

PlaceQueer

Dumb Shit Pertaining To the Intersections of Place and Body in a Life Lived Invariably In-Between
Tuxford Turner

The Place Where Noodle Boy Lived

My ex-girlfriend's
parents'
downstairs tenants'
son and daughter-in-law
live with their newborn baby
in the house where I learned to masturbate.

I went back once before they moved in.
The walls had been painted a different color
and the stain where Jake spilled
a 44-ounce Speedway Dr. Pepper
had been replaced with unfamiliar carpet.

I walked around that barren house
remembering when a thousand spider eggs
broke open on my pillow
as I tried to fall asleep.
I've never seen my pacifist mom
so ferally protective of her cub
as when she sucked their tiny souls
into the oblivion of a raging death
vacuum.

I felt like Harry Potter
with my chin scar throbbing
over the chunk of floor where Tara
had bit me on reflex
when I kept pretending to pick her up.
She did not like being picked up.
No not one bit.
The poor doggo had
whimpered in corners for days because
dogs don't know how to apologize.

The basement was three times
the size without four lifetimes
of collected possessions and garbage

boxed up and shoved into corners.
The basement ghost that used
to chase me up the stairs felt lonely
without the desk where my Dad
would run autocad and watch horror movies
until 2am
Ignoring the projects that piled up
on his workbench because
He Can Fix It Himself So He Will Fix It Himself.
I regret not stealing the
untouched vaccuum-sealed
ounce of weed I found
in the top left drawer;
A relic of my grandfather
who would send ahead greeny goodies
for himself so he'd have something to do
when he came to visit.

The driveway has an extra parking pad now
which would have been helpful
when we filled an entire dumpster
with half our roof
and all our worldly possessions
and an ounce of the finest Humboldt cannabis
in the weeks before I started college.

But I'd be lying if I said
that pairing your home life down
to a one-bedroom apartment
and a medium-sized U-Haul box
1,000 miles from the unfamiliar
cornfields you came to call home
isn't a great
if involuntary way
to strip away
everything you ever
thought you knew
and make space
for new memories

and new identities
you never knew existed
when you lived in a two-story
craftsman bungalow
in Wauwatosa Wisconsin.

An Aforementioned Baby Doll -- Microchasm #1

Pajama day is purportedly
not the proper time
to present your precious
paternal proxy plaything
to your
uptight preschool
peers.

Oh well.
Probably just trust your parents
when they pleasantly prevent you
from further portage
of personal possessions
onto public property.

Stitches in Santa Fe

My brain first
turned on
falling hands first
onto the shards of a mug
that my large
trusting
house-humans
believed could be carried
by my dumb little
stupid stupid
toddler hands,
not knowing their
litty tiny
foolish
klutzy
ceramic-smashing
gremlin
would never develop past
a six foot tall
bafflingly incompetent
brittle bird being
with long overcooked
noodles
for arms.

In due time my knobby little
leg hinges
began to grow
and rise further
from the ground
off of which
I did not learn
to lift my stupid
itty bitty baby feet
high enough to cross
the threshold into the kitchen
at that tender age

of one.

As I got older
I learned to carry mugs
and enter spaces with caution.
Although doorways will always
be challenging for my shoulders.

But dancing on fresh hardwood
as a kindergartner is difficult,
and that dance can be
a dangerously delicious
deranged devil
of destiny.

They say that satan lies in socks
(I've heard it, I swear)
and this dastardly indenture
devised just that plan,
blending the blood
extracted from my split open chin
with the fresh veneer
of the newly installed floorboards
I was celebrating
with a fatal foxtrot.

So it's no wonder
my mother is nonplussed
one year later
when the gash in my eyebrow
from a high-speed
piano seat reaches
"new layers of skin
she's never seen before."
I go to the hospital for help
but suturing nurses sometimes forget
they're still attached to you
when gesticulating wildly with their hands.

But with age
comes wisdom.

So I grew up
I grew out,
moving away from the
small city
fertilized with my hemoglobin.
I drove across the country
To find a new life.
A life without cracked knuckles
from the gratingly dry
New Mexico winter air.
A life where I could walk barefoot
without making friends
with the goatheads
that sank their teeth
into my squishy baby feet.
A life
free from
the stitches
and clumsiness
of being any age under
a ripe
old
nine.
I look out the window
as new lands whip by
remembering my one final Santa Fe mistake
My mind wanders back to the day before I left
I can still see Brandon Baca's stunned face
as I released a stomach bug
from both ends
and ruined his
new Monopoly set
the first and only time
I ever met his Mom.
But I know that foolish
old life will be behind me
as I continue my life
in the promised land
of Wisconsin.

I embark on this new life
This new glorious chance at redemption
surrounded by people
who share my hair color
and know nothing about my painful past

And immediately trip
during a rainy recess
the first week
at my new school
and reopen my chin
in front of all the
Wisconsin people
I
just
fucking
met.

