

Wrong Brain

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Passing Time

I suggested that we go bowling
With the magic eight ball.
My company wasn't interested. Instead,
they wanted to ask it
whether or not
we should do this or that,
whether we will die young or old.
I said that I would like to build
a house made of Tarot cards,
each room a reminder of why not
to waste time guessing
what to do next.



Dream Sequences :

I am sitting in a chair aloof when a loud knock rattles my quiet. I remain still and wait for the intrusion to fade but it remains incessant, the intervals quickening between thumps. Soon enough, voices begin to call for me, droning my thoughts to a stutter. This horrible rupture utters forth in my soul, a dread so languid that it paralyzes me. And so I sit in anguish, trapped in this body, with these voices from outside that will not leave me alone.

Sought over and left immobile, I awaken from my slumber by stirrings within my belly, caused by sour forebodings of what these hanging appointments will make of me if leave them unattended. I run towards the door, towards these beckoning sound-gestures, not quite articulated to the point of sense but rather low murmurs; yet I know what they want – they want me, and staked to a post, the shameful disgrace that I am. The behooved dog-begging-for-a-bone that I am.

When all has subsided, I will restore my virtue, but until then... all is of a sort and I must work with what I have at hand. Unfortunately, what I have is very little (alone in this room as I am); and with endless postponement on hand, time cutting itself in half with each step I take, I feel my innards about to burst. I have not yet learned the subtle art of invisibility, I have not yet learned how to slip silently in-between these “happenings”, so my efforts of improvisation are mostly done in futility. When I do learn, all will be of a piece; but now, all is of a sort.

And so onward, baboon, onward! – What is inevitable is unavoidable, the door must be opened, and these intruders must be dealt with! – But yet, wait: I have opened the door and nothing shines forth but green grass and blue sky. A beautiful day, indeed, by all standards! And there, across from me, is placed a bench peopled by a child and his mother. The child stands right in front of his mother, breached up by his skivvies, suspenders holding together a ragged assortment of garments patch-worked to provide cover for his fragile body against the protruding reality outside the flesh. The mother sits, as is in deep meditation, eyes rolled back, legs spread apart, embracing the boy, enticing him to return to her womb, her red dress

parted to reveal the pink portal from whence he came. This gaping posture of hers arouses me in a confused and incestuous way, me who is now sitting on this bench no more than a few feet opposed to them. The child is completely unaware of what his mother is doing behind him; he seems artificially imposed upon the scenery, a soft blue-green tint enveloping his edges. He remains vibrant and abrasive in comparison to the background, staring at me with these uncanny eyes that glimmer phosphorescent light. Oh what to do with this naughty child who has been causing such a ruckus?

And now, as if in response to this arousing yet unsettling situation, my ear has detached itself from my head and dropped to the ground like a dog drops a bone with the intention of trading it for your meal. What does this child have to offer me? He grows timid before such a disruptive display of absurdity. I can see the horror grow on his face as he slowly comprehends what happened, looking back towards his mother for reassurance but she is now more entranced than ever, frothing from the gaping wound between her legs, spurting forth a fountain that showers the child. He is more bewildered than ever, as am I, astonished at the spectacle before me, this violence done to me consistency. Soon enough my ear begins to grow legs. I think to myself: “No, this can’t be.” And yet there they are, proportional to its size. It stands upright and regards its surroundings as if it had eyes.

The mother now seems completely drained, the last drops of moisture dripping down her legs. She remains motionless, slowing fading into the bench; the child is trembling, shaking with such bravado that welts begin to crop up on his skin. I look directly at my wandering ear with intent eyes, so furious am I with its behavior that I say: “Into the box with you! No flesh of mine gets away so easily! I am both dada and mama as far as you are concerned...” And with that cure, it jumps into the black and red striped box I hold in my hands, laying to rest the demons that had torn it from my control. One violence traded for another, liberated flesh returned to slavery; the ego wins once again...

