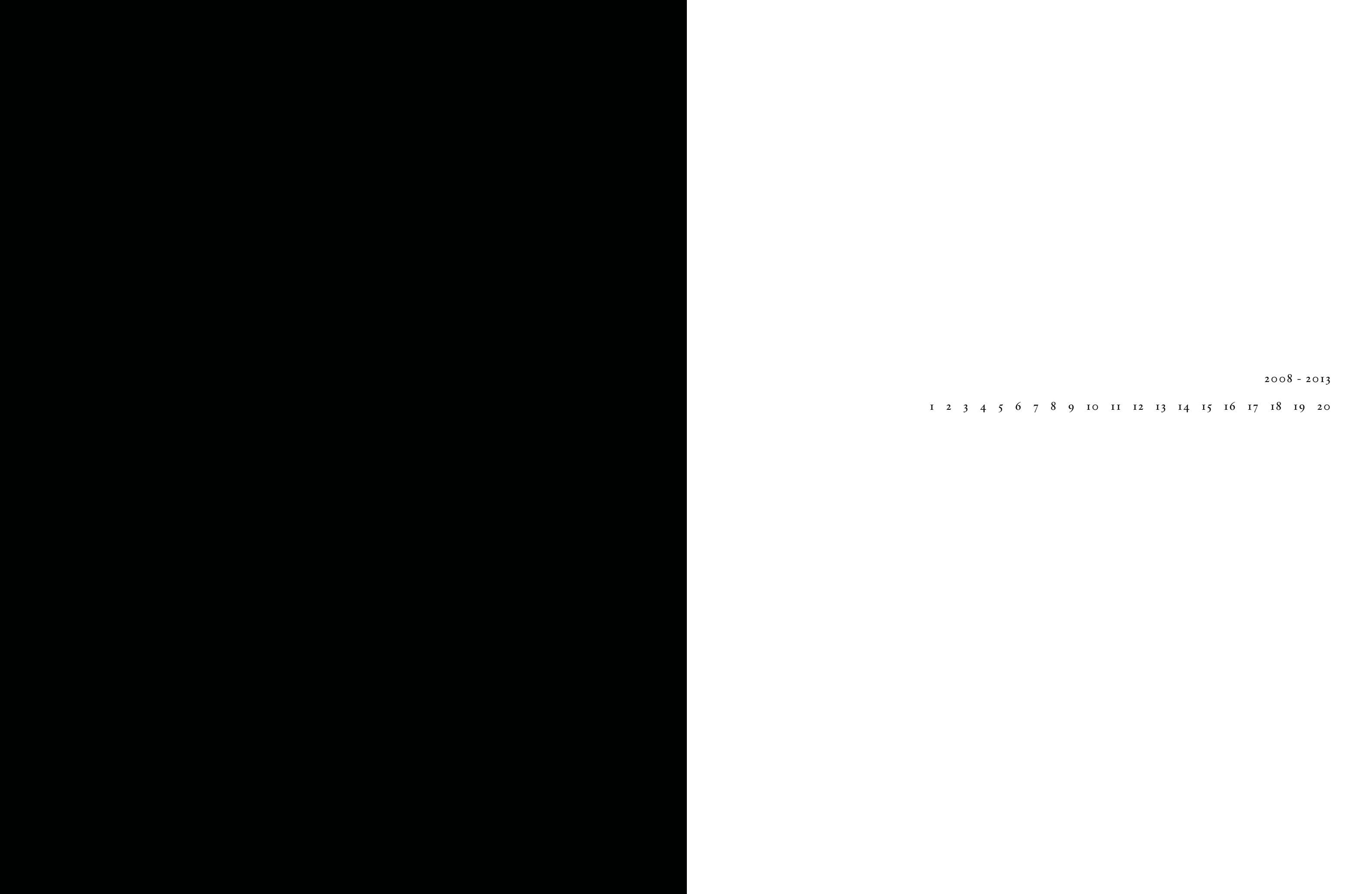
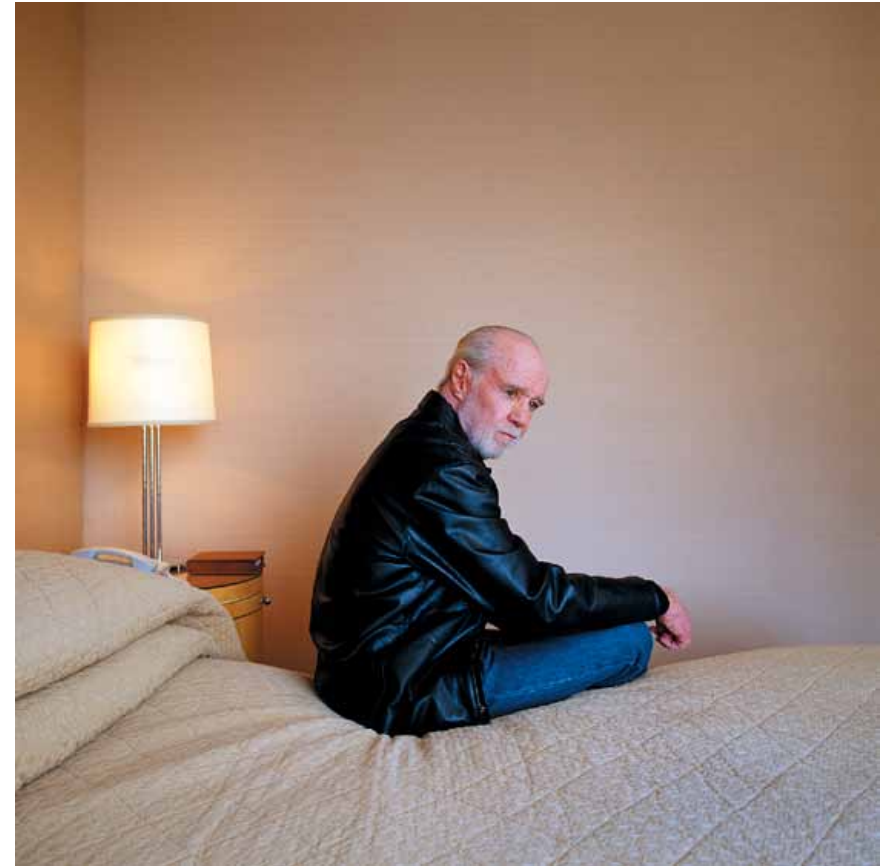


i like to tell stories

© jonathan saunders





My father called this morning, too early for it to be good news. I only remember him saying, “Did you hear about Carlin?” I hadn’t.

