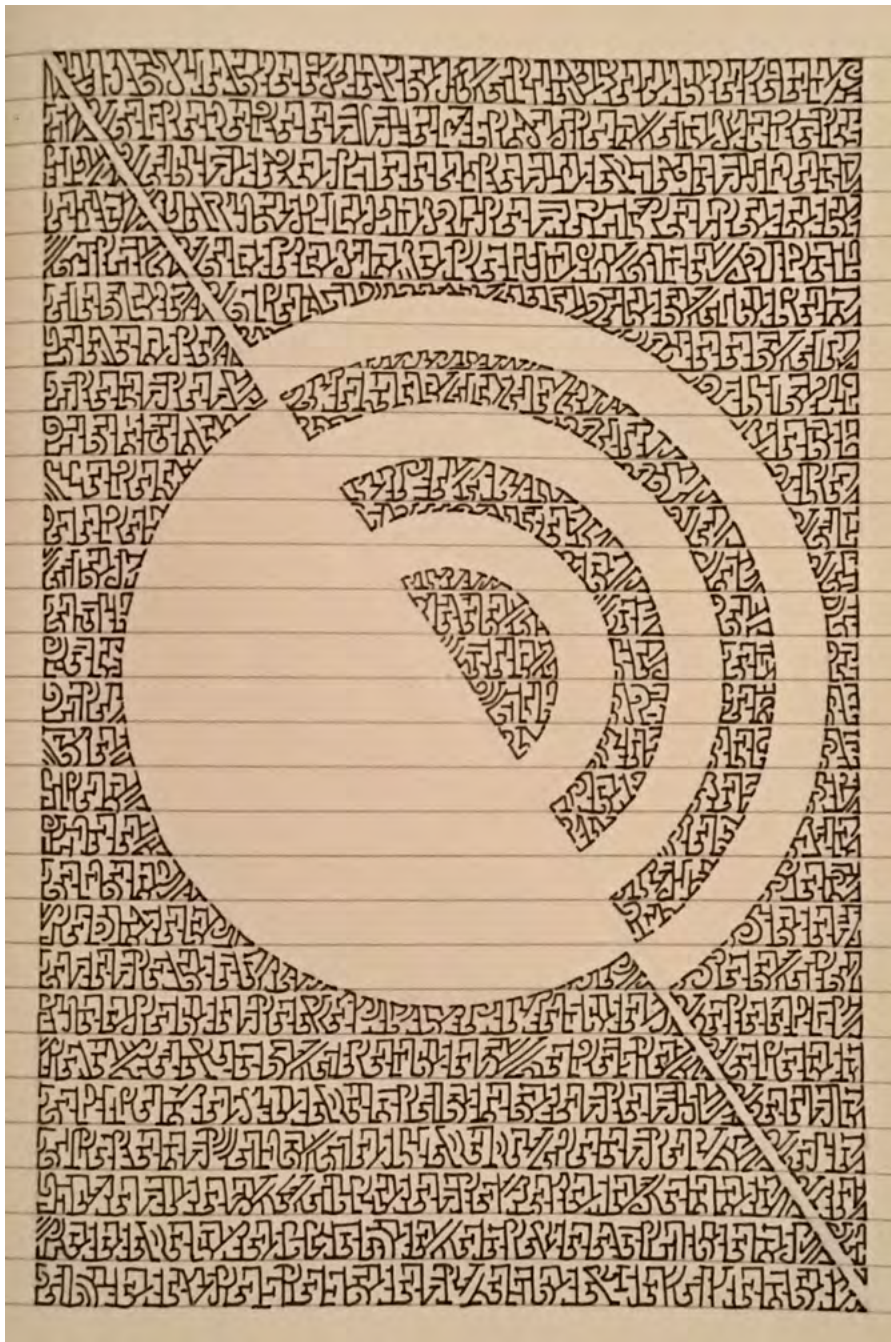


STREET CAKE

experimental writing magazine

issue 78 part 2



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issue 78

part 2

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Yell at my Mom

Tom has the job that just about everyone views as the bottom of the barrel: night shift burger flipper at the local branch of one of the several indistinguishable international burger conglomerates.

An application on a whim suddenly turned into Tom being the senior most junior associate. The night shift meant he got an extra quarter an hour. Tom couldn't wait to one day take a big sack of quarters and just throw handfuls of them into a swamp. In the meantime, rent and bottom-shelf vodka weren't as cheap as they used to be. Tom didn't know who to blame for that, and he thought anyone who claimed to know were dumber than a box of rocks.

Tom always thought he'd meet someone at work and fall in love and then they'd move somewhere exotic like New Mexico and joke about how they used to flip burgers until they day they told the manager he was dumber than a box of rocks on their way out the door.

Gayle, the woman who worked the drive through window, was all right. Looks-wise she wasn't exactly the Tom special, but if he could be less lonely for even a little while, he thought that would be great.

