

FIGHT: A BAREKNUCKLE PLEDGE

ROUND 4 pt.2

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I miss me before this place

Even before the beginning/ before light and dark knew each other/ or cold arrival of dry air on baby skin/ before any memory that is still held in brain fragment or doctors pulled me from her/ before the world taught me speak/ cry/ even before this world taught me breathe/ the gods taught me silence.

There are places back home that I no longer go/ roads grimy and dank pretending to be roots in the earth/ sideways streets and signal boxes stare like false gods/ Cocaine Christs/ houses where girls I grew up with coloured their childhood away/ neon signs crackle in forgotten footpaths/ a greyer shade of brown/ bleeding into the AMs/ we cannot walk there anymore/ there's something about the air that collapses my eye sight/ makes the cement feel unsteady/ I need sunglasses on just to breathe/ they say we forget as a survival technique in a world where silence is a means of production you don't own.

Memory sinks like heat/ cigarette smoke pulling you up/ until it pounds into patellas/ broken into braces on young teeth/ they say we forget as a survival technique but silence is the knife/ there are some things that will never make it into poems/ ghosts I will have to leave my grandchildren to fight/ it is a price I am willing to pay for them.

At night, I dream of a screaming child in my womb/ I do not hush her/ there will be no inside voice with me/ sometimes there are places my niece asks me to drive her/ streets we must go down/ I cannot accelerate in the car with her so/ I put my sunglasses on/ breathe the distal agony of things I can't quite speak about yet and let her pick a song to get us through. I miss this/ old places we called our places / I miss me before this place.

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solitude.

When I walk around
or drive on the road
I feel more connected
then when I'm at home.

Once stopped, there is not much to see
only what is there
if it's just you in a room
solitude.

Some crave this
the hysteria of relations and friends
become a web of annoyance and anger.
The web becomes tangled
distinctions blur
there are so many factors
continuing becomes absurd
the people you love, the ones that come
first
turn into shadows you blindingly hurt.

You're alone!

This is what you wanted.
Long days of smoke haze and VB
on your veranda, you should be lonely
but the best company is yourself.

You tell yourself.

The day will come when the novelty
ends.

A lonesome life you lead
of reflection and sleep
has not changed.
But the Sun has gone down.
Bridges need support
and sailors need a port
taking on this crazy world alone
was nothing but an insane thought.
It does not make it easier
going it alone.
It just hurts more people.
When you cut yourself off,
it frees you of burden
and responsibility.

The bird still flies
and the mother still cries
never ever lie
when you look into her eyes.

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The Modern Man

I'VE NEVER LIVED
COSY IN MY OWN SKIN.
TEARS IN REFLECTION
FAÇADE WITH A GRIN.

FACE HARDENED SO GRIM.
FACED WITH THE PROBLEM
OF WHAT IT IS TO BE MAN.

THE MODERN MAN
IS CHISELLED TO PLAN.
HE'S GOTTA BE TOUGH
GOTTA BE ALL HE CAN.

SUBJECT TO SUBORDINATION
DIVIDED BY ORGANS & ORIGINATION
WE ARE LOBOTOMIZED.

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Block Movement Manifesto

To all the Introverted, Misanthropic Members of The Block Movement

—Needless to Say—

This is the Moment We've all been Waiting For!

*In the name of our manifesto,
now more than ever,
we must continue to lead by example
and:*

Block everything. Block everyone. Do it for your health. Do it for fun. Block me. Block you. Block everywhere that you go. Block everything that you do. Block God. Block Satan. Block sex. Block masturbation. Block the Illuminati. Block aliens. Block the New World Order. Block the Freemasons. Block viruses. Block bacteria. Block Twilight. Block social media. Block alcohol. Block drugs. Block social distancing. Block hugs. Block Shaq. Block the wall. Block North Korea. Block basketball. Block anxiety. Block depression. Block Wall Street. Block stands of concession. Block violence. Block guns. Block your wife. Block your son. Block busses. Block bikes. Block planes. Block trikes. Block power. Block choice. Block your freedom. Block your voice. Block beats. Block Dre. Block The Day After Tomorrow. Block The Smashing Pumpkins' "Today". Block LEGO's. Block logs. Block Kevin Bacon. Block hogs. Block toilets. Block paper. Block your parents. Block your Maker. Block your nerves. Block your pain. Block your face. Block your brain. Block bees. Block honey. Block spring. Block making money. Block heaven. Block hell. Block bad apples. Block William Tell. Block Wayne Dyer. Block positive affirmation. Block growth. Block transformation. Block your dad. Block your mother. Block your booty call. Block your significant other. Block people who call you bro. Block people who you call dude. Block reading. Block One Hundred Years of Solitude. Block the Benjamins. Block the bills. Block the bars. Block Bear Grylls. Block going up. Block Tuesday. Block utopia. Block doomsday. Block April. Block showers. Block Paris. Climb the Eiffel Tower. Block the internet. Block the web. Block a bureaucrat. Block a pleb. Block marriage. Block horses. Block free range farms. Block divorces. Block broccoli. Block cheese. Block your elbow. Don't block when you sneeze. Block electricity. Block the dark. Block your dog. Block the park. Block Tik. Block Tok. Block coops. Block cocks. Block get togethers. Block dirty dances. Block gloves.

