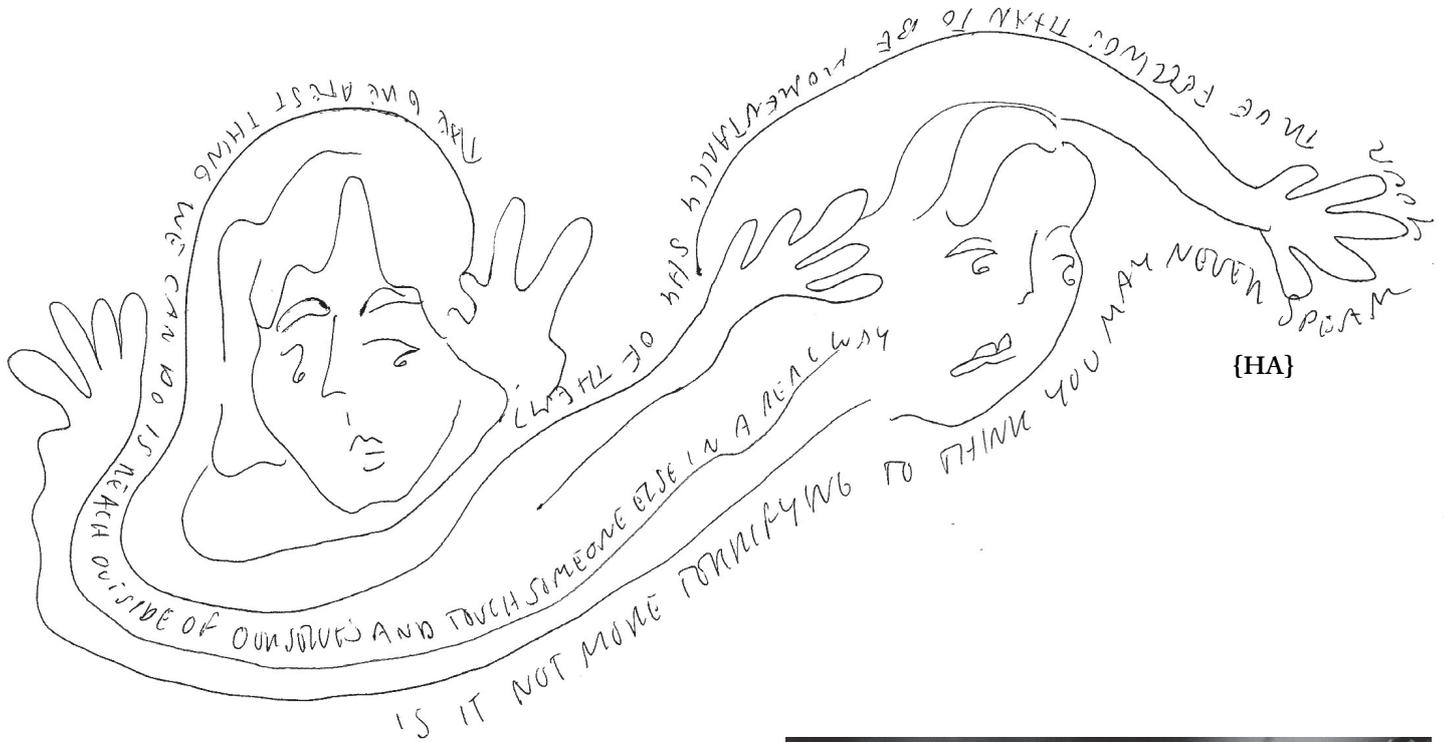


The Paper



space forgets you

The fallibility of the heart is constantly surprising
 before you even have the chance to realize
 it seizes up at the sight of a
 patch of sidewalk
 that bridge we stood under
 (once)
 the slightest semblance in the silhouette of a stranger
 even a box of cat litter
 (for fuck's sake)
 these little links of meaning that we make
 microbial connections
 so cunning
 are only clear after the fact
 the people that they compose in your mind
 (phantoms now)
 merely cling
 begrudgingly
 to the sites of subliminal memory
 your feeble heart assigns them to
 every act is one of love
 and that is nothing to feel shame for