Gayle didn't take any shit from the endless knuckleheads in the three A.M. drive thru. Tom would hear her giving them the business, and he'd smile imagining Gayle arguing with his mother, explaining to her for Tom that they were happy in New Mexico and never coming back.

Tom hadn't asked Gayle out because he felt weird about dating someone from work, even though he only really knew people from work. He wanted to be sure she was a perfect match first.

"Hey Gayle."

"Hey Tom."

"Let me ask you something."

"Okay, shoot."

"What do you think of New Mexico?"

She laughed behind her glasses.

"You always ask the most ridiculous things."

Making her laugh was good. He could see through the laughter that she understood what was important. A few shifts later, Tom talked to her again.

“Hey Gayle.”

“Hey Tom.”

“Let me ask you something.”

“Okay, shoot.”

“Do you think the manager is dumber than a box of rocks?”

She giggled. “Who even says things like that. Weirdo.”

But maybe he could be her weirdo. He was almost ready.

“Hey Gayle.”

“Hey Tom.”

“Let me ask you something.”

“Okay, shoot.”

“Do you think you could argue with a boyfriend’s mother, if you had to?”

She furrowed in concentration. “Well, I think I probably could, but I don’t think that’ll ever happen.”

“Really – why?”

“Because I’ll only have girlfriends.”

When Tom’s mother asked him, with an impatience that drove him crazy, if he’d asked out the girl he liked at work yet, he said no, and explained that burger flipping wasn’t a good place to meet women. He left out that when he found someone, he’d be on the first flight to New Mexico.

Email Scraps

Thanks for doing this!

How do you mitigate fear?

I hope he can be trusted.

Well, he can be challenging in an interesting way.

We could go there, but I would rather wait until we can go to Washington.

We're so glad you could join us.

Got it! Thanks!

Thank you for your interest.

You are now a member.

I wish I had let it go to voicemail.

I love living near the mountains.

I am not prepared.

They changed their phone number.

Every movie is political.

Thank you for your suggestions and explanations.

Linda left.

It was an overreaction. She realized she didn't have their support.

Yes, I moved away.

I love seeing pictures, though.

Are they still waiting?

Everyone pities the woman.

But she's so happy when she is validated.

What a tremendous walk!

No rush or strain.

During a quiet solo morning.

They removed me from the group.

But it was a learning moment.

I thought it was wonderful!

At least they should always be careful.

There's merit in seeking information.

Or at least having a conversation.

Because you're a leader and a role model now.

I will assist everyone.

I think love is revolutionary.

Thank you, my dear.



UK Government

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] you cannot

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] discuss [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] step [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] home.

Certain [REDACTED] people [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] can [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] neither you nor any of your household [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] is [REDACTED] Chief [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]


If you live in England go to [REDACTED]


[REDACTED] Scotland go to [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Wales go to [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Northern Ireland go to [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] other languages  alternative formats, please [REDACTED]

 you have difficulties communicating or hearing [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

STAY AT HOME. [REDACTED]

Her Last Letter

In white tiled room, no window
 let in sunlight from the street. i
 held your hand in mine, denied
 the truth and thrust it deep, so
 deep it might not come to light, but now

truth rises up and sorrow
 is a pathway to strange lands and i
 have trod its jagged rocks and stumbled
 - certainty would cure this vertigo
 but all those questions which begin with why or how

are dynamite; they could blow
 me sky high head over heels until i
 find my heart is shattered; be strong you said,
 but left no modus operandi. so.
 i was your wife until last week; what now?

IMMIGRATION | EMIGRATION

in faith
my ancestors traveled
from Scandinavia
to America
birthing children
walking from Illinois
to Utah
to offer all
for eternal life
my parents drove
from Utah
to Illinois
birthing me
who left America
for Scandinavia
to live softly
beside death

Asemic Piece: Moonlight



Um		Um
Umm		Umm
Ummm		Ummm
Ummmm		Ummmm
Ummmmm		Ummmmm
Ummmmmm		Ummmmmm
Ummmmmmm		Ummmmmmm
Ummmmmmm		Ummmmmmm
Ummmmmmm		Ummmmmmm
Ummmmmmm		Ummmmmmm
Ummmmmmm		Ummmmmmm
Ummmmmm		Ummmmmm
Ummmmmm		Ummmmmm
Ummmm		Ummmm
Ummm		Ummm
Umm		Umm
Um		Um

PAUSE

Dead Sea

I
can
hear
the
ocean
in shells
pressed
against
my ears
rising
mortality
basking
under
the sun
raisin
skinned
fingers
hold
sand
castled
dreams
testing waters

has
already
drowned
I have
died
more
because
of salt
reality
wounded
anchored
shores
the
floods
remorse
tempestuous
until
demigods
like the
vanity
drenching
wave
into
crash

what
sink
cannot
you
sobriety
with
anchored
shores
the
floods
remorse
tempestuous
until
demigods
like the
vanity
drenching
wave
into
crash