His visage was stricken with the disgust and horror of having recently awoken to circumstances quite out of his control. He was within a vast column of cement: dirty stairs ascending and descending into dimly lit fluorescent lights. Whether he wanted to go up or down he could not decide. The decision lay out of his control. In the place of a neck, several score of insect legs with whiskered ankles and small, clicking feet, shuffled and pulled him in all directions at once. They smashed him against the wall, the organism tumbled over as it ran him into the wall. He screamed as several of the legs brushed against his face. The yell decayed through a series of cement echoes under a chaos of insect clicks: "why is this happening...is this happening...happening?" As if in response, the legs jolted into formation and began to bound up the stairs in a mad system of motion.

After some brief attempts at interference, the man gave him self over to his transport. The flights passed readily and he came to enjoy the consistency and continuity of the ascent. The echoing clicks changed gradually into buzzing in his ear and eventually he didn't notice the sound of his legs at all. A vague fear sat in his skull but he was mostly contented by the apparent progress. He was jerked from this tranquility at the bottom of one flight of stairs upon seeing a head facing the ceiling, eyes open dead, flesh white and sunken, plastered with the look of horror. In place of the corpse's body were several score of insect legs twitching idly and with sudden bouts of desperation, unable to right the corpse. The incessant noise suddenly returned to him. It seemed louder than ever. He tried to jerk his head around to more closely regard the face of the dead man but the forces under him wouldn't allow it, they kept bouncing upward. He came to recognize the smell in his nose as rot.

The fear lost its vagueness and began to permeate his consciousness. The legs showed no signs of stopping and each flight brought upon more anxiety. His breath started to quicken. His eyes strained to see the light hanging at the top of each flight and then when it revealed only another flight, they strained anew. He passed several more corpses, some of which slowly made their way down the flights by the coincidental forces of their dead impulses. The smell of rotting increased and he began to panic, cursing his legs and shouting at them to stop. They didn't. His head beat with an intense pain amplified by each insect click. As the legs rushed upwards, the concentration of corpses began to increase. He soon ran into the face of a dead man and began to climb over it, puncturing its eye and ripping apart its lips with his incessant apertures. It was only then, in that mutilated moment that he realized that every dead body wore the head that he knew as his own.





Among the Fish

Together we have stumbled

Gallantly upon

What others before us call real progress
Together we will stumble

Further and call it historical progress
Everyday experience validates itself

By projecting our fears onto nature.
A concept. We have created these concepts. These concepts.

We are ready to die for a concept we have created.

These concepts have already destroyed us.
Why? Yes.
We do not see just as fish do not see water.

Our machine reconstructs our vision. Many of us are happy. We will die

Happy or unhappy. Or content
Who has known any better? The answer is

Is is is is is

Is is is is is is is is is is s s s

No. Yes.
Technology will never be what we have always wanted
it to be and never do what we have always wanted it to be
and do and be and do and be and aha! make things! Haha life um
what?





17 Heather Kehney

Coffee

I'm a fiend, gotta find a way to feed the fix.
I'm not mean; I don't like using dirty tricks
But I'll dig deep into cushions for some spare change
And I'll hand it to you, just so I can get a taste.
That one taste.



Amy Bones 18

The Head is Full of Unwritten Letters

writing themselves, trying to figure

Which way to turn in the night

When hands have stopped moving.

The moon stopped shining months ago and no one could tell what was missing.

The people kept biting on arms trying to remember what to howl at, no recollection of what to look for.

Longing to return the unwritten letters—

Spontaneous screaming Simultaneous screaming

“we must get away” “We must remain” “We must advance” “We must figure out this thing” “We must find a way to stop” “We must return”

“We must press play” We must play—

Stay away from that person that Person’s got holes in the head

That persons howls are opening up into people who have holes.

Life has been gnawing at that person who finds it difficult to communicate from the place of being gnawed at.

If all the people look away the moon starts shining

From the holes of that person, again.

Simultaneous screaming Spontaneous screaming:

press play

Draft

There issued blood and smoke from a hole in my side.

There issued fire from chimneys.

There issued soldiers into the street to

surround what, they asked—

draining hip flasks of spirits

gathered from skyward gaping mouths--

their victims’ last breaths exhaled only to be captured

again and imbibed so the bleary sky could cease to divide

the world into patterns and factions subtracting themselves

endlessly by perhaps playfully switching sides to mow down

comrades during a firefight or jumping onto a live grenade to save a

nice transistor radio that played and played its song

until the hillside twinkled with lit cigarette tips

and gleaming eyes of those who appreciated

the noble sacrifice of the nameless private

and drifted off to sleep not guessing that when the last eye

of a scene closes, everything it holds up falls to the ground—

tents, trees, clouds, a biplane,

mess kits, moon.