George Carlin died yesterday, he was 71 years old.

Carlin was a personal hero of mine growing up, I can remember seeing his famous HBO specials even before I really should of been watching. The sharp wit, piercing observations and sarcasm all poured out of the man with a brilliant point of view that seemed so obvious, you wondered why it took Carlin to point it out to you. TIME called and needed him photographed for a 10 Questions article. I set up hours early and waited for him to arrive in the hotel suite. I left the door closed before he arrived, I wanted to see Carlin through the peephole. He was just like you would of expected, only kinder and happier. He went into a rant about hair care products when I asked him to take his hat off, that then descended into a wonderful moment of he and I yelling the F bomb back and forth at each other till I blew the circuits to that half of our hotel room. Thankfully, I had this second shot ready to go, it was a better photograph anyway. I am so happy I blew those circuits or this image never would have happened.

It was the best assignment I ever had, it was one of my favorite people and it was one of the happiest days of my life.

March 19, 2004.

“The most unfair thing about life is the way it ends. I mean, life is tough. It takes up a lot of your time. What do you get at the end of it? A Death! What’s that, a bonus? I think the life cycle is all backwards. You should die first, get it out of the way. Then you live in an old age home. You get kicked out when you’re too young, you get a gold watch, you go to work. You work forty years until you’re young enough to enjoy your retirement. You do drugs, alcohol, you party, you get ready for high school. You go to grade school, you become a kid, you play, you have no responsibilities, you become a little baby, you go back into the womb, you spend your last nine months floating...

...and you finish off as an orgasm.” -George Carlin



I photographed someone awhile back in few different outfits. No real point to any of it other then to have fun or otherwise make pictures. She said I could shoot her in one if I never posted them, even though other outfits showed more skin, she didn't want these posted. I said ok and kept shooting.

That was a mistake.

All the images I like best I cannot use or maybe I only like them because I cannot use them, I dunno. I have a release from her, but still, my word is my word.

So yeah, I can no longer see the point in making images I cannot share.

Now I know that, without a doubt.



Nathan and Kreg invited me back to their homes in New Hampshire. At some point I will make something from this trip, at least I think I will, someday.

me



1271 Avenue of the Americas, 23rd floor, April 11, 2008, 12:17:35 P.M.
(TIME Magazine)



The American Album
Book one of three - LONE STAR - formerly Red Star.
undated



I can drive and photograph planes at the same time on the NJ Turnpike at 75 mph it seems better then I can drive through Times Square at less then 3 mph. Maybe if I had been photographing something at the time, those dents never would of happen.



11:51:35 PM + 11:57:56 PM



11:46:03 PM



When I was looking for a model for the shower project, I emailed a girl who had posed for me many times before who has since moved away. She sent out a great email to her friends for me, asking if anyone would be interested in letting me take their picture. In the meantime, I found and hired a model and proceeded with the shoot. The day of this shoot I got an email from K. She would model for me and was up for anything. We had never met or even known about each other until this email. I had no idea what she looked like, we didn't even talk on the phone, just a few emails and then she was here, last night, to let me photograph her.

It turns out she is a picture editor. It turns out she is the editor for a great friend I have known 16 years. It also turns out her sister lives 2 blocks away. It turns out she used to date someone that lived in my building.

She is the 56th person in With Out You.



Texas, 2 Weeks After My Niece Was Born, 2004



The Spring, Night



April 16, 2008

The Spring, Day



April 17, 2008



The PR was crazy nice, I got into the building smoothly, I had time to set up, the subject was very nice, they gave us lunch, the client was happy, the client paid on time, my job has its good days. Now, I just need to make what the CFO of CBS makes. That would be good too.

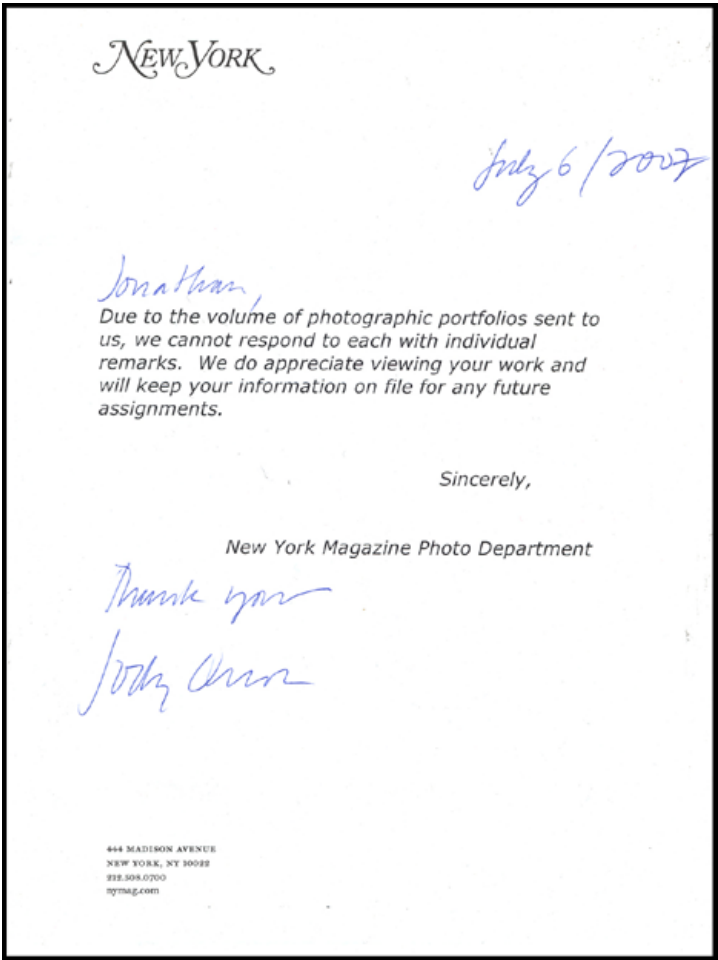
Maybe i just need an acronym?