Aldebaran

The brightest red star, 65-light years from the Sun

You turn round
 beneath the flowering tree:
 pink blossoms overhead
 drift
 down,
 flutter
 to the ground:
 snow in spring's form,
 a blanket of
 blossoms
 that cluster,
 then collide
 like stars in dark matter.
 I wait: Aldebaran,
 the star that follows Pleiades,
 for companionship.
 Waiting, watching—oblivious
 to the naked eye.
 You have your Seven Sisters,
 bound to every one of them.
 So this is *snow*;
 and it stacks up
 in storms
 builds a wall
 in winter,
 while blossoms
 litter
 the pavement,
 like the remains
 of this day:
 but when we stand
 beneath the tree,
 only pink sky overhead,
 and for
 a moment
 everything is still and silent,
 the way it gets
 when the greyest clouds
 release the rain.

The Sermon's Conclusions



Melancholy and Imagination have very great force,

and yield

many strange

and

sometimes



extraordinary



passages



If all Concessions they have freely, and Mr. Wagstaff little else than what I Concessions. I may expect that some other party.

As though if they had not Concessions, though they are not, yet if they

My Potty Love

I
love

to be gentle,

P* -MAN

prepare you. Roll your belly

0 I LOVE

around in my hands

u TO FILL to warm you, from the inside. I love...

D N

r U TO ...that you hold my bags, you're such a GENTLE- L

A

s THE Brim, sit back, watch you *steamm* You like time E¹

H

to settle down....anything from 3-5 minutes.....I love how

E

s you measure moments, always letting things brew. I lurve

V

that you're hard whenever I'm around. But I know, if I let

R

you go, you'd be so broken. That's why I'm careful, why

U

s I carry you, squeeEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEZE you tight by UR C

¹to lift you, grip you, tilt you towards and tip you

inside my r e c e p t a c l e as liquid*

s

FROM YOUR HOT SPOUT

Meeting Minutes for the Coalition of Intrusive Thoughts

Call to Order

A weekly meeting of The Coalition of Intrusive Thoughts was held on 24 March 2022 inside the Prefrontal Cortex. It began at 08:57 AM and was co-presided over by Disgust at My Reflection and The Mountain of Dinner Plates Growing Like Weeds in the Sink acting as secretary.

Attendance

Voting members

- The Random Urge To Jump Off Subway Platform Despite Immense Fear of Death, *Chairperson*
- Flashbacks to Cold Hands Traversing Body Without Prior Approval, *Vice Chair*
- Executive Dysfunction As Identity, *Non-Executive Director*
- The Desire to Morph Myself Into a Whiskey Barrel, *Board Member*
- Choking Sobs As An Attempt to Breathe, *Board Member*
- An Ocean of Post-Its Bookmarking My Failures, *Board Member*

Guests

- A Foreign Body (unresponsive)
- Dexamphetamine Sulphate (40 mg)

Members not in attendance

- Rationale (on sabbatical until further notice)

Officer's Reports

- The Random Urge To Jump Off Subway Platform Despite Immense Fear of Death reports on the monthly goal, Seek Out Other Ways to Imagine Demise. Numbers are looking good after discovering I Could Just Fall Out of That Open Window Right

Now and If The Earth Sets Alight Tomorrow I'll Just Stay in Bed. Keep up the good work.

Other Reports

- Today's guest, Dexamphetamine Sulphate, covers how to provide the Will to Live and take away The Will To Eat and Sleep in a riveting presentation.

Main Motions

- Motion by Flashbacks to Cold Hands Traversing Body Without Prior Approval and seconded by An Ocean of Post-Its Bookmarking My Failures to: lash out at everyone who's ever loved you just to feel something. The motion carried with 5 in favour and 0 against.
- Second motion by Disgust at My Reflection and seconded by Choking Sobs As An Attempt to Breathe to: make it all stop. The motion failed, with 1 in favour and 4 against.

Announcements

- Next month, we start our annual Campaign for Existential Dread, so be sure to consult The Desire to Morph Myself Into a Whiskey Barrel if you have any questions about that. Also, Disgust at My Reflection has brought everyone donuts. They're in the breakroom for everyone to grab—except you, Foreign Body. How's that special diet of self-loathing and too much coffee treating you?

Adjournment

08:59 AM

Mondrian

no traffic blight...the colours wink
at breakfast dishes in his sink
...that breakfast waffle fled his head
the Broadway Boogie Woogie came
foot tapping -- *blue, yellow, red*
all danced the grid and rhythm flamed
-- the city pulsed -- the oils untamed
no rights / no wrongs...light jumps the frame