*

I salute my lieutenant then chloroform a spy.

I dismantle the spy

and congratulate a bomb.

It goes off and I’m hit

then wrapped in tourniquets ripped

from what was left of the villagers’ clothing.

Ah, the joys

of absorbing ordnance,

ignoring orders to advance

upon a fortified position,

exchanging fire

for some water to put it out with.

*

(In an abandoned house)

If only the trip wire weren’t hitched

to a crooked seascape someone will come to fix.

Let it pour on the floor,

I’d implore if

only to spare my men from

cleaning up the mess

*

Tourniquets release their grips upon

swaddled wounds, stacks of severed limbs

roll down a hillside interrupting the marriage

of a plough to land it just happens to be passing through.

If only that last eye knew that not looking

would make it all come undone, that mere forgetfulness

allows blood to pour again and again.

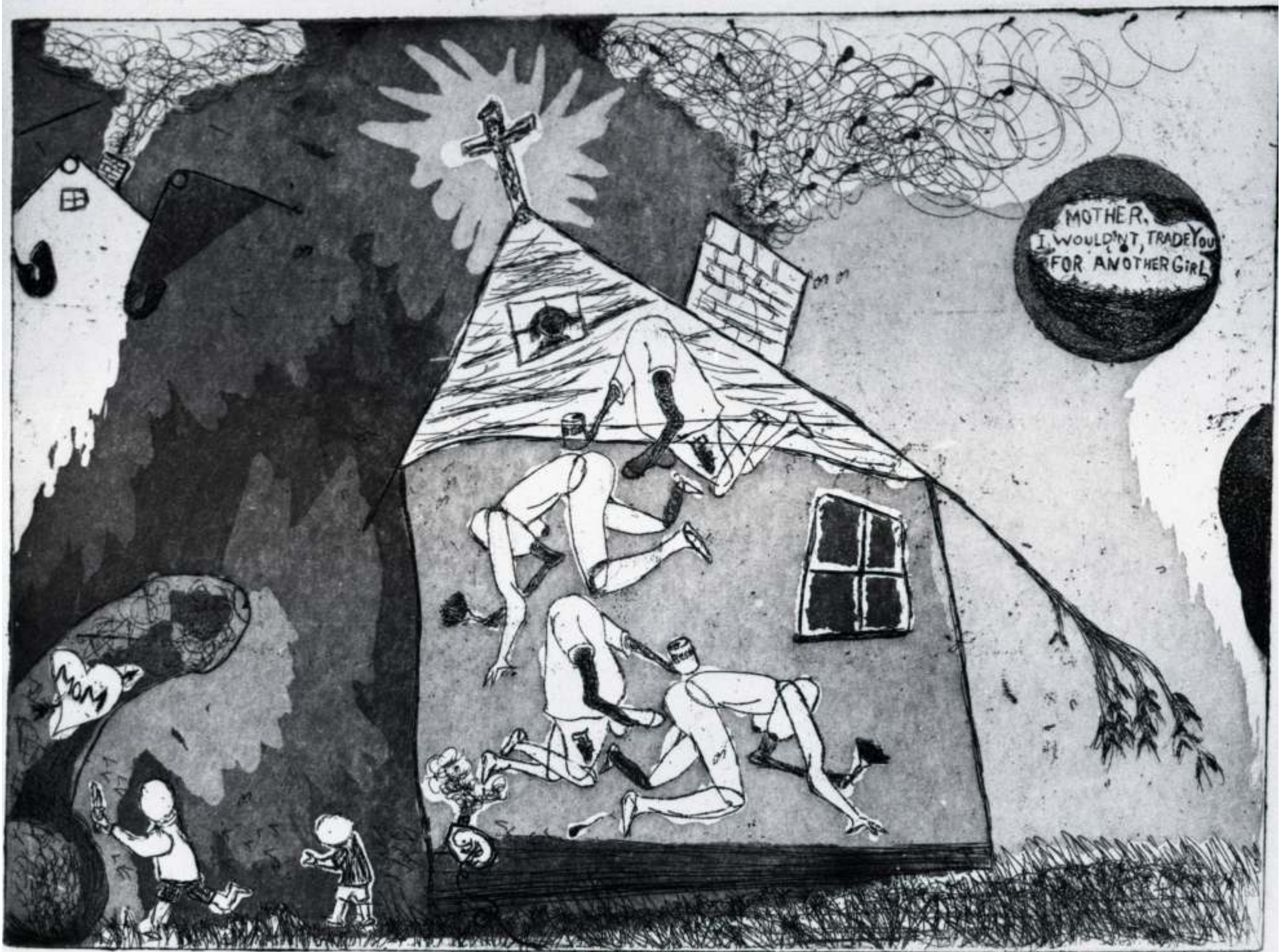
Perhaps it would beg forgiveness,

summon the power

to circumvent againness knowing

that if only we had known,

it would have made no difference.







25 Sammy Johnson



Sammy Johnson 26

there is nothing, coiling devils,
