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Double Life, or Trees in the Forest

I've decided to try not to stop. Completing the drive south, on Route 91, from Northampton to South Hadley, my body clean, Bikram-sweat out, or my valves flushed after therapy, there's a twinned emptiness in my sense of having left it all on the mat or in the mini-Zen garden on my analyst's end table. At the scenic view stop, the cops who cruise in rarely exit their cars, or if they do, and you're sitting alone inside of one, at times, they tap on the window and ask, "Is everything OK?" And it's always okay. I never move quickly, and sometimes circumvent such tapping by reorganizing my tennis rackets or my toiletries case, or whatever's in the back. I never let my heart run fast enough to move me into awkward angles and fissures enough to get caught.

Scenic route for sex = Big White Men in Semis = Or more simply, old, married men with rings that catch the sun in the forest – these men, though, call it the woods. "Wanna take a walk in the woods?" I'm not certain if I found this place on my own, or on Squirt.org, but I do know that as soon as I first drove past it, and saw the lines of cars, the trucks hunched next to the guard rail, I knew I would pull in and park.

Lauren Berlant and Michael Warner write that "...the queer world is a space of entrances, exits, unsystemized lines of acquaintances, projected horizons, typifying examples, alternate routes, blockages, incommensurate geographies"(558). In one sense, what I want to do here is to capture my body's own particular relationship to such many spaces; but let me qualify what I mean. In doing this, I am mapping out the space of decision and indecision in my own body, its pull, its urge, oscillating until I decide or feel, to stop before entering such an exchange, route, alternate, *a* stage of the cruise, of cruising that marks the split, the proverbial fork in my road: Do I go to Panera, home, keep forward after the red light, hope it's green so I don't have to think, or not make the turn into what is pulling me onto, then off of the highway?

While driving, I am thinking about the distance that I cover, some five miles or so from the exit to the scenic route's stop, the fast stretch of road where cars speed from one exit to another, all collecting at the bottleneck, its tight grip that slows the traffic to expose the long view of the boats in the boat dock, and behind these boats, more green, more field.

This vista, a layering of trees cascading to the highway's floor, reminds me that I, here, have time to wonder, that my body can saturate, stew in the promise of who might be waiting at the top of the mountain, or in his car, where I place this urge, an urge that says I am retreating into what I need, like Adrian Piper's *Mythic Being*, who thinks in a white thought bubble, "It is only because of the defects in my personality that I can finally say this to you. I am protected by my inadequacy. I am secure, smugly secure, for my personal flaws will constitute a more than adequate defense against whatever your response might be to what I have to say to you." I am willing to give up, what seems at the moment, like everything, or escape from anything, marking papers, writing, any kind of work, to get closer to some fantasy about my body in space: as resembling the idea of your wife, the one at home, she, in the Capris as happy and plump as you are wide and grey.

Daddy, this is about the body's language in languish, or languish in driving what I can't control but what I remap by resisting. *Resist/resist/resist/resist/resist/resist* – it's what Sonia Sanchez, touched by some inalienable grief gone deep, bluebird out of a window, eyes gone back depressed in a head – is she saying, leave it all alone? Or is it through the litany, throat, hum that she charts the tension not in resisting, as in letting it go, but in the act of letting it hover?

Being near the forest, or being in the woods' proximity, to what it promises (desire, touch, release, view, escape, bush, thorn, tic, dirt) exposes my body across one field into another. The map enlarges: I recall when I lived in and first moved to Manhattan, walking from Penn Station down to the Village or up from Penn Station to Port Authority, and winding up to any of the bathrooms, which were rarely tearooms as late as 1996 with any real portent, nothing often close to action, homeless sweet decay, plastic fixtures, walls, long melted away into the peripatetic 42nd street now gone to the Disney Chip Delaney captures in *Times Square Red, Times Square Blue*. He laments in the fall of zones of sexual and social possibility, particularly, in such realms as the porn movie house, a "social excess" beneficial to some small part of it (a margin outside the margin), an argument he continues, "that allows them to be dismissed – and physically smashed and flattened: They are relevant only to that margin. No one else cares" (90).

