

Surrepetition^f

(And it is told:

And I find this in my bag:

And this is best, when everything
turns to shit. When the map falls
into the body, sinks to the bottom
like a net cut lost and slowly covered
[by] the bottom of the sea. When I go
down, and I remember. Six hundred miles
to get this place, to say, now, now
to say You Will Never See Me Again.
The map is in me now. Looking opened
and died.

A man sits down at my table and tells me the town has died. Who we are and how we came to be here. Emis.

For four hours in a hotel room,
call me to wake me, and then the
gradual process of going home. He
was born here, but can't wait to
leave, to go home. The empty seat
across from me is filled, briefly,
with another cut of the original,
magnificent, stone. We shine. We
sit. We are going home.

3rd St. Diner 2:30 am Richmond, VA

What is constant is the smell of the shit of young children, frightened playful eyes glimpsed through a cracked stall door. The father watches, helps.

Girl's shit smells different from the boy's. Bewildered curiosity at recognizing the unlikeness of I and my sister's shit. How her saliva would turn half-bitten food into irradiated vague threat object, exuding a passage through otherness disgusting and presenting a standoff.

One bowl is not flushed completely. Sixth Street Mall, Confederate Bricks under glass. Tupperware nation. The little girl's turd floats, meandering around the bowl, that little girl shit smell hangs in the air between the stall walls, hovers above the bowl. Odor of an M&M with a small, jagged metal center. A drunk, placing two large CVS shopping bags wrapped with gaffing tape by the door, enters. I close the stall. Everything is dirty about him, except for new white pants. He looks at himself as he passes the sinks and the ten foot mirror, his expression unmoving. As I peer through the stall his odor strikes my face. Alcohol, blood, livid socks and underwear, stale tobacco. He has the high cheekbones and tapering chin of a West Indian. He goes into the last stall, I am in the first nearest the door. I hear him sit. I hear plastic rustle. I hear a lighter ignite. I hear him work the pipe. No one else has entered. It is Thanksgiving evening, and the mall is just about empty.

I pluck the turd up and crush it against my front teeth, feeling it make its way through the cracks, ice cold, drops of freezing water on my chin.

I open the door much too roughly, and its crash is like a shotgun blast off the tiles. I am at the mirror, smiling, shit all over my teeth. My shiteating grin. I am crying, it is Thanksgiving and I am alone, smiling in the mirror.

My bowels vomit into my pants. Something is wrong. I am homesick, I think.

My hands smear shit all over one of his bags as I tear into it. I hear his stall explode. "Naw fucking way," he is saying as he takes a giant step towards me. He stops stepping and says

"Holy motherfucking shit."

"I just need some pants."

"What's going on man. What's happening here now?"

"I just need some pants."

"Ain't got none, 'cept these."

"I don't think I want to continue this story. I think I want this story to stop. I was just homesick, it was a homesickness is all."

"Well you best find someway a clean yoself up. Just don't touch another fucking thing that's mine. Please step the fuck away. Away!"

"I didn't mean this. I didn't mean for this story to happen. I want this story to stop. I want this story to stop."

The Old Dominion takes me home, where I live.

The map sinks into the body, eliminating distance with fire.

Nov. 26, 1994

1:30-2:30

Amtrack Old Dominion

Richmond, VA → NYC