that would satisfy me more than sneaking
up behind you, yelling at the top of my lungs
and watching your scales stiffen, your sinister body
fail you. Then I will strip down
naked, walk into the woods and sit,

waiting

for the life of things to grow
tangled around my ankles
between the toes tightly,

waiting

for a bird to land on my head
scratch my burning scalp and begin
singing in french, warping everything
I knew at one time into a new understanding
that it is not actually french
not language at all, but an exact sound,

a chain

derailing into sprockets
metal on metal or just
the wind, splitting through branches
across fogging window panes

and then I will reach

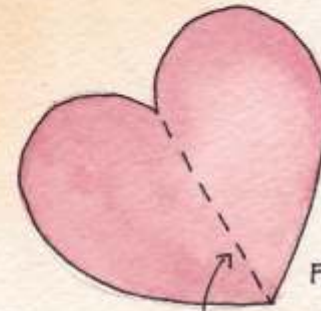
Out of myself

running my finger along the slender
sandpaper body while it waits by my side
in a mutual gaze, for the flowers to bloom

through our eyes.
--Harrison Christian

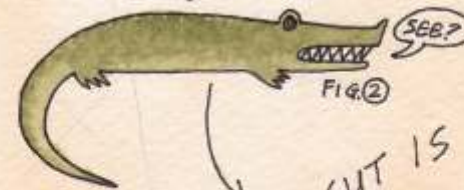


INSTRUCTIONS:



CUT HERE!
WITH JAGGED SCISSORS.

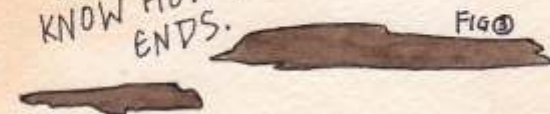
YOU KNOW, THE
ONES WITH TEETH
LIKE AN ALLIGATOR!



SO THE CUT IS
TWICE AS LONG.

(SCISSORS SHOULD BE
BLUNT & RUSTED
IF POSSIBLE)

WE ALL
KNOW HOW IT
ENDS.

