



WROK FMAILY FRÆDNS

DISPERSION

Woke up from a nightmare, automatically reached for my notebook:

Character idea for book: guy name Wallstreet English
This guy like to talk in poems, e.g.:

"In financial modeling we have to liken your asset—say art—to some preexisting asset. That's how we do the model. In law we have to liken a new dispute to some previously settled case, in order to go forward. Likewise, in art... Well, let's take example from the cowpote world: ads and brand identity often employ spare, fluid illustrations composed of scant lines, just casual five-stroke sketches which are then insanely vector-laundered. You've seen this, right? A running figure, a sheaf of wheat, a steaming mug.

Tha visual paradox: compressed expressivity that nevertheless lacks expression.

So, takeaway: CGI is all about light interacting with surfaces, right? And that's why we love it: *it's got Zero Depth... but Transcendent Illumination.*

(Mr. English=good at speaking in poetic snappytude

SET PRICE

Comedy – current comic tics, tropes and memes – functions as a kind of social glue, binding strangers and coworkers and friends and defeating awkward moments of non-communication. These tools are used to skate over holes in conversation and shit. Being conversant with the going comic fillers from talk shows, ads, sketch comedy, memes is not only advantageous but practically a civic duty. You're rude if you didnt keep up

So...

Person like to rearrange basic syntax, i.e. juvenile game presented as serious endeavor, i.e. frist say "Hol-ee-Fucking-Shit" then say "Fucking-Shit-ee-Hole"
ha ha ha
can't take it much farther, I supopse

You know what cool? Throw in random misspellings

Of course at the very end the key to the whole mystery is found in a primitive crappy drawing by a child/ primitive/elderly/insane person



SIGILS

because sometimes, you want to demonstrate that a character is vulgar, a bit unsocialized, but capable of 'truth telling':

For example, have Character be say thing like:

You have to understand, a guy will jack off w/ motor oil if that's all that's around.... With hardcore cleanly product, like help-less alkie. If you had a horny teenage alcoholic, he'd be swigging ethanol and burning his cock with it, getting off at both ends.

Get off on the right foot, then get off on the left foot.

Oh yeah, hmmm, that's realkly interesting

Never thought about that?

no, that insane

I nodded. The drink was strong.

"Why is it," I said, "that we have fully mapped out Hell, but paradise is relatively featureless?" I said. "In fact it's the Buddhists who have presented the best fusion of heaven, which is to say nothingness and no place and no one. This is not very glamorous, of course"

"Yes, that be main problem w/ it"

"What about limbo?"

"Like a playground full of young parents tacitly competing to see who can be more nonchalant and uncommitted to helicoptering over their kids:

WITHCRAF

"Oh, I think I saw your son fall off the monkey bars."

"Oh, he be fine, it probably good for him, you know, man Is that your daughter getting slapped around over there, though? oh,"

"Yeah, but maybe better not to interfere. I mean, this is the world, right?

Yeh, Better they figure out how to navigate their own way through its terrors."

"The world is a place of great beauty

Ah yes, that is some funny shit, but he could also write a good poem. Like the time he stood up in the lunchroom and declaimed:

"Methinks there's too much work!

What about all the women who run

All-night daycare centers

just to provide

care for the babies of all the women who

are busy taking care of the babies of

the secretaries of full time

employed business

women?"

"Lunchroom Poesy," he called it. Later he admitted that he'd more or less stolen it. But you had to forgive him, he was building his brand. It was a sort thing we not be able to



They nodded and slowly moved across the room. "Well," she reply, "And what about fact that wealthy German men in their sixties w/ sixty-thousand-euro HiFis = not simply experts on African-American musical idioms like jazz and the blues, but can speak with deep intelligence on the subject, what an amazing thing, they would tell you, that we humans have constructed a system, like Jazz, which exists entirely within a tradition, a shell of standardized units, a kind of musical calculus, within which one may play, endlessly, bending the rules, and breaking them, and always enacting a delicate play with ritual, and tradition, and the future, and within which all of human emotion is possible, especially the unnamed and odd emotions that fill a listener with questions, severed from language function, and it's there—you can glimpse it—even in a bastardized form, like, say, the flute-heavy 'jazzy' soundtracks to television shows of the seventies, Hillstreet Blues, for example, which are full of the longing—and isn't every Romantic impulse essentially about longing?—characteristic of that

decade, and these wealthy German men actually *understand* these musics in intimate and complex ways, with a warm and nuanced and humanistic understanding, that they could never bring to their own marriages, or, children, let, alone, themselves. SO, you come back at this eminently rational, sympathetic and intelligent man, who has made his money by being rational and careful and lets his imagination run wild with these lovingly-catalogued LPs by dead black men, saying, YES, but isn't that the condition of techno, too? It sets up an even more brutally standardized system: the steady machinic pulse of the drum, and only the drum, but then, when you have that, you can pour all of creation on to it—noise and industrial chaos, soul and harmony, Hawaiian guitars, you name it—and it still qualifies... Another black American cultural product, another twist in the string of beads... What about that? And in return you are treated to a brief smile and a shrug: "I'm sure that's all very interesting, too, but it's not the same. Maybe for your generation, I don't know."





