Dear Aaron and Cauleen,

Octavia Butler

New Year’s meal, warm and almost drowsy well fed and whiskied and worked through the holiday season. Family, settling, being, openness. Gather round, gather round.

Retail drone, worn straight through. It is only now, a year out of that weariness and have spent a good amount of the last 8 months alone in a room writing or coding that the horror of all of this is truly setting in.

William Bird

Conflicted about language. What am I doing? Economic? Artisit? Personal? Fear? Bravery? What the fuck is going on?

Family culture.

Do language.

Mad glee, power of language, articulation, access to stories and ideas, humor, all of this is wrapped up in language.

Still don’t really know what I am doing, but am feeling better about it. We play with language in a way that is natural and fun and

10/25/2020

Blustery 40 degree day in Chicago. Sunny. Mid-morning we hit up a pre-school friend’s sidewalk birthday party in Edgewater on the narrow sidewalks with the buildings zcrawling slowly year by year into the strret. Edgewater strees where the builds are tall and close and the blocks feel dense, lively. Close with life.

Next up: Hallowween: betsy has whipped up a Totoro costume for 20 onth old Helena- she looks like a round, blue lump, like a cuddly paperweight; Esme has a Kiki’s delivery service inspired constome: black wig, black dress, red bow, broom stick. It’s a Miyazaksi Halloween.

Watched Cauleen films on line on our 200 inch projected screen. The projector seemed like a weird sort of splurge, but it has reinvigorate my interest in film!! It’s been way too lung since I have been to see a film on a screen larger than 32 inches… and that’s sad… I do love a good visual image. But I will admit I have strugged as a working adult to order the image intact in my life. In fact I have felt frankly digitally dislocated. Something about he ubiquity of options. The intensely dissected intention and wherewithal.

I am inspired. I am also a little stone. But it is not just being stoned that has me inspired. October 2020 was a monolithically personal month. Essentially feel like I steeped through some sort of portal to firmly arrive in my life, in the here and now. There was a ritual involved. A process. I took notes and had a soundtrack. There were snacks and libations. Rituals. Occasional candles and open fires were involved. I chanted. Strummed. Hummed. Meditated. STRETCHED. Read. Wrote. Copied. Reviewed. Jotted. Opened files. Consolidated. Deleted. And along the way I feel I have moved to a new place in my life. A more settled place. A less conflicted place. A clearer seeing place. A more hopeful place. A kinder place. A more patient place. A more loving place. And I have discovered and settled into practices that promise to help me stay grounded in this good, settled, focused, fruitful place … and I am so grateful. This year has had so many challenges and a lot of year has been about mitigating those challenges. This has really allowed us to strip things down and open up time to pursue new directions, new thoughts, new patterns. My “enlightenment” is merely a righter alignment of my values and internalized expectations and appetite for risk. I know how I need to work and I accept the responsibility to do that work, wrestle with the questions I have, the limitations I have. I know that I must know myself— I know that I must anticipate my false steps. I need to get ahead on somethings and pull back on some others. I need more flow. Parenting has made this a challenge. Being deeply embedded in a career that cut so coarsely against my grain has impeded me. Financial constraints have impeded me. This year has answer all of those questions, or at least laid down pathways to approach them.

Run on after some new dawn.

Gaping ahead at its fiery defection.

Meadow fawn: her soft, dewy pelt,

Golden heather, golden sinew

Breath of life, ever dawning light.

My foray into tech has thankfully unwritten much of this hope. I am going to be able to use thse newly acquired tech skills to transition to a solid gig in the tech sector before our savings and unemployment benefits run out. It was seeming a little audacious at first, but after 1000 hours (clocked on a timeclock program I wrote back in May) and 1500 + pages of notes on Ruby, JavaScript, CSS, HTML, Emmet, Rails, Node.js, servers, databases (MySQL, NOSQL, SQL) etc… it seems possible. All it took was just just emploding upon myself. My wife has been very understanding about it. To bolster my psyche and truly move through to a new state and frame of mind I have been working hard to chronicle the process and utilize my increased wherewithal to write by writing anything and everything that I feel like writing. It has been a very interesting project of purusing artistic creation through stream-of-conscious engagement slipped in between intensive periods of technical study. Much of the writing has been emotional and has focused on my family and this wildly fraught year. I have written without expectation or intention beyond simply expressing in a full and robust way, my experience of this year with a hope of gaining a deeper understanding of my writing instinct, my writing process, how to use my writing as a unifying tool in life. As a tool to settle my thoughts and emotions. Organize my studying, organize my memory, bo0lster my memory, connect me to my family, navigate the complicated relationship that I have with my Family with mirros my complicated relationship with conservative America in general. I am having to steal time away from coding to write this and it makes me worry that the same old conflicted madness will rob me of my coding and writing joy. My work as an artist is to make sure that this does not happen. It is to preserve this joy which is the golden center of my being and the only hope I have a sustained bliss in this red dust existence.

05/25/2021

Stretching, yoga, Rolfing, exercise bike, stretch bands, hand weights, ropes, a balance cube, and our home grown 30 lbs. and 50 lbs. weight set. A workout set so ingenious it chases you around begging you to pick it up, whining at you, screaming, crying, sometimes in public to embarrassing effect, okay, okay, I will work out, I will like and hold, lift and hold.

There is very little synergy between computer work and small children. They do not stimulate complimentary muscle groups nor do they generally demand similar wavelengths of concentration, wherewithal, etc. And each discrete party seems to take special pleasure in depleteing the wherewithal for the one with engagement with the other. My typing makes my arms weak. The girls feel heavy. The girls shatter my concentration. My typing feels really hard to get into sometimes. Oh, but then the buzz of a good flow!!!