A Poem About Everything I Remember from My Infant Home in San Francisco

Prepubescence -- Microchasm #2

Teeny voice

Tiny man

Teeny tiny man voice

lady voice?

gay voice?

gay voice.

Big feels

“Straight” feels

Lady-loving lusty feels..

soooo...

MAN VOICE MAN VOICE

MASSIVE MASCULINE

MASTICATING MUSTACHE

MANLY

MANLY

MAN VOICE

ah, home.

Teeny voice.

Tiny voice.

True voice.

Code-Switching Tests

In Santa Fe
they'll ask you to say
Chimichanga
to see if you can hang.
If you pass the initial review
you'll find the prevalence
of your name being replaced by "cracker"
inversely proportional to the amount
of times you whoop your friends' asses
in Jalapeño eating competitions
but you'll always be the token
and as white and fluffy as a Ritz.

In Theatre circles
it simplifies things
if you prefer to lay down
your little fiddle diddles on
analogous genitals
but a beat ass face of makeup
and a kiki when your baritenor
boys hit a high G
will do in a jiffy.

The straight white men
are where it gets tricky.
You may forget how hard
it is to blend in
if you spend the majority
of your life on the fringes
of the straighter side of the spectrum
of your day-to-day soulmates.
But normies are inherently suspicious
of bent wrists.
They can sometimes get nervous
around fast movements
or shorts that stop mid-thigh.
You may lull yourself into thinking

that you are passing smoothly
until people start to slink away from conversations
because they read your smile
as an advance.

You're somewhat in the clear
if you find the ones
whose eyes light up
when you mention some nerd shit
like how *A Clash of Kings*
is the worst book in the series.
You know you couldn't
code-switch about sports
if your life depended on it.
Which one day
it might.

The straighties don't want you
the queers are still working out where to put ya.
You've grown to be a full-on gringo
with a spice tolerance
of the fragile british toddler
you are deep down.
When you wear a suit
or cargo pants
you can generally reap the benefits
of the hegemonic power
of the stark white wand
you were gifted at birth
but that doesn't earn you a place
at any table.

But at home you can let your voice settle
into its quasi-femme waves
of cracking and curving.
You can sing into the shower
in a voice that would make
your best bisexual Mexican music theatre friend
cringe and grab hold of your straight white little larynx.
You can talk to your baby doll

that once got shamed out
of fourth grade pajama day
and a chance of a public life.
And you can be whatever
nondescript humanoid
queer half-lesbian
albino radio attanae
you want to be.

An Introduction to the Less Pleasant Parts of a Socialized Psyche -- Microchasm #3

Ah Glee.

'Twas middle school
when the bards of
Fox (the network
not the news
dear god
not the news)
decide to bring
the most obnoxious
stereotype
of a gay person
to our living rooms
and our small
baby teen brains.

And then all of a sudden
it was cool to be gay.

So of course,
people started to come out.

But Zoe had just
been dating a man

And Cecily
was talking about
getting back together
with her old boyfriend.

So obviously
everyone was doing it
because Glee came out.

Not because
the broken basis
of binary beliefs.

Nah.

Nope nope.

They just don't know themselves.

Kurt made liars
of us all.

Have You Been to NightShop in Bloomington, IL?

I'm not saying I'm magic
or like a major social influencer
All I know for sure
is that towns seem to get cool
after a few years of me living in them.

Back in the day
the apple of Wauwatosa's eye
was Drew's Variety and Craft
a store exclusively built
for stocking stuffers and 2/\$1 bags
of expired candy.
Well I gentrified that bitch
and downtown Wauwatosa
has never been the same.
Now you'd think you were
in the same quaint cobbled town squares
my European ancestors left
to come invade yours.

There's frozen yogurt
and artisanal olive oil.
The old boutiques have all stayed
but what's a charming white town
without local stores the majority
of the population can't afford
to step foot in?

Three themed bars,
two coffee shops,
a taqueria
owned by white people,
handmade chocolates,
new stop lights,
a skate park I "helped design,"
and three renovations
to a McDonald's that won't die.

These things weren't on North Avenue
before I lived there
but they're there now.
And with the condos going in
above the old diner-turned Blaze Pizza,
that's all just the beginning.

I have older city planning on my resume.
Did you know that
High School Musical
wasn't released
until seven years after I
moved to New Mexico?
Breaking Bad came out
the same year.
I'm not *saying* I'm responsible
for the re-discovery
of the New Mexican desert
by location scouts
looking for a Southwestern Aesthetic to fill with
aggressively anglo Americans
who are either singing and dancing
or encroaching on Hispanic-run drug markets
with their own ~purer~ product,
but
the film industry there
has never been the same since I left.

And don't forget
before I was born in 1997
my family could almost afford
rent in San Francisco.

So if you're looking to
invigorate your neighborhood
with local businesses
and an air of earthy yuppie culture
I'm available to hire
for the low low price

of an apartment
in a neighborhood
that I can comfortably afford
until more financially stable whities
realize how cool I've made the neighborhood
and we all get driven out.