when the fren Johnny said in the lunch room:
If we could actually experience someone else's being—
we think of it as just basically 'seeing through their eyes'
—in fact we would go insane. So when we make a drug
that allows us to 'see through someone else's eyes,' we
don't know how to interpret their brain cues, soooooo its
like a horrifying drug that makes a person forget every-
thing's names. People become assemblages of shifting
planes and textures, masses... the way a bird sees us as it
fly by on way to food acquisition situation

And I was like:

*U think these anarchistic men who desire revolutionary
change, who shake fists at police helicopters, wld they actually
be able to function in the paradise of a socialist utopia, with
love and peace and gentle communal life? They'd be far too
uncomfortable.*

THat's crazy. that reminds me:
Me and Boss were playing a game before class started.
Someone toss a softball like, "Hey Italy, who's the
greatest poet ever? Dante." Next one: "Hey Russia,
who greatest poet of all time? Pushkin." Then someone
bring it home: "What about you, USA? Ha ha ha, inter-
net?" good one

Johnny was like, Why is telecommunication one way?
If I can make my computer talk to another, a remote
server, why can I not send shockwaves thru the connec-
tion and kill that computer? That person? that way of
life, etc

I replied, "Could we spy on people through computers? If we could,
we should call that "Ninja Looks". Like, "I cast a ninja look through
that portal." "My ninja look penetrated that firewall."

he considered that and was like:

"Oh, Holy Grail = computing w no computer, no screen
"Boring motherfucker that's what everyone from the
Pentagon on down to the gang on the corner wants"
"well we call it *thinking*
oh snap

Then we 'wrap up':

*Someone whose email signature = 'btw, heard what you said
about me recently—you know what I'm talking about—and I
don't appreciate it.
but funny thing is, you're right"*

*What if Satan misled Jesus into believing Jesus was God so people
would abandon authentic faith and believe in Jesus instead? THIS*

the center room, Wallstreet English was afoot make speech:

"The essence of freedom is that all obstacles and limits fall away. To be free is to find a way to dissolve all problems. What we want, correspondingly, is a state where everything is swappable. Baby carriages are recycled into vacuum-formed packaging. A slogan befitting a gym, "*Just work through the pain,*" suddenly becomes the motto of a fast food franchise.

A low chuckle issued from the darkness in the corner of room:

"Who benefits? Answer: Anyone whose business is risk assessment. Traders, fund managers. Someone backing a movie. Anyone who plans to do anything involving money. Anyone who plans on doing anything involving safety.

And you know who's invested in all the boundaries being maintained, in everything staying in its little box? *Children.* They haven't yet realized that you can put the slice of avocado in this bowl not that bowl and it tastes just as good, or that if spirit so moves you can go ahead and rip a page out that book and tack it on your wall and you haven't violated some eternal commandment... You know who knows boundaries have to move and change

and remain fluid? People looking to sell something. Companies, especially their fresh, young, art-school-educated staff. And who was it who realized they could take the slogan from a defunct gym and slap it on a fast food franchise with staggering success as people thrilled to the odd disjunction? \ *Brilliant!*

In the final clinch/clutch moment/crunch/ as deadline hurtle toward explosion,

Have a CHaracter propose with following speech -

You often hear the phrase "The world is crazy," or a variation on it: "we live in an insane world," etc. or "Social media is so crazy." But what does this really mean?

With some distance, it is certainly true, but it inevitably holds up as a counterweight some reductio ad absurdum notion of a primitive utopia, of a simpler time from which we have descended. One reason why people plunge into The Digital is because it is in fact a solace; it is less Insane than the World We Live In; it is in fact eminently masterable and customizable, in distinction to the physical world of things and material problems.

We nodded wryly and gaze move past and into horizon, sheaves of wheat waving in Provence breeze, but







A WORD FROM THE

Tonight there were five bussers on the second floor, four bussers on the third floor, and first floor's bussers did food running due to the floor being closed. However, I was pulled from second floor bussing to help the bay hosts and take drink orders. This left three people on the Tee-line and one person at the main bar.

There was an issue on the second floor with Jeremiah wondering off, leaving Jace and Jordan to bus the floor. Gunnar was asked to leave the third floor to help the second floor while Zac spoke with Jeremiah. This caused Jeremiah to work slightly harder, but he still did not want to do the closing duties that he was delegated. Aside from that, he would also take a bus cart down and leave it for others to clear.