As I oscillated in the smash and flat, I recalled the pain in my heel spurs building in my Bostonians, a fat daddy with a pungent foreskin, who offered to my then soon visiting parents that they could stay in a hotel he managed in New Jersey, for sixty dollars a night after we were done in his car in the parking garage. Or, exiting the 4 or 5 at the Fulton stop, and not going home to Brooklyn, to walk down to Maiden Lane, the small set of steps, then the teeny elevator that creaked up to the Wall Street Sauna, and how in that elevator, I felt I was traveling in a cardboard box, creeping up to the men, squat, round, heavy, white, fraying towels. Even before I got there, this promise would tug, such from a refraction of glasses or stubble on any stop on any train, anywhere, taking me out of my doctoral studies bee line, or back midtown to the 4 or 5 to the Grand Hyatt Marriott, pretending to talk on the pay phones, or actually calling a voice mail box on the very same phones, looking to find any silver daddy to eat out my ass in the middle of his otherwise busy afternoon.

There are two discernible sets of trails that arc up the side of the mountain, the ground cleaved by human foot paths in the dirt, or snow in winter, the crunch of the ice below my Hugo Boss boots, the black strap that winds through the leather, and the heavy motorcycle tread keeping me from slipping. One trail leads to another, up the hill, where on top there is a telephone pole, wires, dry grass that leads out into the backside of Mount Tom, to a place I have only driven, an abandoned amusement park that is now concrete and peeking out, rebar.

In day, I look out at the large water cylinder in the distance to see if I can see my home. I wait for trucks, cars with equipment on the back, ladders. But I've stopped here at night, and I can't make out any faces. The town has blocked one entrance of the mountain with timber, logs and brush piled up, like steel wool stuffed in a wall to keep out the flow of mouse or rat. The cop is in stealth mode. He rolls by slowly, and shines the light on me, and the biker in bulky leather. I'm outside, we're talking, and I lean into the blinding light, and neither of us scurry or turn. His name is George, but he says *Gheyahhge*, and he does not answer the telephone on Thursday nights when he becomes

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Tracy, fishnets and short skirts on Fridays. He says I can go online to a site I don't remember, to *See Me Tracy*, but all I want is to know whether or not he is cut. He tells me, yes, and about his little, shaved patch. The sky is black and clear, the night, humid.

Self Portrait as Dig

Riptide sucks the body down, at Playa
Marbella, lost in the topiary.
Deep in the wrought, you glut in the riot.
Release your triceps: *What are you feeling?*
Thick as the dry shit caked on your index
finger. Spy it – Sniff. You rot canola,
ground flax. Fecal fucker, prolapse. Such mess
in your gut, a helix in the echo
between rooms. Nothing is where inside you,
you've hooked in, digging out the toxic grain
bound in the body. You own no truth,
because you were owned. Not ancillary
statue, pigeoned: the wash, sweet foul in
shame holding the body's infinite skin.

Self Portrait with Fly

Compound eyes divide, brick red, exhaustion.
Its meated want, it wants to vomit on
my clean fingers. Hovers in the cubby
at Kinko's 24 Hour – sleep draws.
Not today – you won't finish the sonnet.
A worker's song pierces the room's quiet.
Sleepy, too, its pitch tight strung in grommet
– no draft, no back up, no flood of event.
But a flash, a small brown man in Texas –
Yellow pulses between head and desk, fly
on my hair, neck, peeking in the crevasse,
flying in there. Why are you? You are why
we see eye to eye, fly. You've flown up in
here, marked, and ready, too, at the basin.

Double Life in Desire

“Give me 15 seconds.” This is what the thin, white woman breathes out from the seat in front of me in the *Art Cinema*. She’s riding an older man, grey, tall, a single white stripe down each leg of his black sweats. Her hair, in the screen’s light, is wavy, grey too, but tied down to her head. Other men move into the space surrounding them, a zone we edge into from our seats, and even though I want him, I listen to her breath as her sweater and jacket drop to her waist. She pulls her shirt over her head, and off. How do I write the distance between my body, sealed in my “Paper” denim jeans, and my white Adidas, black striped on white nylon tight weave, with a red tongue, the small black logo laid in the heel? How do I modulate an occasion, here, about power, its recognition of her vulnerability, or pleasure, and the questions that rotate in the dark: *who wants her, and who, him?*

Is my desire caught in the pleasure (or at least the sound) of her riding him? Or does it hover in her moans, or press in the many hands that move in to touch her? I notice she’s not looking at the film, but neither am I. She’s looking around, and I’m looking at her lover. I don’t want to join them. I want to be her. No one touches her unless she wants to be touched. She kisses her man deeply before, I think, she takes off to the bathroom.

