



Dripping pen





So...

Here we are again.

A little wiser,

A little older,

...or at least a little  
more fucked up.

Sophomore sets usually are.

So welcome to our second

edition of  
rotten goodness...

...or was that good filth?

However it is

Here it is.

Discourse.

ED.

DEARLY DEPARTED



*Pretentious*

*Look at you  
you artists  
you falsities  
Fake as a silicone Tit*



*Different?  
Different?  
Just the same  
Different Scene  
different context  
Prose, poetry  
painting, photography*

*When all your bullshit  
adds to it*

*Escape from responsibility*

*You aren't going  
getting*

*absolutely*

*South of No North*

*So sit down relax*

*Tough up a cigarette*

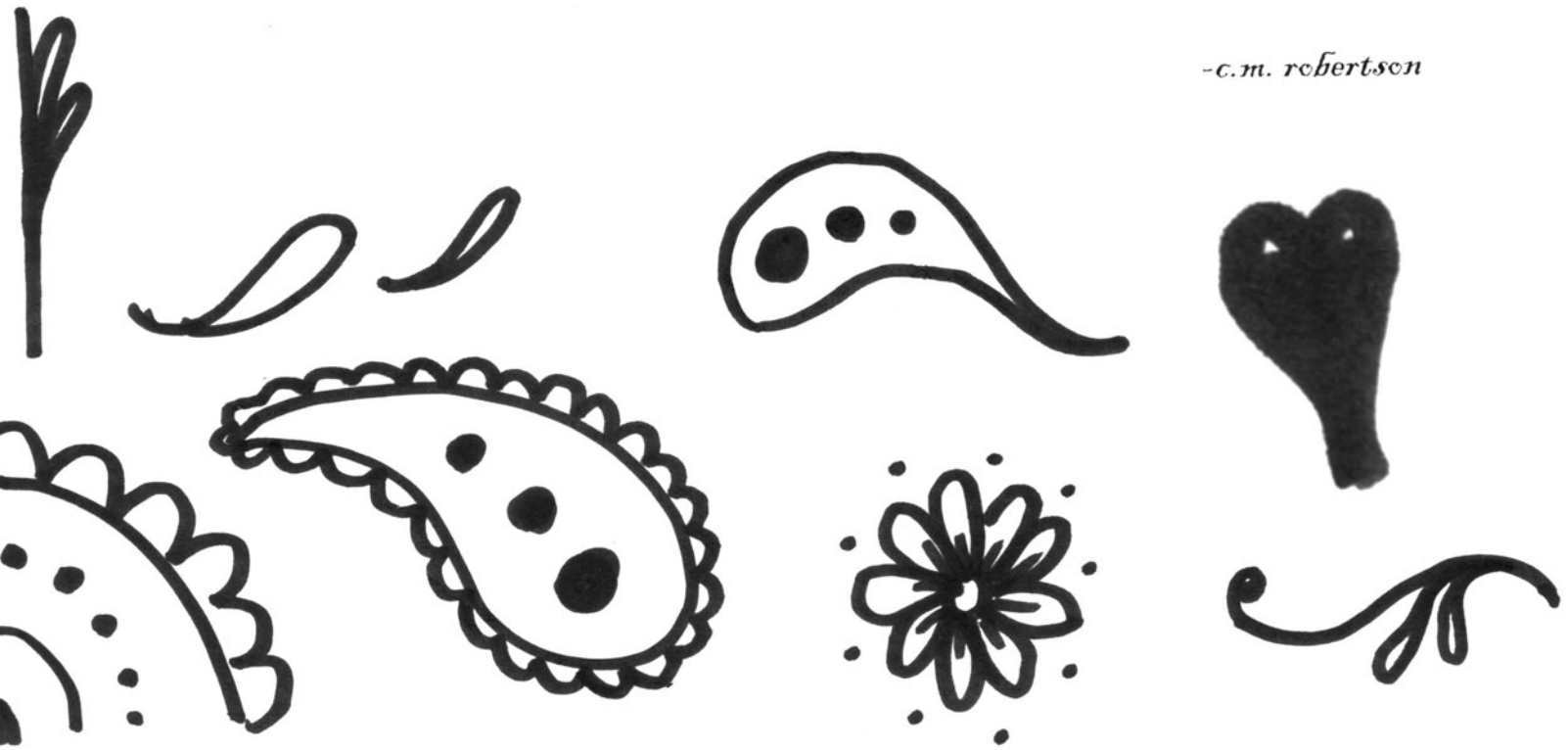
*Slap some black*

*on your face*

*and forget it*

*You are so original*

*-c.m. robertson*



-N. Procopenko

*you*

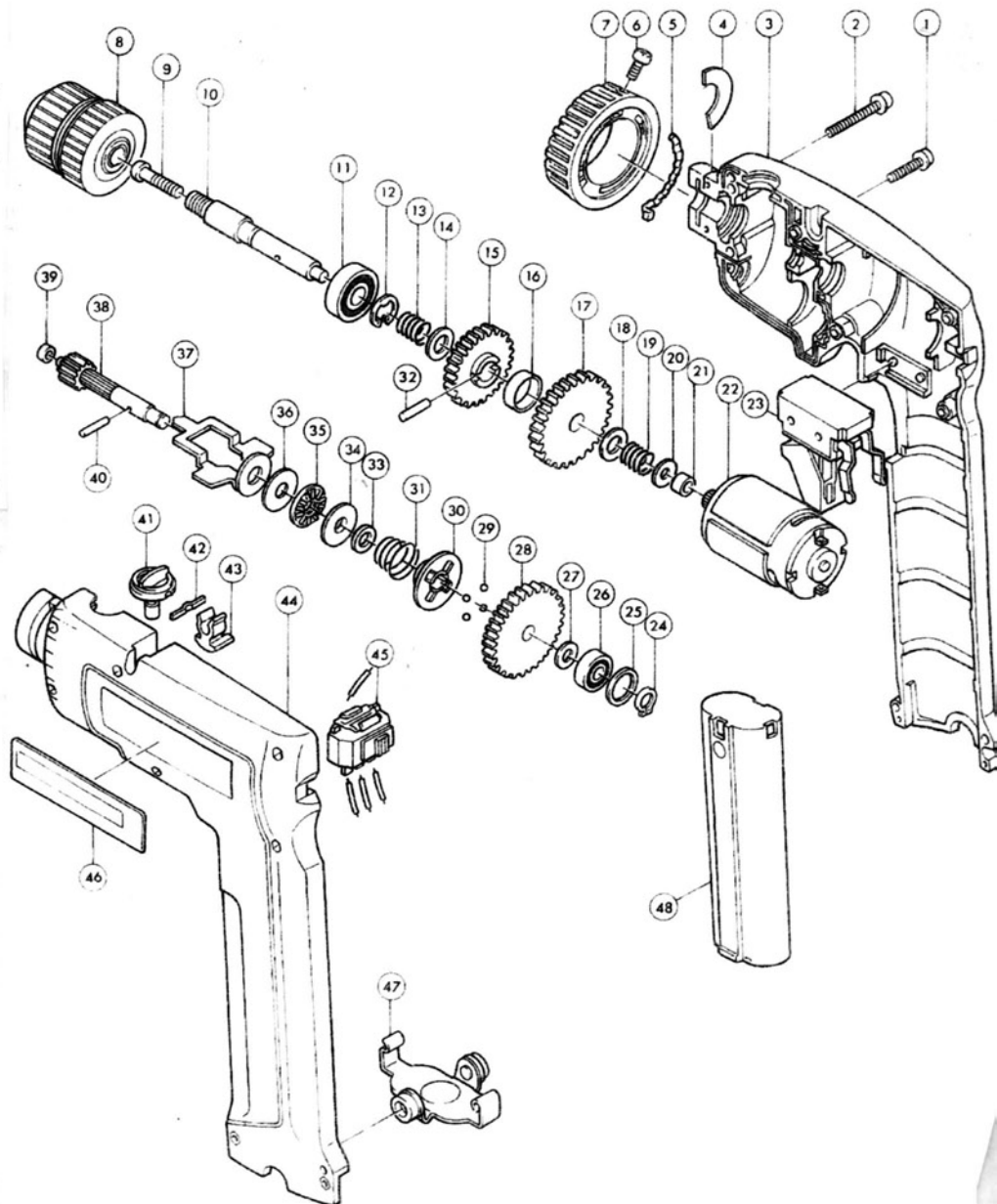
my mind is absolutely saturated with the past-tense picture of us.