On the flip side, Chad did very well on the third floor. Morgen, Eric, and Gunnar played to his strength and had him run bus carts to the dish-pit and back. Joseph did well bussing the main bar tables as well. He organizes the bus carts very well and could probably save us a lot of trips to the dish-pit if we could get everyone to organize the carts the way he does. Jordan did well on the second floor also, but she is more

MANAGEMENT

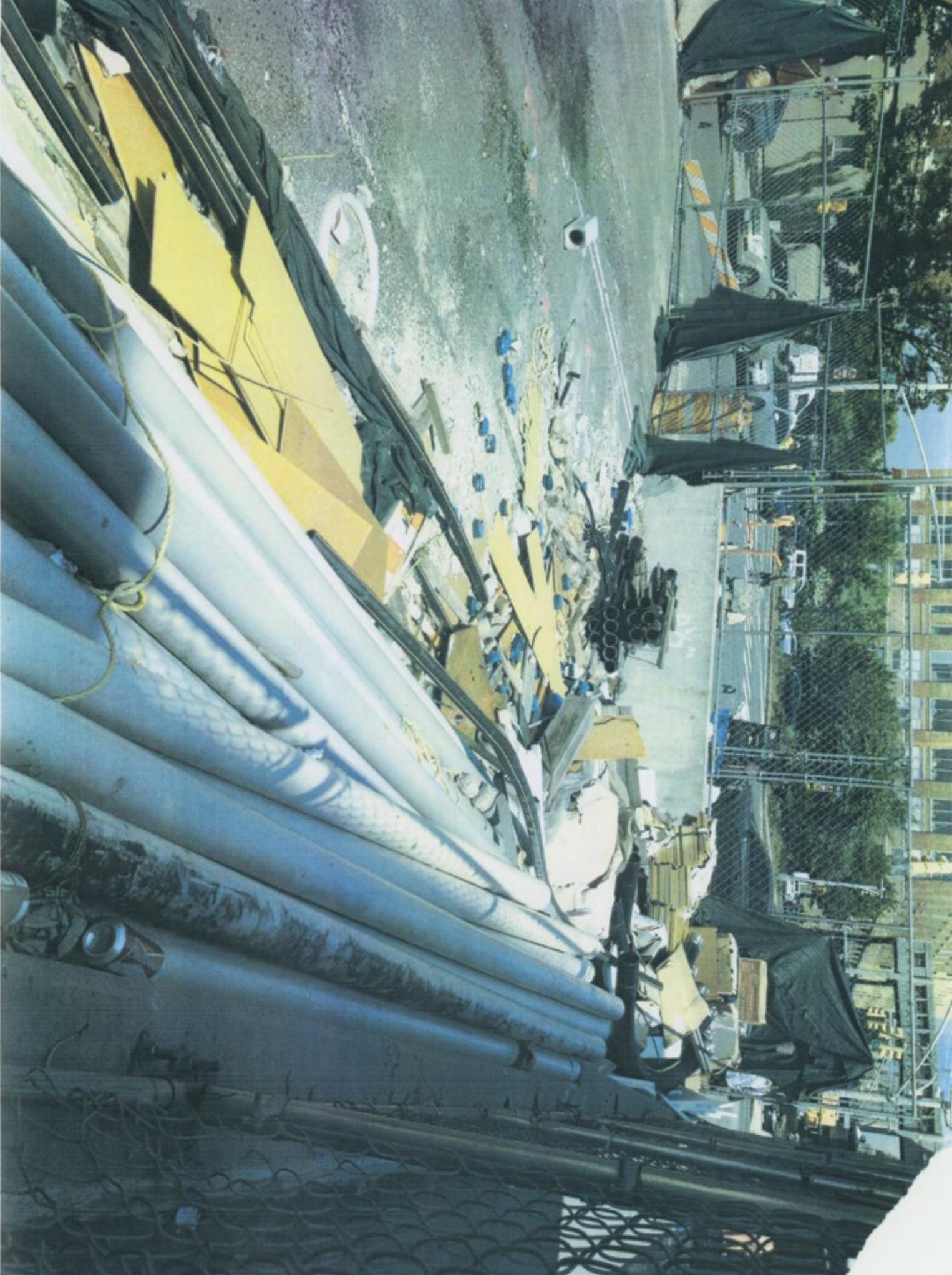
comfortable working as a food runner. She also helped clear the back dock, which Zac and Bruce checked.

The back dock was, however, mostly cleared when we discovered four or five mats that the kitchen had set outside while it was being cleaned. Jace took a picture of the mats to document it. This just added more time and frustration to the cleanup process back there.