{HA}



{LP}

optical illusion

Kendra came home from the hospital today, tender and glacial. It took her so long to climb the front steps, each one impossible, eternal. Ours are larger than normal, of course I'd never noticed. Same things seen differently. For the tallest ones she sat on a chair positioned at the edge, turning her knees while sitting to then ascend. Her face was worn, wincing. A place we could not access. Silky shirt with green and white stripes that her mom got from Victoria's Secret, the nearest store to the hospital, colorful beaded necklaces from Chin, something cheerful. You look like mardi gras, I said, I felt foolish. We must have seemed so far away. I kept thinking of the moment of impact. How scary it must have been, and then to have to wait, how endless. At the door at last she turned around and said *goodbye outside world, I'll miss you* (damn). She was on the porch again in just a week, but already the season had changed. Sitting in a rocking chair, blankets on her lap, scarf, hat. I thought of the drawing that's both an old and young woman depending on how you look at it. She was writing in a journal, the words looked very small. Were they smaller than before? She said that she felt like a child, the connotation negative. The connotation how our wretched culture teaches us that we must rely on ourselves. To be ashamed to ask for help, to need it. To hide away when we get old so no one has to see, no one has to think about infirmity. And we forget how anything can happen, at any time, to anyone. Especially driving, out there in our death machines.



{JB}

Elevator To The Gallows

we are not sons of Adam
 Eve is frothing on the parapet
 we cut teeth and held down new bread
 these fat fashion bred fatness
 plain as the damn day is long
 we rested on laurels and longing
 corralled into clubs for no hoppers
 we ushered in quick quid utopias
 fishy prophets who stunk the place out

{AP}



{P}



The Rugged Charm Of A World Indifferent

bootlickers gagging on grazed knees
 mommy you give us reason to live
 father you give us meaning
 the mother is the monarchy
 the father is the nation
 the neighbours starve hapless
 the babies unheld keep wailing
 the grandma cleans up spilled spaghetti
 the grandad falls drunk down the stairs
 this is the rugged charm of a world indifferent
 the working class stab each
 other in the neck for stale crumbs
 in the mortified darkness they pray
 to an invisible god who don't give a fuck

{AP}

BACK-BURNT

What was the last thing that you purposefully postponed? Maybe, it was calling an old friend - or doing the dishes - even beginning that book. How often do we say: 'I'll do it tomorrow' - with little to no time to slow the treadmill of the sleep wake-work cycle or, in the comfort of knowing that tomorrow will look & feel pretty similar to yesterday? In turn, we can put our hobbies and the people we love on hold - back-burners - second class post - archived - relations-hipped. That said, today marks a change in tide, to re-define the pre-defined. Watch me as I grow & break free from the ache of this routine but first, please take a seat while I get back to you - let me answer this email then take a much needed nap.

{P}

Homage to Vini Reilly

a receipt for deceit
a pocket full of spare change
an emptiness in the heart
that cannot be filled

a terrible terrible
feeling of desperation that
has you questioning

why you feel this way
if nothing has happened
then what's bought it on?

as you dig into the
heart of the matter

searching for a viable
trigger you start to
feel sick and mutilated

thankfully there is always
ample distraction

we are never short of distractions

we are short of money
we are short of love
we are short of kindness
we are short of forgiveness

but we are never short of distractions

so here's to another sleepless night for
the people's pleasure paradox



{AP}

{LP}

Katie's Theme / Sunflower Blues Pt. 1

she loved her cats, all cats
and especially Jasper the fattie

we shared that sensibility

and when the horses were in
their starting blocks she always
said 'look at their little legs,
aren't they cute'

now she did chat a lot,
almost incessantly, like
it was a nervous disposition
to fill the empty space but she
had this singular burning intensity