my mouth on your mouth and this image being the only proof I dont play this touch-lovely game and heard you dont either.

finally i wish and finally i get or rather, this bottle got for me.

you are dripping from every pore on my skin. tiny membranes of you.

when i sweat.  
when i stop.  
when i think.  
you've lodged yourself between my cells so earnestly and i cant pull you out no matter how hard i scrub. i could tear my flesh out and you would bleed out of my wounds.  
my mind is pregnant with the weight of you and my water just broke, baby.



Fool me once  
By Gwen

There are five steps to a sale. And I've worked primarily in retail, so I know all about it.

1. Intro. Hi my name is Gwen.

I had no trouble getting my first retail position. My manager hired me not because she thought I would be good at it, or because I knew anything about the product (I didn't). She thought I was cute. Needless to say it was a shitty job with even shittier people and I quit after two months. I've had random equally bad jobs in the mean time. A waitress at a club. I parked cars. My next job in retail was also my best job. Readers' Books. It is a small independent book store. It's everything a book store should be. And I was good at it... I think. I never would have left that job. Except I did.

2. Story. Our company is liquidating some art (I use the term art loosely) we have left over from a design project we just did with some of your neighbors. So we are selling them at a cost to us...80% off.

I've been in Seattle a week and after finding a place to live and paying for gas I have no money at all. I scower the newspaper looking for work. I was intrigued by an add for an expanding art company. The add was vague but called for an interview, which was also vague, but I was asked to come back the following day for an eight hour job shadow. I agreed.

3. Demo. I'll tell you what, why don't I show you what we have. (present 20x26 framed, matted, Thomas Kincaid print).

I arrived at the office at 8:45 the following morning. I sat in the waiting room for nearly twenty minuets. Than she walked out of the back room. Giddy and wispy haired, like a teenager at an Arowsmith concert in the late eighties. But she wasn't a teenager. She was in her late forties, and she tried to disguise it by smothering her face in foundation. The make-up, however, just fell into the cracks around her mouth and eyes. We got into her minivan and drove around until we found a business park. We got out and walked into an office. Bear in mind, these offices aren't open to the public. There is a giant sign in the window reading "no soliciting".

"Hi, I'm \_\_\_\_\_. And I work for a decorating company in the area that decorates businesses, and we just finished some projects with your neighbors, and, lucky you, we have some art pieces left over that we are offering to you at our cost. They're 80% off." The potential buyer has a dazed look in their eyes. They are





thinking “who the fuck are you... didn’t you see the sign in the window... what do I do now...?” This is when \_\_\_\_\_ interrupts their thoughts with “you know what, I’ll go get some pieces to show you. They are really beautiful.” If she can make it far enough to actually show the “art” she is doing really well.

4. Close. Okay well thank you very much for your time. Maybe later.

Closing usually happens within the first few seconds of each interaction. I was ready to close after the first few interactions. I didn’t realize this “expanding art company” was actually in the business of whoring out hideous renditions of hideous art. But I stuck it out. All eight hours. Even after I understood that it was all a clever pyramid scheme. And unbelievably degrading.

5. Rehash. After (If) someone actually buys a piece you are to go back and try to pressure them into buying some other piece. What the fuck?

When we got back to the office, after 5:30pm. I was expected to take a test. What did I learn? What are the five steps to a sale? And the eight steps to success? I didn’t take the test. I left it on the clipboard in the waiting room. And I’m glad I did.