My dad is big on acronyms, in fact much of what he does involves some that are pretty out there (military related, the military is big on acronyms), he recently created this one for some of what he does:

SIDZ
Sustainable Industrial Development Zone

Now why is this interesting? It's his name, Sid, so SIDZ as his idea and his project and his name...

Acronyms.



I got my first job ever from a blind drop off. (Not at New York Magazine).

If I hadn't shot that first job from that blind drop, I never would of gotten another job of any kind. That was 11 years ago now. I haven't gotten a single shoot from a blind drop since, yet for some reason, I keep trying. I don't know if this is good or bad anymore. The longer I have done this job, the less I understand about how it works.



At an early age Mister Saunders fell asleep roadside in a pickup truck on the way to visit the site of the Battle at Gettysburg in Pennsylvania. While asleep he experienced a calling from the ghost of Timothy O’Sullivan in a dream. Ever since this dream, Mister Saunders continues to roam the country making images and telling stories, some of which are even true. Mister Saunders continues to suffer from insomnia to this day and often the results can be read at iliketotellstories.com.

Mister Saunders hobbies include seeking out awkward social situations, collecting playing cards, losing English sporting clay tournaments and reading your blog. His images sometimes appear in magazines like TIME, People and Forbes much to the delight and dismay of his parents and others that know him. Mister Saunders would like nothing more then to photograph you, so send him an email, as he gets lonely.

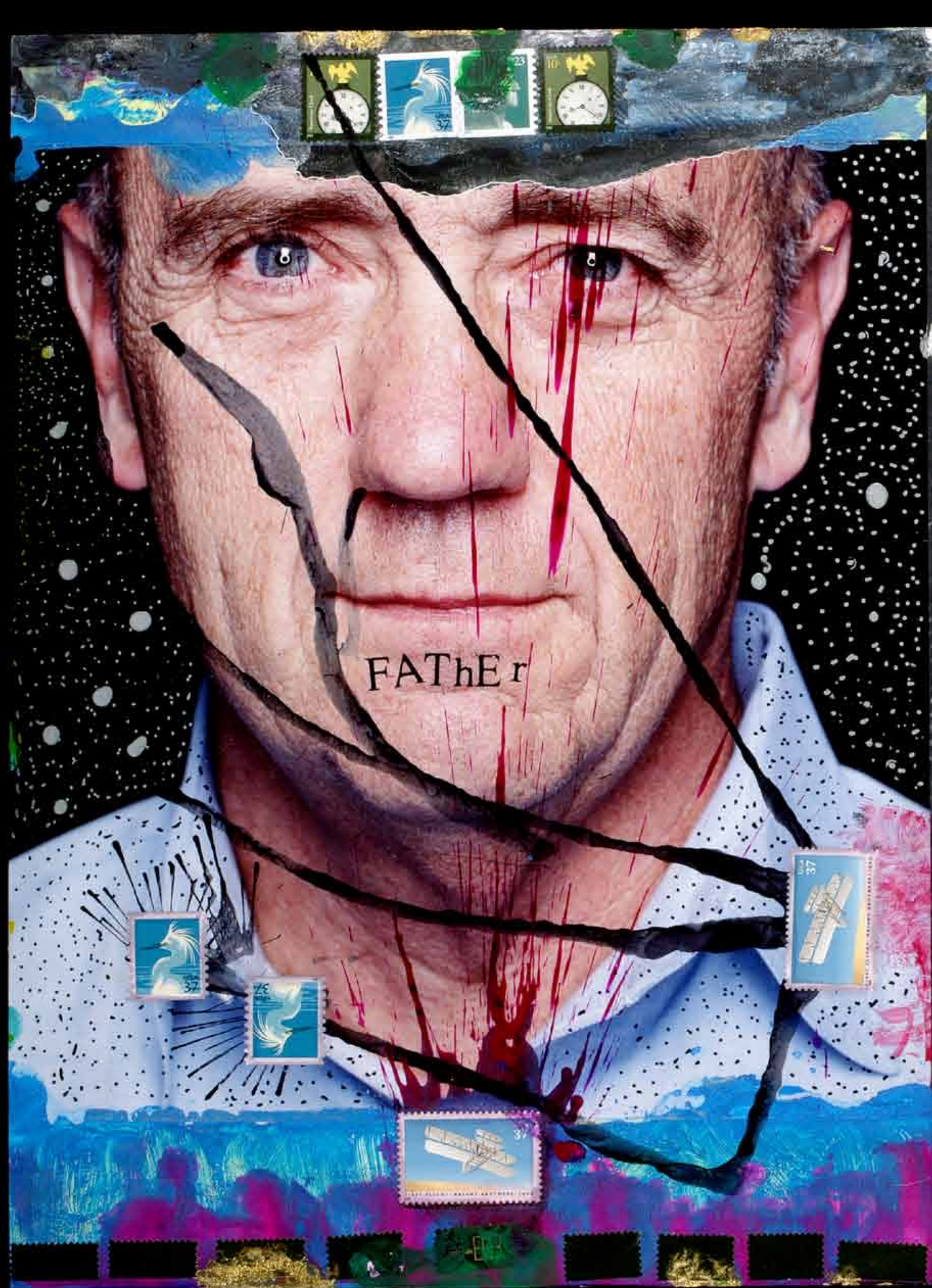
A bio for me was once requested.

40 min after sending this bio and my images (I sent three images to choose from) the editor wrote me back:

“Just read your bio – excellent! My editor chuckled away and suggested we run it with the picture of you with the rifle!!!!!!