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Block awkward face mask glances. Block keys. Block lockets. Block NASA. Block rockets. Block black. Block stress. Block white. Block chess. Block windows. Block doors. Block pimps. Block grocery stores. Block the past. Block the future. Block Michael J. Fox. Block Anderson Cooper. Block smiles. Block frowns. Block what goes up. Block what is already down. Block food. Block medicine. Block Bambi. Block venison. Block life. Block death. Block ventilators. Block meth. Block the ground. Block the sky. Block online dating. Block being shy. Block Trump. Block Obama. Block Will Smith. Block Big Momma. Block Passover. Block Easter. Block your brother. Block your keister. Block Facebook. Block Instagram. Block Snapchat. Block Jean-Claude Van-Damme. Block gangsters. Block rappers. Block fur traders. Block trappers. Block ends. Block meat. Block “lit.” Block “skeet.” Block casinos. Block saying “bet.” Block Quentin Tarantino. Block Boba Fett. Block hope. Block Paul McCartney. Block Jude Law. Block Bloc Party. Block talk therapy. Block conversation. Block pardoning Tiger King. Block incarceration. Block robots. Block drones. Block Bill Gates. Block iPhones. Block giants. Block midgets. Block spinsters. Block fidgets. Block stages. Block props. Block wikileaks. Block mops. Block space. Block trolls. Block Sonic. Block moles. Block going out. Block being alone. Block putting up a fight. Block Sylvester Stallone. Block Grubhub. Block DoorDash. Block eating red meat. Block trying to smash. Block business casual. Block getting dressed. Stimulus check? #blessed. Block your identity. Block who you are. Block lockdown. Block getting in your car. Block summer. Block the beach. Block Nancy Pelosi. Block James and the Giant Peach. Block underlying issues. Block diabetics. Block politics. Block dialectics. Block vinegar. Block piss. Block the things that you love. Block the things that you miss. Block Lyme Disease. Block ticks. Block orgies. Block magic tricks. Block by design. Block theories. Block 5G. Block conspiracies. Block anger. Block denial. Block bargaining. Block your child. Block barn burners. Block martial law. Block texts that say “hey.” Block your last straw. Block people. Block Mark Hamill. Block Hannibal Lecter. Block Dannon Danimals. Block acceptance. Block fear. Block Grateful Dead. Block Bob Weir. Block The Movement. Block this from being written. Block puppy love. Block being smitten. Block beauty. Block grace.

Just block everything in the first place.

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A nonbeliever on Heaven

If god is real
then heaven isn't:
it's the biggest temptation of all.
There can be no golden gates to lock
and if there are
beyond them lie no resting clouds
for those who did their time on Sundays
to get the rest of time off.
If heaven is real
it is not rife with people
who wanted to get there so badly
that they spurned those they believed
were not heading in the same direction
in a perfect afterlife.
If heaven is real, if it is a refuge, if
Jesus prefers the company of the outcast
won't he be having dinner at the freak's table?
If heaven can only be reached
by shaming sinners
and if Jesus loves those, well, maybe
he waits in hell instead
to break bread and sup
with children cast out by parents
whose eyes were trained upward.
And if he does not, then
what makes his love so ultimate?
A man whose unconditional love
required worship, whose lips spoke
forgiveness, but
only accepted into his sight
a partner who rejected outright
entire peoples on his behalf
would rightly
be called toxic.
If heaven is real
and populated only with those
who spoke the right language
and lived on the right lands
who had the time, the family, the means

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to believe or know
that god is real
and loves us
can you really blame me
for not wanting to go?
Those gates are built by human hands.
If heaven is real, it truly is a cosmic joke
that god
who loves strangely and cruelly
who famously demanded devotion
while he gave out suffering
plays on his devout followers;
for heaven must be full
of unbaptized
immigrant
faithless children
trans children
all the never-had-a-chance children
the killed
and not
what killed them.
The ones who welcomed death, who lived in fear
who struggled to give a damn about damnation
because heaven doesn't count
if it isn't here
who believed
only in themselves
who were defiant
who were flighty.
Wouldn't that, after all
be bloody typical of the almighty?

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Aerith Gainsborough, after Marty McConnell

I found the lakebed,
a prayer still
refusing to bubble me
breathless, still mollusked
inside my body's dimming nautilus.
I found the lakebed,
ribbons
pluming umbilical between me
and the surface. Where
to inherit this prayer is to inherit the
warfare fledged against it.
The checkmate
of my ruptured and flowering church;
holiness, a sky of scarletted water.
I don't know if it was me
or the prayer
that put me here.

* * *

Down,
among the fish of crueller leavings,
I, too, molt the stained pinkhood
so easily prescribed
those symbioses of guard or gore. Its
green-filamented billow. Its bodiless
testament to genocide's best effort,
unoccupied and stirring.
The keepsake bangles that sang
soons from communing wrists,

slipping off and into rusted company.
To the flutter of fish, eyeless and
everliving where their similar war
dredged what griefs they once were,
the prayer of me. A glimmered ache.
To die here, even beneath this much
of my own, unwillingly-spilt blood is
to evanesce into green-blue deity,
to join again that
diaspora ushered from spillhood and
back into the long-held promise
of each other. Gaiablood loved
as such. Gaiablood meaning *hers*,
meaning ours, meaning here's. As I
both go and stay, hope
for no more atrocities-turned-fish
does so with me.

* * *

And as the same everything It
dragooned me jetsam to claim, I now
pray, and the dirt coils hopeful. I pray,
and the water oxidizes itself
free of what stigma It sowed there.

My friends are standing in the rain,
and they don't even know how many
I love yous their perfects are wet with.

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