name is a very interesting message. It is something that can come loaded or not. I suppose for a brand name the advertising provides a good bit of the loading. The gaslighting, the framing, the negative capability of the brand to reach out and connect with every significant aspect of a persons life. Contributing to the robustness of one’s WORLD as they battle against the hardness and challenge of the ENVIRONMENT.

How do you point out absurdity and vapidness and gaslighting without sounding like a crotchety old crank? Try not to be mad about it? Perhaps admit that the world is in fact not conspiring against you linguistically. That new developments need names. And that according to credible sources like the bible naming things is one of the most direct expressions of our close connection to the deity. He makes stuff. We name it. We are like Susan Golland at the field museum pulling together profession and standardized labels for the wonders of this earth.

And maybe this is how we enter the LOGOS. We just start naming things. And we try to do it honestly and sensibily and intuitively—the names have to feel right.

Children jump straight into the LOGOS. Helena had no problem taking over for Adam in naming things, even duplicating some of his work where another word struck her as more expedient. *Elephant*  as we know it became *Bum-Bum*; Our *cat* who is named Marcelwas rechristened *Niao*; Her is became *Ya*; Competition or being finished was expressed as *Ga*.

She felt very comfortable with her naming role. She did so freely and charismatically. Pulling us into her syntax and wavelength. She just started grabbing things around her and started building context.

Cultural elements are like LEGO. Some people keep the plans and keep all the elements placed according to the plans. Some people just let all their bricks mingle. Some people meticulously create their own constructions. Some people lose their bricks—in the coach, down the drain, the dog chews the shit out of them. These bricks are neglected.

Where are these bricks. They are stacked against our walls on our bookshelves in collapses into our infinite libraries of unmoored musical peregrinations. There bricks are in our conversations and on our plates and in the very way we move about the world—the mode, the attitude.

I do not have much more to add to my bricks musings at the moments other than at 42 I would like to acknowledge the deep importance of culture. It is so damned slippery and I hardly know what I am talking about or thinking about, but it is a meaning creation and negotiation system, a relationship of symbols and values that acts as an interface for shared experiences and creating opportunities to expand of bigness in the LOGOS. This idea being that we are either expanding our exposure to the LOGOS or we are walling ourselves off, no new input, all names are static.

But how can we create something new? New combinations? New amalgamations? I don’t really know. What has made the writing I have done this year different than in the past is that I feel much more resigned to having zero idea of where I am going here with any given piece. I am trying to escape the didactic bludgeoning of the ideologically rigidity and narrowness of my inherited culture. In a word I am trying to expand in the LOGOS.

Pressed on my relationship to God I quote from XXX about God.

Laurel jumps in and races ahead of me with the verse quote. To what? Emphasize how familiar she is with these words? The implied piety of verse memorization.

Has been a gorgeous blue sky and billowy, pillow cloud kind of day, Helena— now 2 and a robust towheaded brute— and I are out in the yard and she is ambling over inquisitively toward our small garden plot, bee-lining, in fact, straight at a recently planted maroon and forest-green shock of leaf-blades.

“Do NOT pick my Chard!” I preemptively scold, nearly adding “or I will spank your bottom,” though I do not ultimately add that last part because I know how deadly serious I am, and I sense how deeply uncomfortable it would feel to threaten a child with violence over a salad.

Little backstory, recently she has been insisting on picking the buds and leaves off all of our botanicals almost as fast as we plant them. I, being somewhat more experienced with these kinds of things, find this approach to gardening messy and self-defeating.

We had a similar difference of opinion just the other day about whether or not it was appropriate to re-pot a goodly amount of loamy topsoil into my tantalizingly sweating mason jar of chilled water.

Years ago, before I had kids, I was once at a brunch get-together at Phil’s, and I observed Nathan Nordlund being a little short with one of his girls over some issue with a cup of orange juice or something. At the time I remember feeling kind of surprised at how impatient or even almost unkindly he was addressing his angelic little Tomte of a child. *Maybe, he’s having a particularly stressful day,* I had thought at the time. Now I realize he definitely was having at least a partially stressful day because, you know, he had children and he was likely NOT being mean to his child at all, but was, in fact, exerting incredible, if not saintlike patience, artfully teasing out, expanding just a bit further the reservoir of that most precious of parental commodities, that greedily gobbled up resource, that well before this cup of juice or even this very morning had been plied and pulled and stretched as thin as a gossamer shroud though still somehow holding— together and true through some miraculous act of superhuman effort. Love?

I also now realize that our children are in essence sociopaths that we have been charged with by fate to reform as penance for our own past, if not present, sociopathic behavior. Which is certainly not to say don’t have children, but just, you know, that if you do, you should brace yourself… for love.

Last day of pre-school for Esme. Make crepes with mangoes. Box of 12 picked up for 4 dollars up on Devon, Indian food for father’s day after hanging at a forest preserve off Western on that big swathe of space from Daen to Western (half mile and Bryn Mawr up to Peterson (is that another half mile too? Mango Lassi at that Pakistani restaurant. So inexpensive, so delicious. Mango Lassi, bottles of Coke, spicy and savor and sweet, so hungry after a long day bussing to the country side and hanging out on the river and joggin with Mike up into the hills and smoking a little weed and getting a little sunny and trail happy and coming across that enormous Preying Mantis that on closer inspection was in the process of consuming a still quite large though way smaller preying mantis. And that little stone hovel, that was obviously manmade and had a door on it. A hermitage? A shepherd’s refugee? Back at the river we order a rabbit dish and the amount of time it takes for them to emerge with the rabbit it is obvious that this rabbit was killed fresh. The tuft of fur in on the dish also alludes to this fact.

Listening to Phish on a sunny Big Cloud day. Typing away in my office with time and space to concentrate. Making that sweet, sweet incremental progress. Stretching a bit more each day. Almost imperceptibly… perhaps not at all, but then I look back and everything has changed out from under me. The rhythms of the day have transformed, the patterns and connections and communications have collapsed. The revolving orbit of venturing out and returning , the around and round orbit of earth, that sweet, sweet three hundred and sixty degree completeness. Around the sun, around an issue, a topic, and idea, a system, a process. The holiness of balance and order and safety. All praise the sun. All praise the restoring waters all around.