Top stuff, _____”







Reverend Dr. John W. Saunders Place - Harlem, New York City.



I made these all in less then a minute, in the midst of doing something I shouldn't have done, a fools errand really. I do many things, knowing they are a mistake, yet I still do them, unable or unwilling to control the impulse. I do feel better having done it however, sometimes. This time, following up on other mistakes I cannot fix, this errand had to be done regardless of how I felt about it. I could of ignored it, in the big picture, it didn't matter and made no difference, yet I did it anyway.

Today a friend got a tattoo because it was friday the 13th, Tim Russert died in the midst doing of what he loved and I made a foolish errand that changed nothing as the sun came up on a street named after me, sort of.

Billy Ray Cyrus



for People

Billy Ray Cyrus



for Me



I hadn't been to the Guggenheim in a few years. I went this past Friday, Cai Guo-Qiang had a show I wanted to see. I photographed him for TIME awhile back and have since been randomly finding new work of his in unexpected ways, always smart, always leaving me different then before I saw it.

The last time I went, the best part, was what I saw through this window after leaving the show. I still think it's one of the more beautiful things I have ever seen. Earlier that night I watched one of Marina's performances, this one:

November 14, 5 PM to 12 AM 2005.

Marina Abramović, Lips of Thomas (1975, Galerie Krinzinger, Innsbruck). Abramović ate a kilogram of honey and drank a liter of red wine out of a glass. She broke the glass with her hand, incised a star in her stomach with a razor blade, and then whipped herself until she "no longer felt pain." She lay down on an ice cross while a space heater suspended above caused her to bleed more profusely.

When it was over, she got a loud, long round of applause and cheers from those still on hand. It lasted long enough that security had to force the issue to make everyone leave. I left, went around the corner, and saw a few other people looking through this window. I stepped closer and the small crowd of us respectfully watched and kept quiet. Inside, through this plain unmarked window, you could see her gallerist and her lover or boyfriend or husband (I don't know which) holding her in a blanket as she appeared to be weeping... joyfully.

Another time shortly after this I got to meet her, she kissed me on the cheek, it was a good moment as well.



It all happen in spring 1996 in San Francisco, but in June of 1997, across the street from the Visual Studies Workshop and not so far from where Minor White did and thought his things in Rochester NY, sitting in a church converted into a boarding/halfway house, I decided I would write it all down, I didn't want to forget a single thing.

I can remember writing it so well, the bad desk lamp bounced off the wall, the single window open, the breeze of the crisp June Rochester air coming through the window, the soft sounds of night outside and listening to those renting the rooms around me scream and fight because they were trapped in their little rooms too. I couldn't write fast enough.

I dare you to read the next two pages.

I wrote this in a journal I have since given away, I have no good copy of this story, other then what I am posting here. I wrote at a little desk next to the light table, a Walmart bag and pile of paper next to my feet was knee deep, it was the only bag large enough to hold all the film I had just processed and was scrambling to get printed that summer. I think some part of me knew that vacuum of living and breathing what you love with no regard for the daily nuisance of making a living and normal everyday life was about to end, I miss that vacuum.

It is all about the girl above.

G.H. #7 1131p.m.
I was lonely. It was on Friday at midnight. I was painting. I stopped and looked at point A picture for my friend Ben I would later never mail. The loneliness started to really hurt. I couldn't remember what it was like to be touched. At hug, a gentle stroke of the arm. The close smell of another person. Their texture, their clothes texture, the feel of hair on my skin. I couldn't remember the feeling of touching another person with purpose and with affection, lust, love, and curiosity. I ran from darkness. I ran to the money machine. I ran 10-15 blocks to the cheapest nude/lap dancing place in San Francisco's Tenderloin area. I paid my \$5 and went in side. I sat near the aisle not far from the entrance but also not too close. I watched a woman dance. Soon they were approaching me, asking me if I wanted company. I was still feeling too much hurt to get a lap dance so yet so I just watched. The one dancer left and the main attraction dancer came out with her abs visible and confusion beyond repair. I watched her try to work the crowd that was about maybe 10 men just as lonely and confused as I. It was making want to leave. I didn't and haven't really ever enjoyed just watching them on stage. About half way through the show a dancer came up to me from over my shoulder. She leaned close and asked me "It wanted some company." I could smell her hair. I could feel it on the base of my neck. I wanted to talk to her. I played stupid. I asked what the "rules" and the "prices" were. She sat in the chair next to me. My right elbow was brushing against her left breast. She told me the prices. We both watched the dancer on stage. She asked me what I did & told her I take pictures. We started talking more. She was soon moving into the city to start art school. We talked for what seemed to be a half hour. She got up and said she had to go back to work or else wouldn't make much money that night. I didn't want it to stop. I stayed in San Francisco a year and this was the best conversation and most comfortable and one of the only women I had met. I had \$45 dollars. It was the last time I saw her. I took a topless lap dance in a private room upstairs. I felt like an asshole asking her to go up there with me after our talk but if I didn't I'd never see her again. She just smiled and held my hand with hers and led the way. We got up there in dark and I gave her my forty and sat on the couch. She stood between my knees, took off her top and climbed into my lap. The next song started. She was facing me. I was running my foot heel up and down her right leg and my right hand up and down her back and through her hair. We started to stare at each other and than started talking again. Then we just sat there together with her in my lap like any other people do. We talked about pictures, where I was from and so on. A few songs went by. She said she had to go tomorrow. We agreed still wanted to talk. While she was getting her bag back up she asked me to meet her somewhere tomorrow. I showed her to meet at MBL's Diner on Lombard street. She walked me down and toward the exit and we said goodbye. I headed up at MBL's early. I was convinced she wouldn't show. I couldn't remember her name or even what she looked like. After all the staring I had no idea. I was sitting in a window or saw a woman walk by from behind towards the entrance. I knew it was her. My heart said. She came through the door, looked at me and we both started smiling and laughing. "So we finally see each other in the light and neither of us have run off yet," she said as we set down in the booth. Then she asked me what my name was again as I did ask her numbers. She was apartment hunting today. She was wearing a black dress with white sweater. I had brought some pictures to show her but I started getting more and more frightened by her beauty as we spoke. I had brought some pictures to show her but she had asked the night before. It was silent while she went through them. I stared at a broker eyeing resting on his right cheekbone. Her finger went up about an apartment and she had to go. She asked me where I lived and we were to meet there later. I went home and waited. When she came over we sat on the floor of my room. We looked at more pictures and kept right on talking. I kept staring and holding onto the desire to touch her, kiss her, my bed and I got close and we kept talking. I kept staring and holding onto the desire to touch her, kiss her, and touch her more. She called about her apartment, she didn't get it. She got upset and went home to Santa Rosa. If I had assignment out of town for couple weeks I got lost. I called her. We spoke at first touching her the other day we had made looking thinking of each other all week and why she asked I didn't want to call me. It was 2:30pm she was leaving day of my place. She was to come stay with me for the night. It was 3:55am when she arrived. Heavy rain fell from work. We went to room and went to bed. We looked at each other in our underwear and turned off the light. I started kissing her neck and back while she layed there next to me moaning intensely. She told me she was pregnant so we just kept going. If I was a real man I'd fuck her anyway. I didn't have condoms and she told me she wasn't feeling either. After awhile it was too intimate. I didn't want her to leave and she said she'd stay if we just went right to sleep. She went to sleep and I masturbated lying next to her when she woke up in the morning. I watched her dress and couldn't stop thinking of how pathetic my life was. A dream come true. I beautiful woman that wanted me or at least someone which is my painful anguished cry. It wasn't me. It just had to be some one. I asked if she wanted to go get breakfast she looked at me and said "do you mean together?" That is when I know I would never see her again. A month later she called she spending her first night in SF in her new place. I went over and we talked on as we once had. She gave me a sweater and I took a picture of us with minor together with her in her nightgown. I always had my paint and glue camera with me because it was my only camera at the time. After I helped her move. I never heard from her again. I called and she'd never call me back. I mailed her the picture of us and asked for another chance and told her she was my angel. There were a few times over the next year I would drive by her apartment to see if the lights were on. Sometimes when I went by I'd see her car and want to knock on her door but I never did. I was too scared. I knew she must never think of me even though I knew my pictures were on her walls. I would wonder how many other men she'd done all this with, been through all this with and I felt smaller and smaller whenever I thought of her. I hated not knowing how she was these days. I went to the place I met her once at her. I hated not knowing how she was these days. In time, of course, my thoughts of her faded but not really. she was always there JUST LIKE all the others before her with same feelings and awkward, tense, confusing pain. Then a year to two weeks went by.