As far as drink running goes, the bay hosts did pretty well with taking their own drinks on the second floor when they were able to. The only host that there were any issues with was Jessica Arata. She would see her drinks in the well and just expect Fon to take them as soon as possible, which is not fair to the drink runner or other hosts.

The last point that needs to be covered is the maggots under the dumpsters. Water was not effective on them tonight. Some type of repellent or killer is needed to rid the dumpsters of them.









later realized, Names are seen as evil.... They are trying to name everything. (ie Let break down religion into 'christian, jewish, muslim, other' Break politic into 'left, right, independent.' Break sexlove into 'gay, straight, other.' Lame! ha ha yeah, me too, LAME!

Yeah, "I crap on people who put their faith in love, poltiics, family, religion.

That's right, I said 'crap'—'*shit*' would have been too banal.")

She nodded. "It's essentially the same as all the certainties of childhood that are demonstrably wrong: e.g. the sun is yellow, water is blue, bears like honey, women wear dresses, and so on."

Then WE started A band called Parole board. An obsession with the law, contracts, documents prevailed. That was the future. The main question of the band was: What it mean to be a collector or connoisseur? It means that one having the leisure time to make distinctions based on history and aesthetics: every object a mirror, but a double mirror what reflects taste and also reflects a context of experience."

Everyone 'workshopped' this idea,

The main criticism was: "You know, sometimes in medicine you take a drop of the bad thing, the thing

you fight, and you ingest it. It seems as though an advanced Western image culture might displace violence from its own bodies into the realm of images. Something needs that violence to be present still, but somehow dispersed into images, images that represent the violence that is now done to others in parts of the world that don't exist to us, except as images.

She=remind of people trapped in burning skyscraper who rather than seeking exits in the intense heat would leap from the windows, into peril, of course, but also into the world, into wind and weather, *asserting a final passage through emptiness and freedom, before an ultimate denial of space and time.*

But we 'shoot down' that idea, it so corny!

Instead "the band" focus on developing theory:

The tendency of young actors to bulk up, work out 6 hours a day and exhibit huge bodies onscreen is similar to the public desire for art that shows unambiguous evidence of intensive artist-labor: photorealistic painting, minutely detailed drawings, etc. We want our onscreen humans to be a combination of intensive workout and plastic surgery labor, artificial retouching labor, CGI compositing labor, and studio money (ie, labor)



SCRIPT FOR SHIT

He smiled.

“And, we actually *like* plastic surgery.

The wealthy have cleaved off into a separate population; its not just that they can *afford* alterations of some sort—after all, the working class also does whitened teeth fake tans & boob job/cock tug—but the aristocratic tendency *akshwee* departs from a popular and pedestrian vision of beauty. This is not grotesque or decadent, it’s the future. You can say oh, yes, the future is all about a gradual racial mixing til most people are mid-sized brown skinned but the wealthy won’t stand for that He he For them, future is about savage individuality. Women who try to look like men, men try to borrow from women’s game: all tired debris from back in dawn of free and open expression

“These fellows” say it: When U see 2 teens making love it’s like catching your parents in the act all over again: This = your cultures primal scene. We have made effort to link it to tendency of CGI cameras to envision the self as a spirit or gas slipping thru not only tight enclosed spaces like drains or keyholes but thru solids, ie walls. The camera as a ghost.

We were talking this whole time in an upper wesst side apparemnt:

“And people actually *like* to be surveilled, they like

SESH

Sauron’s eye in their pocket, it grants *value*.

Into party came another guy, Character give angry “rant” speech:

“if you’re wearing a tee saying anything I’ve ever heard of, mightswell be CBGB or some dumsh. Marketers, we demand tees absolute inscrutable. That one guy? made bank selling kevlar tees say: “IM GAY,” but produced only in toddler sizes... *Yes...* Fucking mad unavailable best-seller steez lasted one afternoon by the registers at Whole Foods, crust punks line up early finna knit hovels from that ish

It’s like all the certainties of childhood that are demonstrably incorrect, e.g. the sun is yellow, water is blue, bears like honey, women wear dresses,

Because there are 3 boundaries, cousin:

Human to animal

Living organism to machine

Physical and non (ie waves, forces)



On the other hand, she said that One of strange thing about art world come from fact that it a domain of most extreme aesthetic sophistication possible not because simple fact of wealth but much more elusive: taste On other hand, this taste fairly uniform and for most part make a certain sense wherever you go Of course there be eccentrics in art world doing all manner of outrageous, ingenious and bizarre things, but chiefly same preferences and secret knowledges: eat very good Italian food and know about best grappas, but also best fresh uni still in its cold, spiky shell plucked from shallow salty bay churned by rough waves, they wear fragrance by Comme des Garçons and pants by Acne and everything looks pretty good and smells pretty good or if it looks very bad or smells very bad, this is intentional."