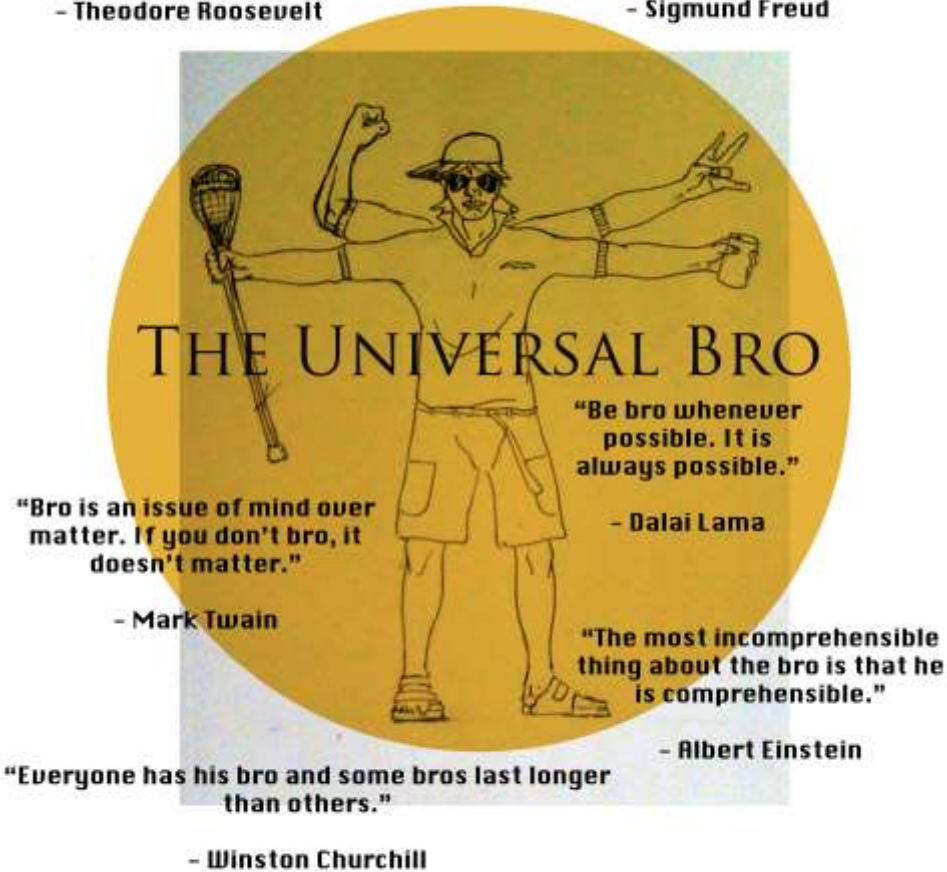


"A thorough knowledge of the bro is worth more than a college education."

- Theodore Roosevelt

"Everywhere I go I find that a bro has been there before me."

- Sigmund Freud



"Bro is an issue of mind over matter. If you don't bro, it doesn't matter."

- Mark Twain

"Be bro whenever possible. It is always possible."

- Dalai Lama

"The most incomprehensible thing about the bro is that he is comprehensible."

- Albert Einstein

"Everyone has his bro and some bros last longer than others."

- Winston Churchill

"A bro is a bro is a bro..."

- Gertrude Stein

"Be not ashamed of bros and thus make them bros."

- Confucius

Chicken Calabasa

CHICKEN WITH BUTTERNUT SQUASH

Serves 4

This is an excellent recipe for the cool weather.

1 whole chicken breast no tenderloins sliced across the grain about ½ inch thick. (looks like rounds)