I was lonely. I was sitting on my couch watching the fog on Tuesday afternoon hating my mediocrity. My pager went off. I didn't know the number and dreaded the thought of working for someone new.

When I called a woman's voice said "JOE IT'S ME. I knew it was her who it was right away." She said she needed to see me - right now. We agreed to meet at the beach by the zoo in 45 minutes. I went early. I stood out in the fog, in the evening, out in the cold and tried to remember how our original intensity had been. She pulled up in her car parking illegally, got out, ran around her car and into my arms. I had forgotten how beautiful she was, how her hair smelled, and how good it felt to touch her. We got in her car and went closer to the beach. The wind was blowing and the sand burned our skin and our eyes and so we got back in car. She told me she had been driving all over California seeing everyone she knew to say goodbye to them. She told me she was going to kill herself and that San Francisco was her last stop and I was to be the last one she saw. I asked her why she had called me and it was because of the picture of the two of us where I had told her she was my angel underneath the photograph. She was at a pay phone trying to think of someone to call and I came to mind just because of a silly picture and a few words. The car got uncomfortable so we went to my room. She laid out on my bed and I sat next to her showing her pictures to get her mind off the earlier topic. We stopped looking at the pictures and she asked me to massage her neck, then her shoulders, then her arm. I did. She told me how to do it better. She started talking about her death again and asked me if I ever got depressed. If I ever hated myself. If I ever hated my life. If I ever wanted to kill myself. I told her that I did. I told her that I felt and thought those things often. I told her a lot of people do. I told her the triumph of life was not more than killing yourself could ever be. We started joking about it even though she started talking about how we should kill ourselves together and how we could do it. She asked me if I had a gun. She asked me about jumping off the Golden Gate Bridge. It grew silent. I was still rubbing my hands all over her body over her clothes. Her head. Her neck. Her hair. Her face. Her chest. Her legs. Her stomach. Her arms. Her feet. Her ass. Her pussy. Her hips. Her shoulders. She looked at me through her hair and said "I need to be comforted" and smiled. From previous conversations over a year ago I knew she was asking me to fuck her. I smiled and continued touching her. I knew with her experience compared to mine, I could never give her the fuck she wanted, desired, and I guess needed. I knew that if would also just be me fucking her. She wouldn't be there and let me do things. That she had no real desire for me specifically compared to all the others before and the one she was with currently with who she said was stupid but was the best sex she ever had and that when his dick was in her bow much it made her love him. I was still touching her and she was still lying there. I brought her hand over to my mouth. She sat up and said she was hungry. We went to get food and played with her long enough to make sure she wouldn't purge it. While we had been in the car eating and purged all the way. She spoke of her bulimic behavior. She told me of how she went to see two therapists today and begged and purged all the way through them both. She told me about being bulimic for years. She told me she called me after the second movie. As we walked from the restaurant, we had our arms around each other. It felt really good walking with her clutching my arm so hard it hurt. I felt alive for the first time since I don't know when. She had to go to work. She was to purge me at 3am when she was done. I hugged her goodbye. She squeezed me hard. I stopped kissing her neck then her ass. She pulled away slightly and gave me a short kiss on the lips and gave me a small smile. I looked into her eyes and gave her two more kisses. She said goodbye and got in her car. I watched her leave and went to my room. Something was wrong. I had left my camera, my laptop, at the restaurant and got my keys from the busboy. I went home and cleaned my room, took a shower, and put new sheets on the bed. I lied there awake from 10-230pm thinking about her. At 2:30 I knew she wouldn't call at 3am. She didn't. I went to where she worked the next night, she wasn't there. I called her old # in the city and got a new one. I called it from her work. She answered. I told her I was worried about her. That I missed her that I wanted to see her again. She was living near Reno. A few days later I quit my job and moved to Reno. I went to her work that night. I sat in the waiting room until 11pm. I was scared and she was scared. I got up and stood in the street and waited for her. She came running to me and into my arms. I closed my eyes and felt the good. We sat down with her in my lap and we watched her friends dance. Then she looked at me and said "Kissing me was a mistake. She never kissed. Not even her current man with the diet of love. I wanted to have sex with her. We went to eat. I stayed with her long enough she wouldn't purge and she drove me home to be alone. I was going to pick her up the next night from work. She was to call me at 11 when she called at 11pm she was back in Santa Rosa. She had purged and purged at the movies all day again and gone to her father's for a help and comfort. I couldn't provide. I went to see her the next Sunday in Santa Rosa. We got a picnic and went to the beach near Redwood Bay. We found a house to stay in at spot and ate. After we had eaten I held her close so she wouldn't want to purge. We layed there for a while and I touched her under her clothes all over again. Time passed. She stopped me. She told me that ever letting me touch her was a mistake. That she wanted me to be a friend. I couldn't be her friend. I didn't know how to be her friend. And that deep down in her somewhere she really didn't even want to. We slowly got our stuff together and I packed my cameras away for good and we went to the car. I drove us back to her father's in silence. She turned a letter in my car from another girl. I knew that also only wanted to be my friend. She questioned me up and down about heart. I answered her truthfully. We sat in the car in the driveway and tried to have some small talk. There was no point. We smiled at each other and I drove home. The next day the friend I work for paged me. I had been telling him the daily happenings between her and I. He had talked to his mother who had just returned from a therapy convention near Reno. He got eating disorder therapists #'s from her and had urged me to pass them along. I called her and she answered. I gave her the #'s because she said she wanted help. We had some more awkward small talk and hung up. She had said she'd call them in the morning. I called the next night still worried. Her roommate answered and asked if he could take a message. I never heard from her. I paged her with a voice mail before I left California. But she never called me. I miss her. I worry about her. I think of her too often. 6:15.97 (11:02 pm)