Sheee moved off down the block, thoroughly rattled, aware of cop eyes riding her back. The police occupy a weirdly split role she thought, one person might judge them heroes called to noble duty, putting their souls on the line to defend the thin barrier between etcetera and chaos while the next dude reviles cops as brutish embodiments of the state's monopoly on violence and subjugation, symbols of all that is backwards. Perhaps there's a middle position,

pointed out her other part, but she shushed that shit, because why do kids like policemen, in fact they *don't*, not really, they're fascinated by authority and uniforms and the gear, but they don't really like policemen, it's a slight confusion of categories; it's *firemen* children adore: the shrieking red truck packed with men in jumbo helmets and fuckjackets facing death/ toting smoke-weakened survivors through collapsing door-frames before grimly heading back into the inferno Irish Bar of the blah blah. Firemen know they're walking into a dangerous situation, it's the premise of the job, and children easily grasp the heroic; cops, on the other hand, are entangled in strands of power-struggle and corruption and bureaucratic coffee runs and weasely assistant DAs and so forth, because they're tied to the nightmare structure of 'the law' and all its politics. Police are the enforcement wing of the law, plain and simple. Their function is nothing so straightforward as sparing lives and property, it derives instead from the gun and the stick, and they're the embodiment of force, and if they happen to save some people along the way, great, but they're just enforcers.

In a way, she thought, the duo "Firemen and Policeman" was analogous to the aspirational mother's mantra "Doctor and Lawyer:" on the one hand you had

the good example, the God in White concerned with minimizing human suffering; on the other you had the bad example, the supposedly heroic profession that was concerned mostly with its own place in the legal matrix, which realistically meant little beyond cynical ass-covering.

She stopped at the corner and glanced around, then made a quick post: *"Like people who think doctors have some kind of superhuman authority and moral certitude, and that they're not simply ordinary citizens trained to act authoritatively and endowed with arrogant power by a fearful and ignorant public."*

She recalled another poem that Boss had declaimed:

Law Poem

What are lawyers,
Instruments of the law?
No.
Rather, the individual
Instances of the law
i.e., The Law.
So, you might even say, 'words.'
Would the opposite, then, be

Silence, or
An undifferentiated scrum of noise?
(The opposite of lawyers)

She felt as if she were entering into an understanding of how programmers built broad-based game engines. We're past the Golden days of the Eighties, when each video game was written from scratch. Now we sculpt them out of big pre-fab code slabs. Your world runs on some clever young man's game engine: an operating system, a common currency, the ease of a shared tongue. The man has written, for example, a rendering engine in order to deal with volumetric FX so your world can handle weird conditions like fog. He has dealt with technical eccentricities like horizon-based ambient occlusion and percentage-closer soft shadows. Always the shadows! People infer three-dimensionality primarily through shadows, not through texture-mapping, that relic of eighties ray-tracing. Shadow volume is all-important. We've done studies. The point of all this is to make rules, the new rules, and they're your rules, so powerful and flexible that everyone adopts them and they become the gold standard, undergirding hundreds of worlds and hosting millions of consumers. A programmer develops middleware with an eye

to power, with the goal of writing the one code to rule them all.

Regarding a skyline, she thought, or any cityscape, or row of houses, one was struck by the awareness that these were just stacked boxes of stuff, rectangular storerooms for all our junk. Every building was a storehouse of the same basic elements, repeated over and over from one apartment to the next, on and on, up the stack, packed full, a pattern that repeated right on down the block and along the avenue and throughout the city. How many versions were there of the same lamp, flatscreen TV, bathroom sink, living room rug, dining table, fork, bowl, stereo, shirt, pair of pants, computer, cellphone, chair? Only so many things in this world, or rather, precious few templates, so many pointless variations. What a redundant mess!

They were walking through city:
He was wearing a shapeless Champion sweatshirt, but there was something odd about it. The oversized cut was straight out of the Golden Age of Hip Hop, 1991 or 1992 maybe, but the Champion logo was repeated as an all-over print, which was a far more contemporary sportswear trend. The combination was disquieting.

"Where's that from?" I asked.

"Uh, I can't remember. I think it might have been a little thrift store out in the 'hood, maybe a church shop in East New York?" He laughed. "Some OG brutha prolly turned thirty and couldn't fit into it anymore."

We nodded. We had a strong suspicion that, were we to check the label, we'd discover that it was a recent collaboration between Champion and some young Japanese designer.