I scraped together some change to buy a cup of coffee. I went home to my empty apartment. I had a seat on a box of books (something I had collected, blew pay checks on, cherished, keepsakes from Readers’). I thought for a moment about how the owners of the book store just scraped by. They could hardly pay the bills. But they always treated me well, and they paid me whether I sold books or not. They gave me an impressive raise every six months or so, although I’m not sure they could afford to do it. Instantly I feel home sick.

I looked around my apartment. Nothing caught my eye, because aside from the box I’m sitting on there is nothing in the place. I could afford to furnish, or eat, if I went door to door soliciting. I could make (at level three with the company) 100,000 a year. There is a lot of money to be made off of peoples’ indifference or fear of loss or greed. I’m just not interested.

I decide to make a bed for myself with pillows and blankets on the hardwood floor. I open an advanced reading copy of a book Readers’ received in the mail a week before I left. Tomorrow I will apply somewhere else. Send Readers’ some kind of love letter. Call my dad and beg him for some money.

JUST A SHORT HAIKU

SNIFFING THE FLOWERS  
BOY BECAME BLUE LIKE TRUE DEATH  
HE SAW THE FUTURE

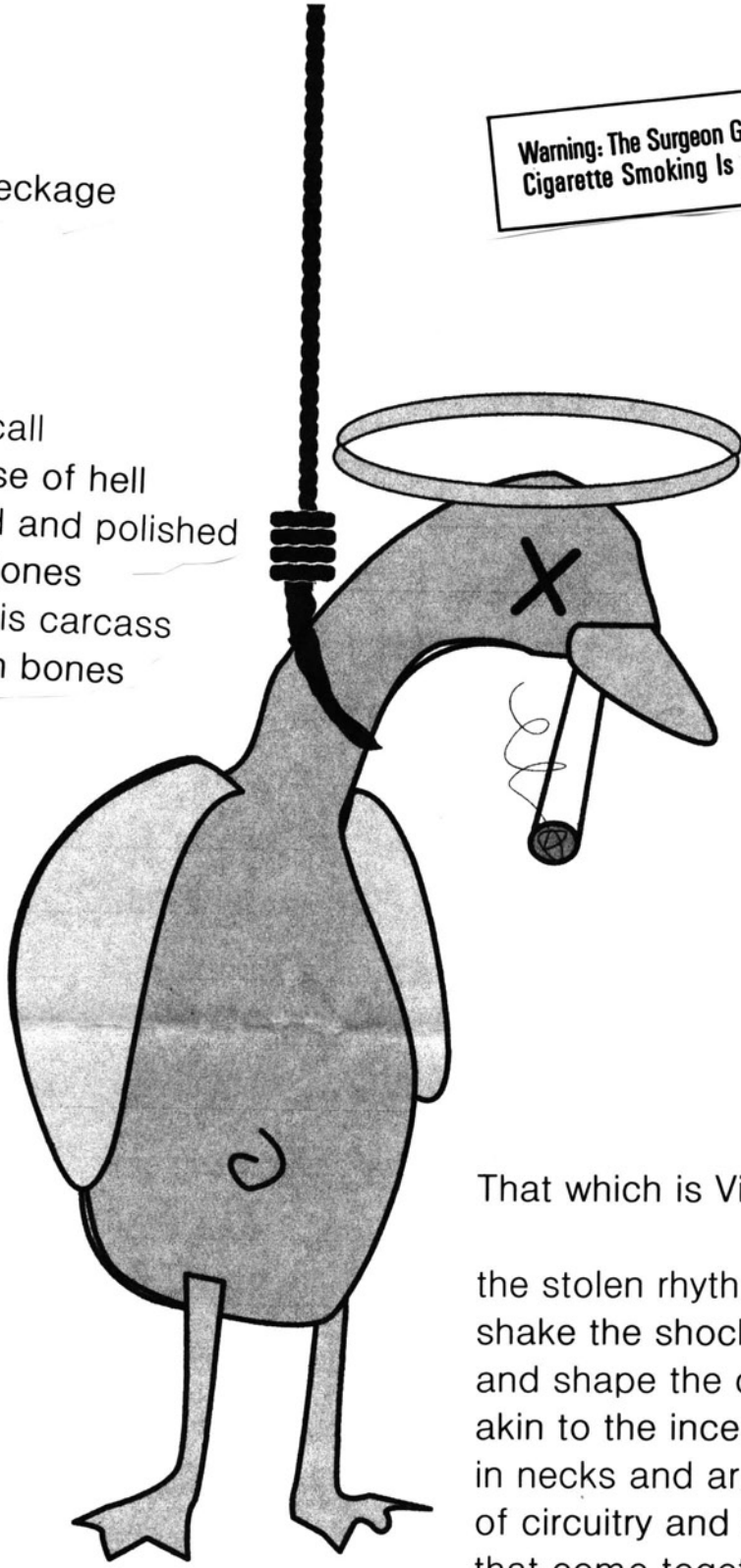




Sledgehammer

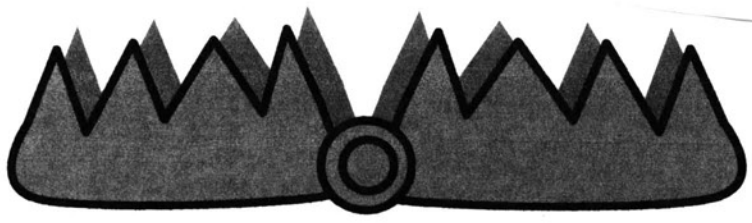
angel  
sleep among the wreckage  
the remnants of  
a demolition derby  
line walls  
stain halls  
and my ventricles recall  
the deafening expanse of hell  
tides have pummeled and polished  
shards to softened stones  
the worms that ate this carcass  