I found this polaroid this week.

The polaroid is a picture of Peter Ment. Peter died in the summer of 2004. He was a friend of friends and he helped me on a few shoots. I didn't know him that well, but I always enjoyed his company, he reminded me that it should all be fun when I got stressed out on some silly shoot by simply laughing at me, in a good way, at least I always thought so. I wish I could remember what this shot is from, but at the moment as I write this, I cannot remember. I can remember almost every frame I ever took of anything, how I lit it, where it was, who it was, but this one is escaping me. There's a chance I set it up and never shot it, I do this often. Either way, I am glad I found this one polaroid.

The polaroid is the modern day equivalent to the daguerrotype. This object is a picture, a one of a kind, a tangible, touchable one of a kind that was once in the same room, place and moment at the same time as the photographer, and more importantly, the subject. Present in its physicality at the time of its creation by its very nature.

I remember sitting right here at my computer when my friend sitting on my couch got a phone call, I knew after hearing just a bit of the conversation, it was bad news, but not what it was or who it was about till he was off the phone. It all felt so unreal and took a long time to sink in.

I went to his eulogy. It was given by Stéphane Sednaoui who knew Peter pretty well, it was beautiful.



The person I mailed this to says he never got it, but his wife remembers it, I don't know what that means.

Color copied, mailed and almost forgotten. Undated. All prior to 1998. Not mailed to anyone pictured.



YOU

TOUCH ME

TOUCH YOURSELF

RETURN NO LOVE

Drive. I was driving from san francisco to rochester, I had been driving at least 15h, it was dark, I was in one of those states where its just dark all around, you could be on a highway or the moon. I put all the windows down, turned the music up all the way, screamed along to the music, picked up my only working camera I owned at the time, my little Olympus point and shoot, jammed it up into the steering wheel and pressed that little button.

Bed porn. It was my third time living in a boarding house, a kinda place where you pay rent weekly. It was even my second in Rochester, the boarding house was right across the street from the Visual Studies Workshop and although I never actually went inside VSW, I liked having it across the street, it somehow brought me comfort knowing it was nearby. The first thing I always did in these places was inspect, I never even knew what for, I just wanted as much from the previous occupant gone. Well, experience had taught me to look between the mattresses. This time, instead of rodents or insects, it was porn. When I got it all stacked to toss out (it was heavily soiled), the stack was 2 feet high. I even found a compact magnifying glass hidden in the pages. There were Victoria Secret catalogues and random odd issues from times square stores dating back to the 70's.

San Francisco Woman. It was one of my first walks with my first Leica. I owned the body almost a year before I had the money for the lens. I loaded it with Konica 640 chrome film I had gotten for free and went out. No agenda, just made images as I needed to. I loaded the camera and looked up and she was right in front of me, the first thing I saw after getting the camera ready. I raised it to my eye and squeezed the button. It felt right.

Rail Yards, Rochester. I was back after 2 years and went for a walk again. When I first left Rochester, it didn't feel like it was for good. Now I was back again on yet another random walk, ignoring all the things I should of been doing. Rochester was my first home in many ways, the first place I was ever on my own. I have even been back since I made this picture, returning there then and since, has always felt special. It took me 14 years, but I finally got my degree, I even attended a few classes, but my path to a BFA was not a straight line, course or plan. Much like my walks around that place.