We talked a bit about fashion, a topic to which we often returned on the heels of other conversations, in they way one clears the plates and arrives at a favorite digestif. But today something about the clear New York skies set us on a grim, analytical path. Famously, the early seventies had seen the rise of designer jeans, I said, and this was the harbinger of an epochal shift in fashion, a slow but relentless development that mounted over the course of the eighties, the nineties, and into the '00s, and which yielded our pathetic current situation. I pointed out that designers used to be able to rely on a small cadre of well-heeled and au courant women who each year could be relied upon to attend the shows and

buy the collections, following the ancient rhythm of the fashion seasons and giving the artistry on display its due. But now those women have been swept away in the rip-tide of mass merchandise. Boss was in agreement. Right, he said, a fashion company thrives now not on limited-edition works of art, nor on any fresh and bold moves, e.g. when the Japanese stormed the Paris barricades in the early eighties, bringing to the land of Gaultier and Saint Laurent the good news of the savage black silhouette. Instead, he said, we speak the stupefying Lingua Franca of lux commerce. We must suffer through endless permutations of the same sunglasses, the same handbags, the same heels, and all the other trinkets. Accessories, I said. Yes, he said. Accessories have conquered the world. The fashion companies realized that these pendants to the body—not the things that cloak and flatter and follow and shape the human form, but those things that are mere asterisks to it—are what people really desire, and thank God, because they're cheaper, easier, and quicker. High markup, and equally good in Dubai and Seoul and Capetown and Rio. A bit of acrylic, some aluminum, some nylon, leather, fur... Spice, honey,

a spot of dough, and the all-important baker's thumbprint. Designer-branded, but not, in fact, designer-designed.

"Ah, so depressing!" Boss cried. He made a little ululating sound, and produced his phone. He dropped his ass on the utility box and I crouched beside. He wanted to check up on the latest posting. I leaned over and we read it together:

We need a grand unified theory capable of uniting the following items: cash, drugs, weapons, and passports. These items are linked in a few obvious ways. They're the sorts of things you might want to keep in a locked cabinet in your house. Most US households keep at least three of the four items locked up somewhere. Ask the industry that produces personal household safes if it could survive without cash, drugs, weapons, and passports. They're also the sorts of thing you want to have "on hand" in case of crisis. You toss them in your 'Go Bag' and slip out the back door, just as faceless assassins high on Sass glide up the front walk. And where are you headed? Why, the Triple Frontier, the dangerous and unpoliced tri-border area between Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay: a

playground for those seeking an illicit trade in the four areas of study that we have identified. Four fields, linked by paranoia. But paranoia links everything! Is it simply that all these items are subject to rigorous and jealous regulation? The state wishes to have a monopoly on violence, and the sole authority to print money, and the unquestioned right to decree which drugs may be sold, and no competitors in the business of issuing identification documents. Consequently these items become fetishized contraband. "Authorities recovered a safe containing cash, drugs, passports, and handguns." Police catch you on the street with cash, drugs, passports, and weapons? Legit as it may be, you're heading "downtown." What we need is to figure out a theory that explains this. As a thought experiment, we might try to envision an item that can fit in all four categories. In other words, our McGuffin functions as cash, and it is deadly, and it masquerades as a piece of state-issued identification, and it functions as a drug in the sense that it's a controlled substance with its own warped illicit economy. For our purposes, any mind-altering ingestible qualities are negligible; we understand the singular and hallmark aspect

of drugs to be negatively economic: a drug is a worldly item that is not to be sold and not to be bought. Perhaps the mysterious item that fits into all four categories would somehow be pornography? No, no, too neat. Pornography is a related area, and closely enough related that it causes confusion. If these four items went for a drive, Pornography could almost ride shotgun, but not quite: too different.

"Most of all," I said searchingly, "people seem way too concerned with the question of what to rebel against."

Boss laughed, then tried to rally. "Right, right. In the end, I think the ones who understand best are artists. Painters, and video makers, and poets, and musicians. They understand what it means to make something real, and just for yourself. I'm not saying that they're the most oppressed, they just understand what it means to imagine something and then go and make it happen by themselves. To produce something, not just to consume something."

"Well, let's try to keep it historical. In a way it all got started in '89, when the wall came down."





In the therapists office:

"Now computers," Goldstein was saying, and, from my position I could see that he was reading from an iPad.

"Computers have the opposite problem. They face significant challenges when asked to represent hair, wrinkles, dirt, slack wattles... In a word, aging. Irritatingly vigorous and robust, CGI is best suited to representing children, or, as in so many animated films today, adults as children. Whether shaven genitalia register a desire for childhood or simply an ambivalence about aging, it makes sense that CGI would be perfect for pornographic use."

He stopped and made a little hand motion as if he were swiping an invisible, hovering touch screen.

"So, can we say there is something special about a computer-generated rendering of a smoothly hairless child-adult having sex with another child-adult? We can say this, yes, though with hesitation, and perhaps sotto voce. But there is a clear relationship to popular images, even if it may not transcend the observation that we are intensely interested in images of sex and

images of youth, and that in such a picture they overlap nicely. Maybe we should leave all this for others to resolve, merely noting in closing that while violence and domination are to be scorned, there's nothing inherently wrong with finding children sexually arousing."