you could feel her as she spoke

she loved pizza and knew all
the best takeaways for a scan

it was Arctic Monkeys tunes and
knowing all the lyrics by heart

there was sunflowers always
and cool french turns of phrase

all slightly above ingenuine emotion

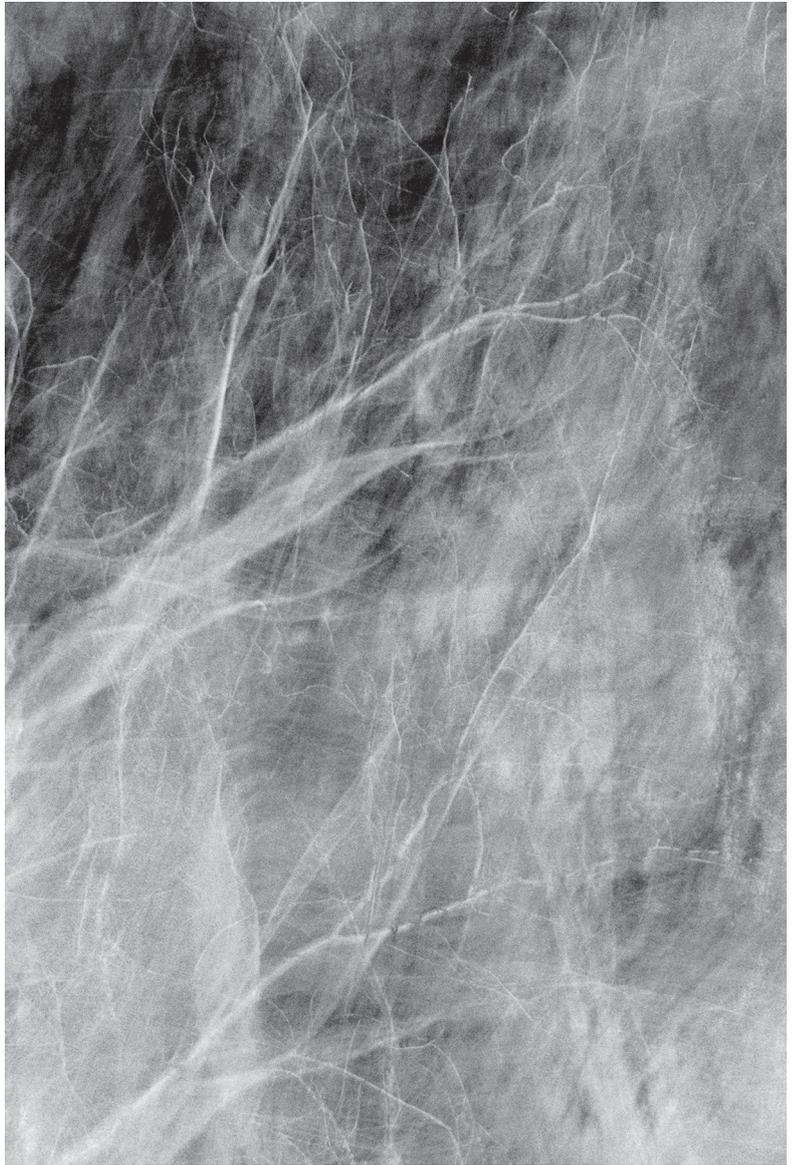
or learned honesty through pain

and she talked about values and
had that self deprecating quality

when she walked
it was pace and purpose
and when she spoke
looking into her green eyes

