

NACHTRÄGLICHKEIT

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Vision telescopes as it collapses (dead eyes hold frozen the last image they saw) but no one saw the telescope collapse, and he said he used to be a *county extension agent* but now the preferred term was *earth observer*, or she saw the whole sun in my half-smile but when I laughed she saw the bit of lettuce along my gum line.

“Schwitters felt, Schwitters experienced, Schwitters was corporeal,” and I write with only one hand and my handwriting is so bad I have trouble making out the word *double*, but late winter sunlight is always somewhere, on my right forearm, my left ear, my closed eyelids.

They asked which rocks *seemed darker*, and I answered the phone and she said, “Is your phone working?” but when he wiggled his fingers in front of my eyes and said, “You are getting sleepy,” I realized I’d heard all this before, so I took a nap until he finished.

“Change comes from the end of a gun” and “thought is produced in the mouth”
and it’s just naturally occurring radiation.

Our t-shirts said *contractors* and we sure were tough because when we drove our pick-up through the barn the whole building exploded but we came out OK, and those under thirty were surprised to learn that “change” means “what’s left over,” but we didn’t actually seed the clouds—those were pompoms.

It's unusual for me to express strong approval or disapproval of the actions of animals around me that others do not see, but Woody Allen thought the people at lunch kept saying "Jew," and that's putting the training wheels before the Bigfoot.

No wonder I had trouble sleeping—“the mental spaces of dream, of memory, and of the imagination are equally upright,” but *purified by reverse osmosis*, or I often believe that someone has control over my door latches.

It didn't matter to her that I was kicking her shin in Morse code: that the mortician had a Picasso cubist portrait c. 1913 on his wall was cause for concern, or civilization and its phantom limb.

They had no sense of place, so of course they listened to the radio: static cling is a common behavioral problem, or Panda in China Zoo Bites College Student who Wanted a Hug.

I had to write the gaps, too: she always asked for the holes the blender tongs left in the mashed potatoes, or we never found the moon but after all there is only one.

Malevich's *Black Square* has cracked into a net of white lines: when the polka music started, he said a bolt from heaven is what I wanted but this is nice, but I don't care how much of a sale it was, the clerk wasn't talking *me* into buying evaporated milk.

I guess it's OK that my new kidney has "Made in Hollywood, USA," stenciled on it, or the west is still wild—most corporate products are corralled by either the Circle C or the Circle R ranch, or they were talking turnaround time before I'd made it all the way through the door.

There was no disputing the final figures—the universe turns out to be an outie black hole, or our invention was hailed as a breakthrough in killing moles, but the fullback cleared the ball off the goal line with a swiveling kick and the announcer shouted, “And *somehow* they’ve cleared the ball!”

The cow in the commercial was angry that the man was eating chicken, or “he’s fallen down—rather optimistically”: I felt bad all day but then my sleepiness before bed was normal, so I knew I was OK.

Important archeological sites such as Abu Hureyra and Jerf al Ahmar are now under water, or her breakouts were *under* the skin: I find it hard to make talk when I hear strange things when I am alone.

How can you say I'm dull just because entropy reminds me of . . . of . . . of so much I couldn't possibly begin to go into details, but "despite my recurring depression, my handwriting has recently displayed an upward slant," but I'm beginning to suspect the bottle of invisible ink I've been using for twelve years is empty.

It was perfectly clear, so of course we couldn't see it, but in training I bury that 9 out of 10 times: more technically, it was a pre-ghost.

We've rescued the dogs that kept the people up all night before the hurricane but now there are thousands of orphaned pet rocks in the Middle East: WWII Rages on at the Multiplex: the alien said all I had to do to go to its spaceship was take its hand but no way I was doing that, because who knows where that hand had been?

MARK CUNNINGHAM has three chapbooks out — *Second Story* and *nightlightnight* (with photographs by Mel Nichols), both from Right Hand Pointing, and *10 specimens* from Gold Wake Press — and three books, *Body Language* from Tarpaulin Sky Press, *80 Beetles* from Otoliths, and *71 Leaves*, an ebook from BlazeVox.

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