He looked up. I took out my phone and posted:

"Like people who still grate their parmesan fine instead of roughing it into irregular scree, which gives a dish some tooth. We like heterogeneous crude, not silk-milled slick. Get with it. Same for sea salt, incidentally: Don't muff the rough stuff."

*END OF MY THERAPIST'S NOTES AND SHIT





"I've been thinking a lot recently about the idea of a state of existing where every person you saw—man or woman, straight or gay, rich or poor, ugly or hot—you perceived first of all in terms of being a potential sexual partner. Or at least a sexual victim, sexual collaborator, sexual apprentice... At any rate, initially and overwhelmingly you see a person as a knot best cut through an appeal to the flesh. After all, that's the way countries see each other."

We clinked imaginary champagne glasses and laughed. Then he said, "I'm giving up poetry." He waved his hand to indicate our conversation. "This is more immediate."

I waved my hand weakly, and he sat down and started playing a video game. I tried to lose myself in the atmosphere once more. A pair of appealingly scruffy but well-fed men were making their way toward the elevators. Scrubby, elegantly scrubby, relaxed according to a rich cultural heritage that allows one to relax, to rest on the laurels of cultured forebears. Belgians, I intuited. They were discussing their New York friends, the ones who had hosted them for dinner last night, and wasn't it funny how the metropolitan,

cultured Americans were a bit try-hard. All the right music, books, and political consciousness, but a bit correct, a bit unrelaxed. The wine served always in wine glasses and the parmesan grated fine, the meal 'plated' before it heads to the table, because you'd never plop a bowl of steaming vulgarity down in the middle of things, the right blend of appreciation and resentment for French thought, the lighting all warm and wonderful because all lights should be on dimmers and ideally positioned below eye level, no down-lights, please! They weren't people who rinsed the pasta in the collander, they weren't people who kept tomatoes in the fridge, but they were only one step above. They were people who had the apartment cleaned prior to a casual dinner with friends, and who, hours before the cleaner came, attended to certain ugly tasks themselves, but only because it embarrassed them to imagine a diminutive brown lady scrubbing wayward feces from the toilet bowl: what would she think of them?

In a way, the Belgians concluded, they had more respect for fusty American WASPs. The edges there were worn to a fault, a perfect fault: the disdain for trends, the longstanding summer

house in poor repair, the dotty aunt who was a plein-air painter, everyone in the family apparently agreeable because they didn't judge it necessary to air disagreement, everything running on fumes. Thank heaven for people who scanned menus for a fixed roster of timeless foods: asparagus, caviar, risotto, quail, langoustines, turbot, oysters, sole, filet. Forget about venturing into greens, greens were volatile; arugula or kale was exciting one year, awkward the next. Better to play it safe and have a mixed salad. "What? Is that that South American miracle grain? Fabulous. No, no, I'm sure it's very good but I'm all set, I'm having my boring old skate wing."

Wealthy people: what enormous will they exhibited, what force it took to shoulder through the world! Or perhaps they called this world into being only as they moved through any given bit of it, like a gaming engine conjuring a sphere that extends only to that which a player chooses to observe, and no more. Had this sort of tremendous will always existed in humanity? Of course it had, to some degree, but perhaps now it was developing to new and more radical degrees. We were becoming a different animal, after all. Could

one breed will, might it be guided to evolve in particular ways under the right societal conditions, such as the depthless privilege that was possible for some under contemporary global capitalism? I stood, aware of new energies flushing through my system. I gently laid a hand on Nick's shoulder. "Let's go, nerd. Let's see what MY THERAPIST DR. Goldstein has to say for himself."

END OF MOTHERFUCKIGN CHAPTERX



She smiled. "Yes. The problem is, there's no sense of time on the web, yes? Everything is new, bright, contemporary. So there's no hint of decay, no static, no light-burns, but also there is no mystery. Just the present of your own monitor. No place, no time. And if you take away our sense of time, the world basically loses all meaning. We can say that the sense of time is a reflexive invention designed to give meaning, much the way that our mind 'corrects' the vision of the world passed on by our eyes, in which all is upside down, or the way that Christianity essentially collapses if we decree that all life is material and mortal. By creating a continuous present we are flirting with disaster. There is no mystical experience. There is no gnosis in this situation in which we find ourselves. There is only faith. And that was the problem with Christianity: it was fantastic at creating an institutional structure, which allowed it to win out over all the rival sects skirmishing at the feet of Christ on the cross. But by banishing gnosis and mystery, it guaranteed that it would eventually wither in the face of modern atheistic technomaney."

He smiled. "Yes. In a way you could say

that we're finally returning to the pagan era. Why do you think there is so much sickness and dying now? It's like the medieval era rolling in over us, a kind of heavy pall of smog you don't even realize is here."