RJ. Old friends came to visit me in San Francisco. We went to get food. I grabbed the leica but only made a few frames all day. This is one. She was talking to one of my best friends at the time who also happen to be her husband and looked at me while stretching and telling a story when I took it. Everyone accuses me of being in love with her, but I never thought so. She was just one of the only women in my life in anyway for years. Things are sometimes never as them seem or look, sometimes they are and sometimes it's the exact opposite.

KC. The first professor I ever had. I cannot find words for how thankful I am that I got him, his first year teaching at this big photo school was my first year at it. The assignments were unlike anyone else's. I walked out of my first class so excited, someone was finally going to help me learn all that I wanted to. My class hated him, they tried to have him fired. In the end, he even made the students that hated him smarter. The school reacted too, after that year he was never the same and eventually ran away too. Some 10 years later, me and two friends who had him later then I did hit the road to attend a lecture of his. It was worth it. I made this the summer I returned to print for 10 weeks only to run away again. Right after I took it, he asked, 'What gives you the right to take my picture?' I remember him swinging at me, but I cannot remember if that really happen, or if it's just what I know he wanted to do.

35 tournaments in 232 days. That's a competition every 6.5 days for 7 months on average. 3200 registered targets attempted in competition, 2364 broken for a 74% for the year. The goal was top 10 at Nationals or the Krieghoff cup. That was the quest.

I fell short, shute kicked my ass and I didn't get the girl.

I really wanted to
 crying. I wanted to get
 14 years you made me
 let me with pleasure as
 apart. you let me catch
 cry and then you let me
 moment, I called us even.
 my turn to receive your love. then it was over, it ended just as our
 first meeting did. But know I don't have to imagine being inside
 anymore, I know I don't have to imagine your kiss
 anymore, I know I don't have to imagine your touch
 yesterday and I wouldn't change anything. I would
 still do it all again the pain, the tears of waiting
 the love, the first kiss, the last kiss, photographing
 touch, your wedding dress as you married another
 you in your wedding dress as you married another
 I would do it all the same, there's only one thing
 I would do different and it's only to tell you this
 Just me as being in love...

Photograph you
 back at you for these
 hurt so you let me, you
 your entire life was falling
 you. you let me make you
 photograph it, so in that
 this was my moment, my chance and

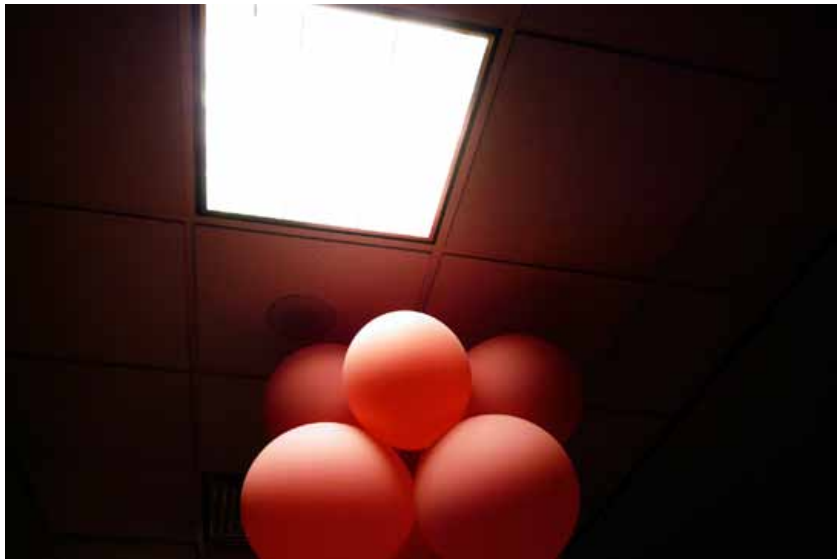
Morgan

Chicago
 in your
 apartment,
 I cannot
 the street,
 it was
 only as
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 I know
 if we
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 I
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 with
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 this
 picture.

8.20.08







I had just gone through the TSA check in San Antonio. I sat down, put my shoes back on and started walking to the food court to look for breakfast. That’s where and when I first saw her. I saw her red hair and heavy makeup first, that’s what got my attention, then it was her face, she was really cute. Honestly, that’s what really caught my attention first, if we were to ever meet, a crush would be likely. She was leaning forward and eating a bagel or donut offered up to her by who I assumed to be her boyfriend. It was a simple yet intimate moment. It made me smile a little inside. I walked by them a second time after getting my food and that’s when it caught my eye why he was holding her food out like that for her, both her arms were missing from just above the elbows down and the scars looked really new. She couldn’t have been more than 25. Her boyfriend looked about the same age and the bags they had were mostly military. It hit me as I kept walking like a punch in the face. What I thought was a romantic and playful simple moment was in fact something else while still potentially being the same. My eyes started welling up with tears. I kept walking, trying to not let them out as I walked to my gate.

It was the second time in 24h I did this. While competing in clays, I noticed a trapper had a Segway. I walked over and gave it a bunch of close looks as I had never seen one like this or seen one up close. It was just sitting there, parked and ready for action. I wanted one instantly. The trapper was a young kid, shaved head, polite and speaking with my squad mate already about something else. As I got closer I realized I hadn’t even noticed his left leg was entirely gone, it was simply a silver pipe with gold hinges for a knee. That’s when I put it together with the news I had seen months ago about some new veterans getting Segway’s during their recovery.

I felt really foolish at first but then decided I’d rather be a fool then live in a world where I assume people are missing their limbs from war because they have a Segway or a romantic boyfriend.

Now I was sitting in a rocking chair by the gate in San Antonio, waiting for my flight. She walked by with her boyfriend and I wondered where they were off to. Was it home, was it a vacation, was it her first time out of San Antonio and its hospitals?

Now sitting on my flight in the aisle seat, getting hit with bag after bag as everyone filed on, I looked up as one bag all the sudden had a cat in it I could see through the mesh. The cat was scared and starring at me, as I leaned in for a closer look at the poor cat, the next bag hit me, I looked up and there she was again. “Sorry,” she whispered as she smiled at me when our eyes met and then down the aisle she went, cats in bags and boyfriend in tow.