1 green pepper sliced into wedges

1 lg onion sliced into strips

3 tblsp. Butter

1 tblsp cumin

¾ tsp. chili powder

¾ tsp. ground cayenne to taste

1 small butternut squash

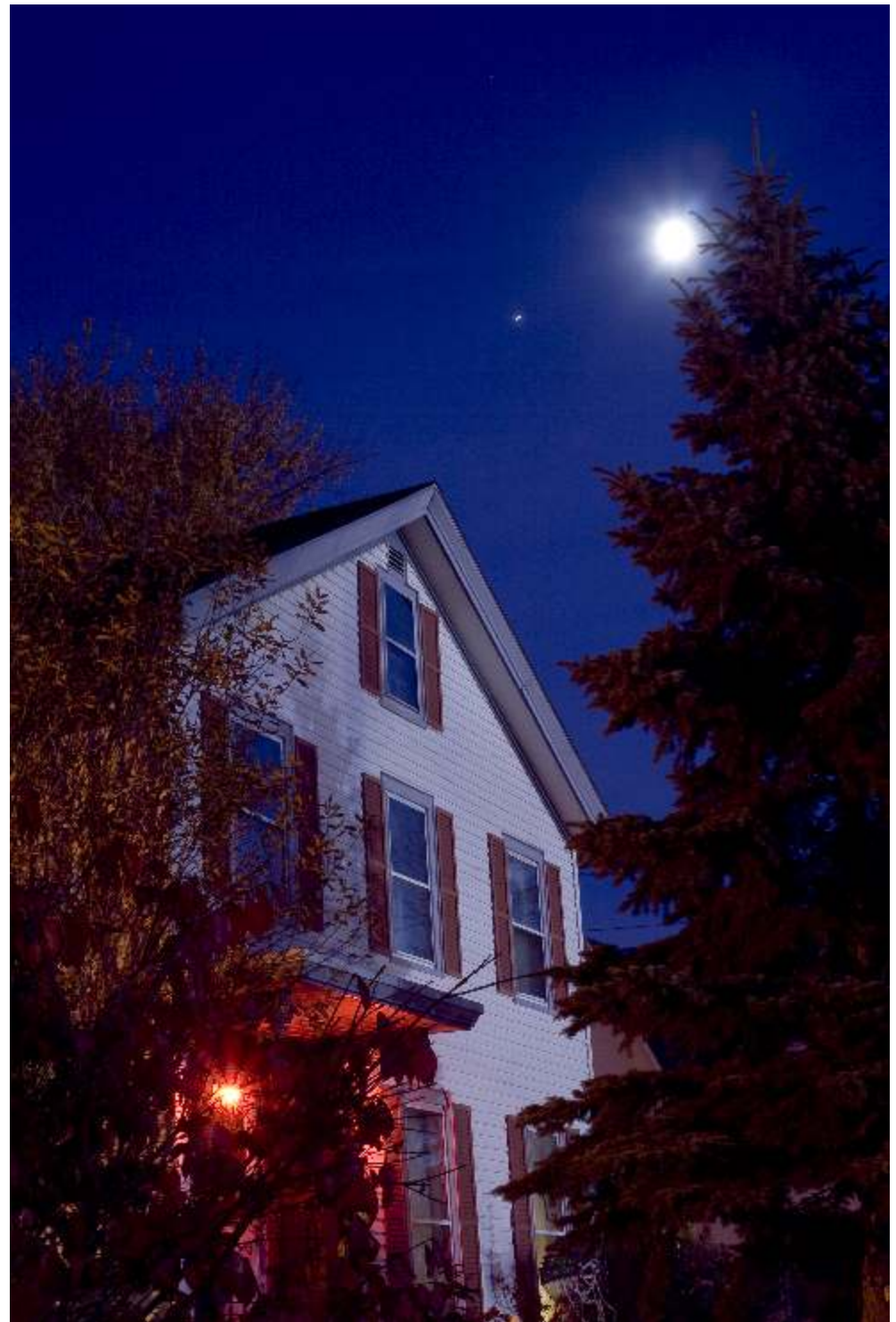
½ cup flour

1 c. chicken stock

Cook the butternut in medium chunks until they are tender, strain them and let them cool. Meanwhile, sautee the other vegetables in butter until soft. Remove and set aside. Coat the chicken pieces in flour and lightly brown them in the same pan that you cooked the vegetables in. Once browned, add the vegetables back to the pan until hot. Scatter all the spices over the chicken and vegetables and sautee (high heat) until mostly dry, tossing them lightly to coat them evenly. Add the stock and bring to a boil. Cover and simmer on very low heat for 45 minutes. Add the butternut and gently simmer for another 10 minutes.

I serve it over white rice.

Variation: instead of squash you could add squash blossoms. 5 or 6 in the last 10 minutes of cooking time.