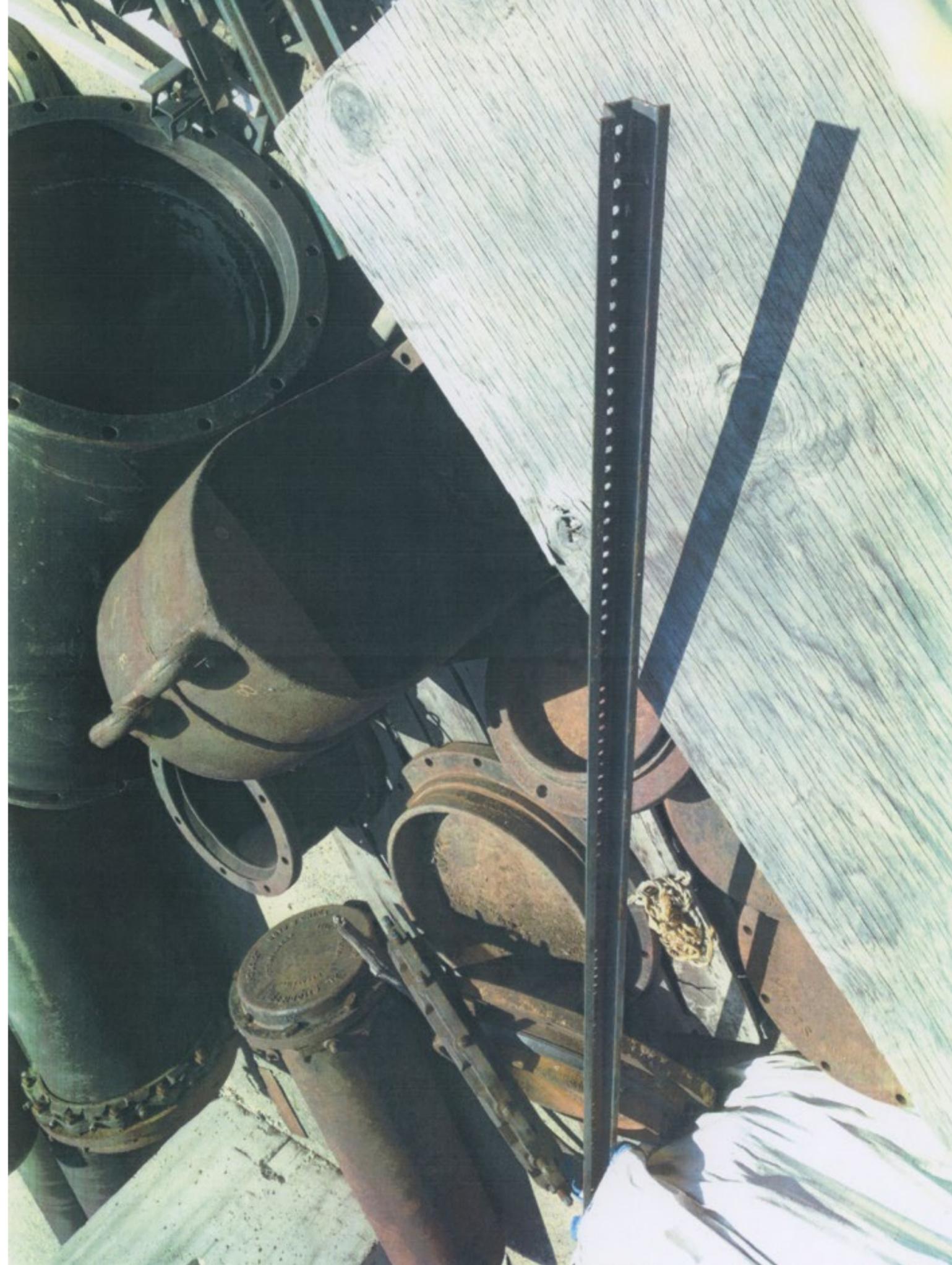
She smiled. "Yes. The goal is to get to a place of utter universal equivalence such that we lose our sense of time, in which case basically the world ends."

He smiled. "Right. Science reflects a gradual realization that events are not totally random. They instead follow an order or system. There is a pattern. However, this depends naturally on repetition. Events must repeat in order for us to understand them as part of the system. That is why we write them down. Building."

She smiled. "Right. The test of orthodoxy is whether it can build a church, not just a sect or group of gnostic individuals. A church needs to be simple and accessible to all. It needs to find ways of sanctifying the basics of life: together we take part in rituals around eating, sex, birth, illness and death. The thing is, the Internet does all that."

He smiled. "Yes. The mission was terminated in 1993, we packed up and went home to





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