she was so delicate
and vulnerable that
she might
 just quietly
fall apart

but she'd find time
to stitch the pieces
back together again



{LP}

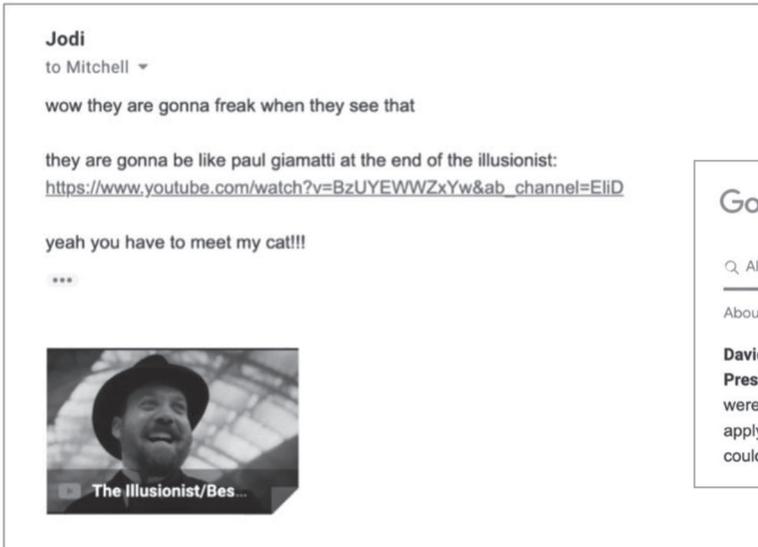
Grieve for Change

I grieve for that what change leaves behind.
The songs once sung in joy and pride,
Now cast dark clouds upon my mind.
And in that moment of weakness,
The hurt which I feel is only internal.
And though it shrinks away each day,
It stays with me – always and eternal.

{AP}

{DW}

twin films



this the one with (*redacted, via learned my lesson*)?????" And they said "SSHHHHH Carly hasn't seen it!!" Which was my bad. Which one was David Bowie in, I am wondering, I look this up. It was *The Prestige*, Christopher Nolan was a big fan of his.²



I always mix up the *The Illusionist* and *The Prestige*, released mere months apart in the year 2006. I wonder if this is a coincidence. I am not the first to wonder this. I learn there is a phenomenon called "twin films"¹ where very similar movies are released at the same time, something that has happened almost every year since the 1950s. For example, *Harlow* and *Harlow* in 1965, both about the life of Jean Harlow. Possible explanations include espionage, staff overlap, screenplays sent to multiple places, and topics that are relevant.

I came home once when my old roommates were watching one of these (*The Illusionist* or *The Prestige*) and said loudly "is

Bowie plays Nikola Tesla, a "real" magician (do not take him for some conjurer of cheap tricks!³) via his inventions. He meets with stage magician Robert Angier (Hugh Jackman), who Tesla him to build a machine. Tesla says the machine can be built ("nothing is impossible, Mr. Angier. What you want is simply expensive") but warns him not to do this. He asks, "Mr. Angier, have you considered the cost of such a machine?" Angier replies that price is no object. Tesla says, "Perhaps not, but have you considered the cost?"

{JB}

¹ https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twin_films

² https://www.etonline.com/features/200214_christopher_nolan_cast_david_bowie_the_prestige

³ Gandalf, *The Fellowship of The Ring*

motherhip

Battle to the death just
for a roof over your head
I dread
the day it comes to
life
tear me open
a wound that Home can't heal
when you're not there.

empty nest, at best I'm
Keeping my head
above the water.

If i'm no Longer
a daughter
do I cease
to exist?

{AH}

1.08am, 11/9/22

the only constant is inconstant

our fates fluctuate

the only way
is through

{AP}



Katie's Theme / Sunflower Blues Pt. 2

the years are old cats they are not fearful
 old cats are timeless the most fearless
 the timeless faces are yours to pick and choose
 to pick and choose is an exotic luxury in a river of choice
 choice is an endless swirl of coloured pearls
 the endless is without definition but it's eyes full of sun-
 flower blues

{IC}

those eyes like coloured pearls in exotic rivers of tears
 the years are like old cats they are not fearful
 feline elegance curled by the crackling fire

we are the unfortunate children of chaos
 we are timeless in devotion and hapless in hope
 we are a river of choice bursting above the prescribed lines
 we are without definition cannot be boxed in
 we are languid cats without limitations of the human form
 we are fearful and not fearless we fostered chaos
 we are doubt and indecision and derision
 we are cruising on impulse loosing on repeat

but we're going to do it anyway
 so what so when so why wait
 we're going to do it anyway
 so who said so who gives a fuck so why wait
 it's all the way or no way at all

{AP}

Contributors

Contributions accepted on a rolling basis, submit before the 20th to feature in the following month issue. Send your words, images and more to: goodpress.thepaper@gmail.com

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