have left behind clean bones  
-m.dyer

Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That  
Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.



That which is Vital

the stolen rhythms that cannibals crave  
shake the shocks and springs  
and shape the cockpits softer things  
akin to the incessant pounding  
in necks and arms, a supple sounding  
of circuitry and welded cells  
that come together like freight trains  
then slumber in a secret shell  
forever rendered free from pain







# ALCOHOL

Alcoholics are a sad bunch  
Sitting along  
a bench  
Hunched over  
Saturated  
with  
mesmerizing melodrama  
They think  
they have  
a grasp on reality  
Yet stray  
to understand  
the most simple things  
I feel  
that there  
is only one recourse  
The blackened knights course  
The course

that causes futility  
Grab  
the bottle of poison  
Should  
the stray tongues  
of passion  
Be unleashed tonight?  
I wander home  
Alone  
Mesmerized  
by the wandering dusk  
By myself  
these thoughts fade  
As I set myself toward  
the glistening charade  
Good night

## Future Tense

I could use a map,  
a deli sandwich  
& a shower, too.

The sorority girls  
have made it clear  
how they feel about  
yellow rabbits today.

I'm wrapped in rusty barbed-wire.  
It's wrapped around my arms,  
up under my armpits,  
around my chest and abdomen,  
between my legs and around my waist,  
around both legs and ankles.

This dream about fish is final.

Crowe is hiding behind  
the dumpster again,  
wearing human track shoes  
and a new track suit.

Shut-up & sew! We're going for  
the lowest prices, right, Tom?