Recently, I’ve become obsessed with watching amateur porn clips on my laptop. I find them on a myriad of sites to include “Slutload,” “xHamster,” “Tube8,” and “Sextube,” each of which features a variety of miniature screens that promise, in detail, whatever the viewer desires. Once, after not finding what I needed by typing “older,” or “old man,” or “grandpa sex” – I tried “amateur gangbang” – I typed in “theater.” I found “Dawn,” an older red-headed amateur star who features in her own series of videos, made while (she says) her husband films her getting fucked by anonymous men in theaters. Dawn likes the older, bigger ones, like I do.

In one thumbnail “Theatre Cream Pie,” cum eventually suspends from her puffed-cunt like the ooze out of a jelly-filled doughnut, and she’s very chubby, and the men, they are all fat, too, stout guts, sweatshirts, some in camouflage, some in shorts, some in whatever ship grey and dusty blue windbreaker they fit – some in belts, some in whatever jeans, or Dockers, some small cocks, some bigger, uncut, pubes clipped, some natural, all hungry for Dawn on her back who is ready for it all.

In the graininess of each scene, I want to be Dawn, too, her soft, open body, wet and revealed by flashlight, pumped by daddy and trucker, security and random Tom alike. Though she is being *used*, I think, she, too, is a *user*. She gets up, lays some mustached long-haired grey dad down on a table, where she just got trained, and sucks him off. Gobs of his spunk geyser out, and she ignores it. She spits out what she caught. Dawn turns to the camera, not really looking into it, lost in the middle of her and her husband’s fantasies come true.

In the cinema, I think about space, the various ways that bodies interact with one another, and the modes through which they intersect. How do I mark my own being through the matrix of what at any moment depends on what the couple in the theater performs? How do I mark the space between my body and theirs, my legs crossed and hidden, my eyes wandering around, my body in the frenzy, wondering how close I can get to her riding without his hand waving me away?

A large, mid 50's cross-dresser sits in the back, eating from a bag of chips, loud enough for me to hear his crunching over the moans of the movie. The boldest among us, he comes over in his tent dress and tiny clutch to sit right next to them. I reach out to touch one of the men straddled above the couple, who've moved, now, a few rows back. Fat, bald, big belly, beard, this new visitor's pants are open, his little un-hard cock out into the air.

Online, I click in search of old men like him, simple, un-pierced, thick, or old men who fuck men, and then I note the links, try to ignore the massive dick pushing into the pulsing "Fleshlight" ad. I find myself viewing "destroyed pussies," "cream pie," "anal ownage," peering into the repeating blonde, gaping, her availability, my point of immersion, to be Dawn, or the thin, white woman, riding, to take in what they have, to absorb what they make me feel in the clutch of desire.

Skin

The Geezer paste in the Red Wing Y whispers
Fielding poems in my ear. Queer men piled
on one other, at some mountain cliff's
drop. Down goes the 72-year-old white,
Tazed on TV, at the side of the road
in Austin Texas, zapped by cop, she squeals
like a hog, seared by hot iron stoke.
How smug, she reclines, for the YouTube's glean.
The law by her side – this Grandma pushes
the pig, screams: *Give me the fuckin' ticket!*
The bird moth's wing flops, the beetle crushed.
Its outer shell pulveres when my Puma tries to flick it.
Dead and dead, the bug, insignificant
spun in the porch web, the brown corpse trapped.

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Pest

Bleach burns plaid. Vietnamese agile
men clean bats. Biohazards in attics,
ton of their guano, bag after bag fills,
like bee after bee pushing. Stings splinter
out of memory's flush, a queen hides in
between the ceiling, its workers and drones
flood one flat. I take a sip of Reisling.
At Yaddo, the bats fly in the bedrooms,
strafe by the eye-ear in sonar's silence.
I, too, grab a broom between sleep and speech,
In the suite, bat bit, a writer's crisis.
Vision: a wheel is sculptured to a desk,
in the hall, a napkin, roach crushed to death.