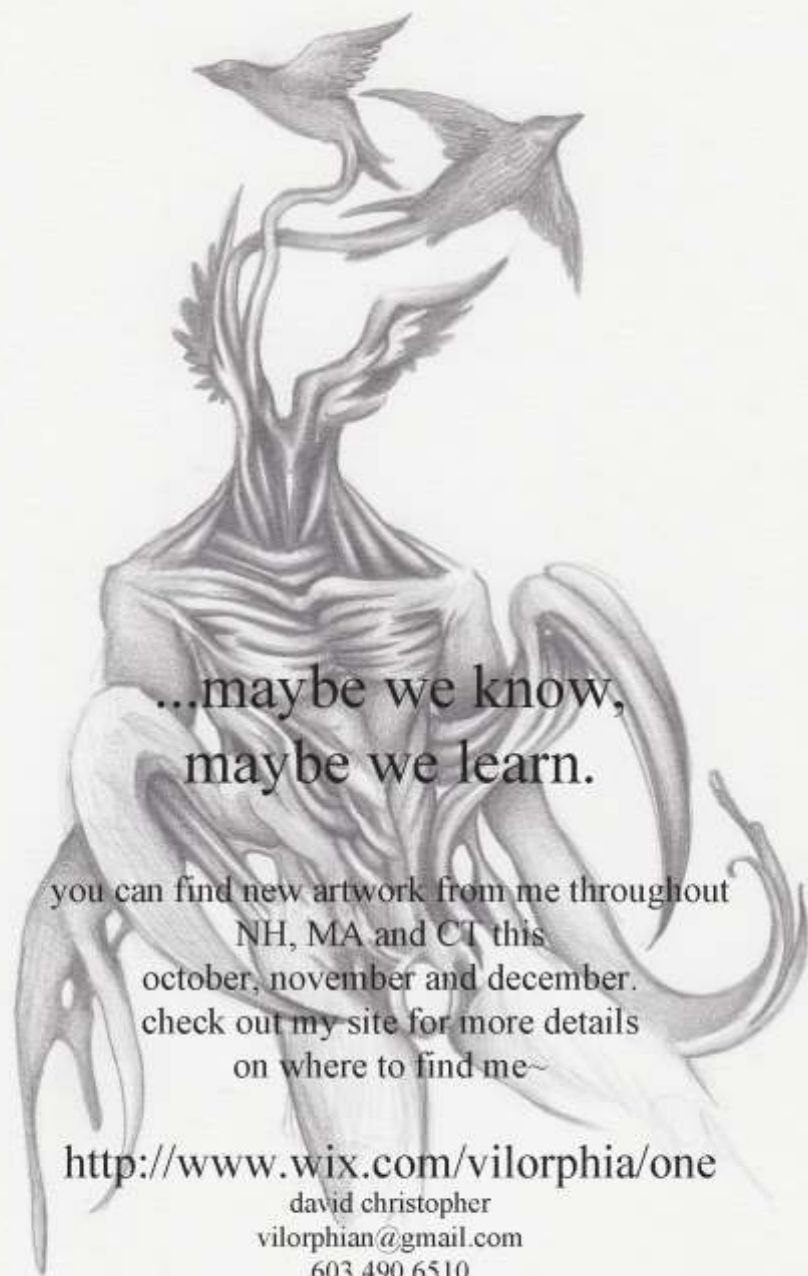


Battle Royale With A Fruit Fly
in a McDonald's Bathroom

I rush in to find relief
Pull down pants,
lift up seat
There you are
Annoying pest
You zoom
by my chest

And wait to strike
While I wipe
I've other crap to do
After the kind
I've already done
You're watching
from above
So I run





call me.call me.callme.call me....call.....me



the deer

this piece is available framed and mounted from the artist
for \$50.00 which goes directly towards printing costs for
future issues of wrong brain.
help us continue wrongbrainin'

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Sam at spaolini@wrongbrain.net

I appreciate the lone artist, the starving shut-in who paints masterpiece after masterpiece until she dies, cold, staring at her latest unfinished offspring. She is a hero who is read about in art history class, giving me and other hopefuls a romantic ideal of artistic euphoria. But with such creative energy comes an inevitable reclusive, destructive and depressing lifestyle. Why is the most tormented the most powerful? I desire the traumatic to motivate. This desire is unhealthy. I need an artistic family.

The Damaged Soul has been my unrealistic artistic ideal. I recognize the deliriousness and hopelessness of my Artist Hero. My work compared to the Damaged Soul's just seems fruity. Silly. Fake. If I aspire to be a demented genius, why do I spend my time publishing zines with my colleague's work? Why reach out to the creative beings around me?

Perhaps if I cannot muster up enough creative energy within myself, I can harvest it from those around me. Although the ideas and subjects themselves are birthed from my subconscious, a fervent motivation to give them a proper home is not always present. Seeing and feeling the work of my artistic family drives me to get these things out of my head and into the world. Perhaps I can kill my Damaged Soul ideal with my artistic family, Wrong Brain.