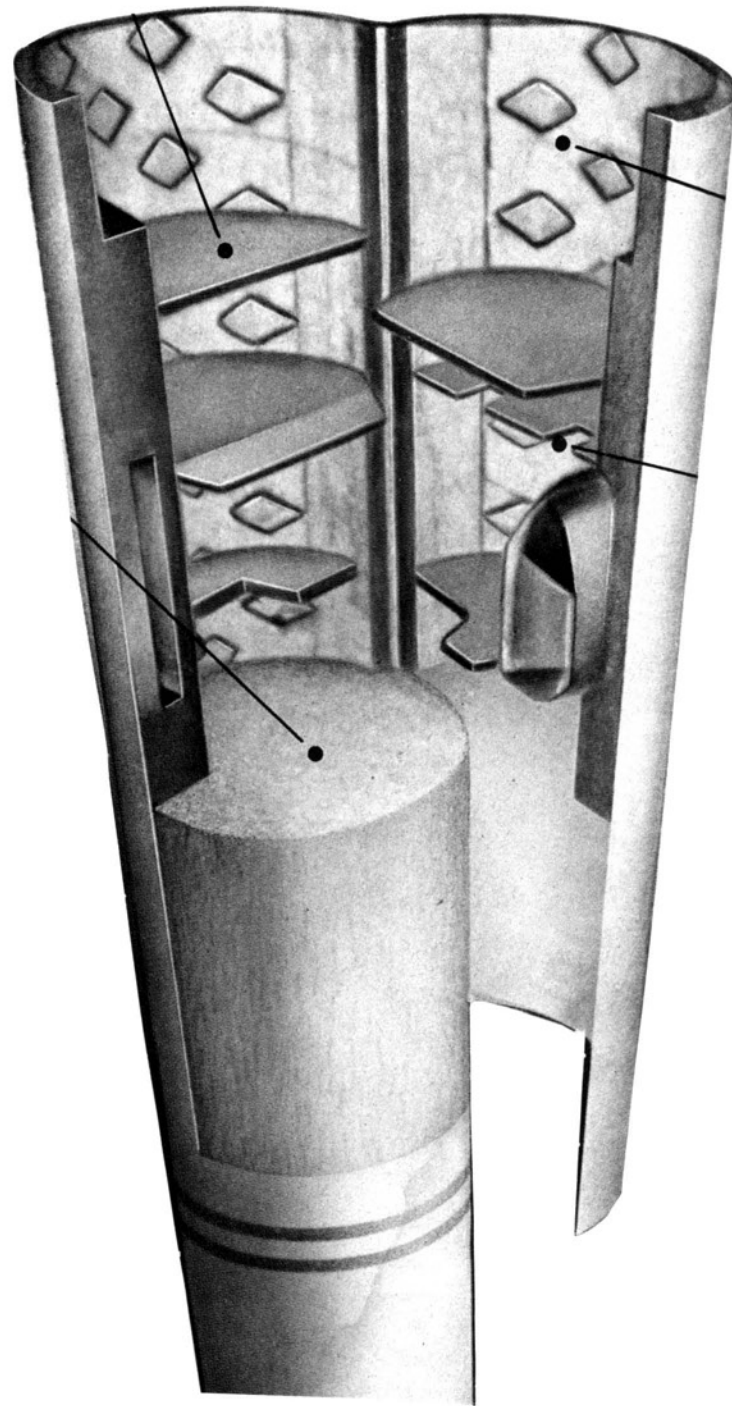
Old Crowe shut off the radio.  
He imagined a bathtub  
full of radios & sewing needles.

He liked eating thread  
but the doctor said no more.

The old ones know  
how many fingers it takes  
to get the moon on-line.

Vipers again?

Yellow Rabbit is reading



a new kind of book,  
something for the "new" mind.

dollar signs are dripping  
from the monster's brush –  
a new painting emerges  
on the sanctioned walls  
of my convenience-kitchen.

Instant value bubbles  
rub my nipples right off –  
don't even need a sander –

I used tiger skins,  
a little more jam-jam  
& cool blue aluminum.

J. D. Nelson

**K  
-  
B  
A  
M  
P**



**WRECKED**

by C.M. Robertson.

I sat alone. My glass in my hand. It was half full of a Makers Mark Manhattan. Dry not sweet. I was left alone again after another brutal brawl that left nothing resolved. Just the resolve to drink it all away. It had started a few hours ago while getting ready for another Monday morning, another Monday of tedious, wasteful work. I was, I recall, putting on my right sock while sitting on the left side of our Cal-King sized bed. It was a nice bed, a bed that had served many passionate and not so passionate nights, sleep and rest, restlessness and oh of course laundry. Laundry always overtook our bed whenever we were too busy to put it away. The clothes piled high in different spots around our house. Our clothes never quite clean. It got to that point that previous night. I had not said anything then. What was the point? I wanted to have a restful night, maybe get lucky, and then sleep without the tension of a late night fight. So I saved it for Monday morning while getting ready for work.

"Babe, You think today you can put some of this away?" I said in a voice that reeked of irritation. The irritation and disgust that every now and then found its way into my voice when communicating with my significant other.

"What? What's the matter?" She said in a voice quite groggily as I had just intruded upon her sleeping mind. Her black hair was all

I could see as I glanced out of the corner of my eye. My half-awake self simply refusing to yield the kindness I ought to show to her. Instead I yielded towards the irritation and malice that called from my half-awake consciousness.

"Your shit! All your clothes and your stuff that clogs every corner of our house." When I said clothes I said it as if I was discussing the most vile, rank thing that I had ever encountered. She awoke and sat up. Her face looked sad, confused, and slightly angered. Poor confused girl. I was an ass, but would I continue? Oh yes.

"Every day I get home you don't have anything done. All you do is sit around, go to work, come home and sit some more. Oh that's right you have a hard job. Well so do I, and I still get my shit done! Why can't YOU seem to get anything done?!" I figured with the abundance of overpowering words I could infiltrate her defenses and at the same time make myself seem more intelligent. Isn't that what we are taught? To win at all costs, in conversation, dialogue or discussion? The tactics of war applied to a conversational setting?

Her voice slightly cracking and upset "Why are you saying all of this right now? What did I do? Why are you attacking me?"

So she had sensed and perceived the attack. Saw this as I saw it. A war, a battle, a conflict of powers. I would win at all cost. I had attacked swift; I hadn't attacked deep enough quite yet.

I laced this one with sarcasm and wit "Well maybe I am saying it now because I (very self important here) deem it necessary to discuss what issues I see when I feel they are relevant." This was said in the tone that an instructor takes while being condescending towards a selfish spoiled brat.

Her pretty face scrunched into confusion and the first signs of anger. "...you, you are being so mean! Why do you think you can be like this...? I know you are tired but please don't take it out on me!!!"

I could see the crack in her composure, I attacked with all guns at full fire, took aim to take the wall down. "Yeah, well, you can take your clothes and your mess and deal with them when you want. Actually I will just not

be here to see them so that I don't get irritated and pissed while they are in my FACE!!!"

"YOU ARE SUCH AN ASSHOLE! BACK OFF! I don't think you have any right you pretentious, self serving jerk!"

"Me a jerk, me a jerk??!!!"

"Shut up! You need to shut up right now! I can't take this!"

Well that is where the fight got ugly, we battled, we swore, we traded rude unfair words. The battle escalated into an all out war. I finally lost it and left the house for work. Leaving her crying while sitting upright, while half dressed in the mess of the post-conflict disaster.

I went to a bar at 11 in the morning, hoping to take the edge off, or just get sloppy drunk while skipping work and forget about the ordeal I had just been through. I got to the bar and realized they didn't open till noon. "Well that is just fine", I thought, "grocery stores sell bourbon and I have the bitters and vermouth at home". Time for manhattans. My favorite drink.

I shopped for a while trying to decide what bottle to go for, then proceeded towards the counter with my selection. The clerk gave me shit about looking unlike my California driver's license picture. I gave him a look of death and destruction and he sent me on my soon to be drunken way without any more toil.

I entered my home and was stopped in my tracks. The house that was clean was now in complete disarray. The laundry that I had so fervently perspired and fought about was gone. All of it. Every last item of female clothing had been removed. All of the clothing I owned was strewn about the floor with ketchup and mustard and my favorite topping of ranch dressing spattered and poured out upon it. I felt the sadness enter my heart. The feeling of despair that she had left and hadn't bothered to wait to see if the words were just that. I hated the feelings of doubt and fear that entered my still waiting to be drunk mind. I didn't know what to do so I didn't begin to do it. I took my legs and made them move one awkward step at a time toward the kitchen door. I glanced inside and saw broken dishes and our favorite glasses all

upon the floor. She had gone into a kamikaze mode and left me to deal with the destruction of a broken home and heart. I admit I dropped a tear or two and set my bottle of Maker's Mark bourbon on the counter.

I, me, the one who had to be right, left alone to be right by myself. I grabbed a plastic cup that didn't look too damn dirty and proceeded to make my drink. I hated this left over feeling of being used up. I hated the sight of the stuff that I had so valiantly battled and fought against and for. I hated myself. I deserved this I thought for two seconds more. Then I stopped, the whiskey ran through my blood like some extreme antidote and left me less than regretful. I pounded a few more and passed out holding her pillow after stumbling towards the bedroom. I cried a little and fell asleep. I awoke and drank some more and some more. It helped. I thought or hoped or lied to myself, somehow I would be okay, but not today. Without the help of this booze and this numb, immovable heart, I would return to pain. Did I want to go there to the pain of loneliness and despair? Not today, today I will drink and tomorrow I will be miserable once more.



Karl Koweski

a bed of kleenex

tears and mucus  
are the lingerie  
of her sorrow

clonzipam rattle  
ritualistically in  
pharmaceutical orange  
mood music for  
the manic depressive

dulled senses  
slurred words

a night for nostalgia  
and reminisce  
anal sex and  
nipple play

her sudden lust  
inspires me to research  
her family tree  
for leaves not yet fallen

I consider her sister  
working late as a  
night auditor for  
a hotel chain


I imagine the funeral  
the formal grieving  
her sister laid  
to rest

I fantasize the aftermath  
the bed of kleenex  
snot sealed kisses  
as we fuck away  
the concept of  
our own mortalities

# THE SILENT CRIME







Sadness deep hurts like scars fresh awakened

Shes hurting  
I'm hurting  
Shes hurting  
I'm hurting  
the tears have started now  
the tears are choking  
Vassals of relief  
they hurt so much  
Release release release  
the hand comes up to the cheek  
it waves at the wetness  
clinging to her  
Pushing past her hair  
I see the confliction  
emotion

A little bit of hatred  
bottled deep inside  
the hunger to release it  
and bury me with my pride  
hunger satisfaction and pain  
it breaks my heart...  
So I  
try to  
break away  
hide my face  
hide my face  
be hard  
Without hatred  
be hard  
WITHOUT WITHOUT  
hatred....  
So I  
try to  
find what  
I should  
I should  
I should  
do....

*Robertson*







## Fourth of July

I love fireworks. I really love them. This Fourth of July I missed them. I'm nearing tears just thinking about it. I've only missed fireworks once before. I was in a train station in another country. A country that doesn't have fireworks on the Fourth of July. I was crying then too. The year after that, I almost missed them. But didn't. I watched them from my ex-boyfriend's car. And we drank champagne back at the house. I don't remember if it was before or after we watched the fireworks. I also love champagne.

*Gwen*

# Untitled

i had the same nightmare every night week month i was alone on a porch looking out at a chair lit by a streetlight

when i was 8 9 10

by a mute scream hands arms legs hair skin stomach insides all outside fuzzy red clouds i would wake up

sweating and screaming it was always me



their faces kissed and ravaged

with a silent

whispered them with a silent

it was my hair it was i who kissed them with a silent

and slowly pull their body apart

it was my hair it was i who kissed them with a silent

it was me in the dark

but it was me in the dark

untill a few moments ago

at me an arm would come from the dark

and strip of their clothes

and slowly pull their body apart

untill a few moments ago

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and strip of their clothes

and slowly pull their body apart

untill a few moments ago

but it was me in the dark

at me an arm would come from the dark

with my mother cooling and trying to whisper me  
my sisters or mother or father  
would be sitting in the chair looking  
to sleep i did not realize it

at me an arm would come from the dark

and strip of their clothes

and slowly pull their body apart

untill a few moments ago

but it was me in the dark

at me an arm would come from the dark

and strip of their clothes

and slowly pull their body apart

untill a few moments ago

but it was me in the dark

at me an arm would come from the dark

and strip of their clothes

and slowly pull their body apart



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