I walked out of the bathroom at LaGuardia after being one of the first off the flight. There were people all around and it was really crowded in the terminal. As I stepped over some bags and through the crowd to get to baggage claim, I saw her again for the last time. I hadn’t even realized she was on my flight to NYC as well. She was bent down and wrestling with her bags with what was left of her arms. I think she was actually just talking to the cat, but I’ll never be sure. As I went down the last set of stairs, I tried to not let the tears out all over again.

Today was S's Birthday

9 months, 0 days, 22 hours, 21 minutes



Today was S's birthday. She invited me over last minute to her rooftop for a small party. She too does not enjoy her birthday although I think it is for different reasons then why I have a hard time with mine. She randomly drops in and out of my life a few times a year, I can never make a plan to see her, I just get calls for last minute ideas of needed or wanted company. I went tonight because I had been wanting to take her photograph again for some time, she let me, no real questions or explanations needed when I told her I needed to photograph her on her birthday. You may not know it from these images, but she was full of joy, it was beautiful.

I made small talk with the strangers, the gallery owner and then lied there in the dark, staring at the sky, waiting for a moment to photograph her again. Then, after I took these, I walked back home.

K & K had a baby:
9 months, 0 days, 22 hours, 21 minutes after I made this image.





Los Angeles, CA | September 13, 2008 | 12:23:37 AM



Los Angeles, CA | September 13, 2008 | 8:23:16 PM



I was standing next to them later backstage staring and wondering how you go about finding such a beautiful woman and then get her to curve your skin and drink your blood naked in front of a room full of assholes with cameras. They were cleaned up but still had small spots of dried blood on their bodies showing through their street clothes. She looked at him and smiled and he leaned over and kissed her neck. He then laughed and said "you taste like blood" she smiled and kissed with her tongue. I was on the subway on my way home from a job on the G train in Brooklyn. We stopped at Fulton. The doors stayed open too long just as we all looked down and saw an old man lying there face up blank face soiled pants with a woman kneeling over him crying. Everyone stared. Every one crowded. no one touched him. A homoboy said "Yo that man is dead. A woman on the train said I'm a nurse but I won't touch him without my gear. Then the doors being longed the doors shut and the train pulled away inches from his head lying there on that fucking orange line. A week later I was waiting to get on a plane in Dallas. I was patient by in line staring ahead when I heard an odd noise. I turned and watched paramedics put things all over this fat man's chest as he layed there and stared at what I assume to be his family everyone seemed a little too calm. They put him on an orange stretcher and wheeled him off through ~~the terminal~~ the terminal. I sat there and stared at all the nearly naked women leaning against the wall. I counted my money and looked back at them. I stood up to leave and one came towards me and asked if I wanted company. she had Ivory white porcelain looking skin soft black hair a slender figure with few curves and a red thong and red bikini top. We went to the back and I stood against a wall as she rubbed against me as she faced me in the dark. I held her tight as my hands back and forth from her hair to her ass and the muscular skin of her back as my face was buried in the hair that smelled as wonderful as nothing I can describe. One song passed and then another. she had already gotten my money but continued with me song after song. I kept my face buried in all that hair and hoped that when my tears were hitting her skin she would just think it was sweat. She slowly held my hand and led me to the front door and told me to get home safe. I was standing in the shower years later washing my penis. I had never realized just how much blood it was every month. I just stood there and watched all the orange water swirl and go down the drain. Years before I was in the south in a beautiful place with a beautiful girl watching the sun set over a pond. The mosquitoes were eating me alive. I sat on a bench next to her and took her picture. I tried to kiss her again in that orange light and she asked me again to stop trying.

5-22-98



I was waiting on the train platform playing with my camera, listening to music in my headphones and avoiding the group of teenagers hanging out nearby, hoping they'd leave me alone and not ask what I was doing photographing the bushes and rocks. They didn't.

My phone rang and I knew it was you. I had been hoping to hear from you and kind of hoping I wouldn't as I was scared of what you had to say. I knew you had another doctor's appointment today to take even more blood and do even more tests. I knew you received results from the last blood test today too. I could hear the fear in your voice when I answered. I could see you shaking a little, trembling and stuttering on the other end of the phone in my mind. Your voice never lost it's calm yet I could sense the panic just under the surface in your mind through it. The doctors had no answers, they didn't know what it was causing the problem, they only presented more possibilities of one dire thing or another. They could only take more blood and make you wait, again.

I didn't really know what to say to you to make you feel better, relax you or let you know how much I worried for you too, so I kept making pictures while I listened to you talk to me through my headphones. I thought all I can do is stay calm for you and not let you hear or sense the panic in my mind, so I calmly kept making pictures while we spoke.





I took countless pictures like these, you lying wherever as I stood over you, wherever we happen to be and only when I happen to have that one camera on me. I took the one above on what was I think our third date. I don't know how many I made over the years. I know there are more. They are lost in the binders of film I would process and put away. It's one of those things I think I'll always get to, yet never do. Now it's been so long since I looked through them or made one or made worthwhile scans or even had you in my life. Our lives are so different now I don't see the point, yet it's still one of those things I want to get done so badly because I know in my heart for some reason they still really matter, but I don't feel ready to go back into those binders looking for you.



1/3/06 - 3:09 AM. The last time I saw you before we moved on.



Sometimes I wish we could speak again so I could apologize for everything. Other times I wish we could speak again so you can apologize for everything, either way, I wish we could speak again. I wish we weren't so far away from each other, in every sense of the word away. You're in that state and I am in this one, somehow, that makes whatever this is easier.

As different as our lives are now, I never envisioned a day we wouldn't know each other anymore.



5/16/06 - 1:23 PM. The first time I saw you after we moved on.



Crash



Scoliosis

YOL

YOL



YOL'S FRIEND
JONATHAN

HELLO
my name is
Jonathan



1 hour 40 minutes 48 seconds | September 23 | 2007

Los Angeles | Solar Eclipse [Remembered]

FUJI RVP

RVP 564

RVP 16

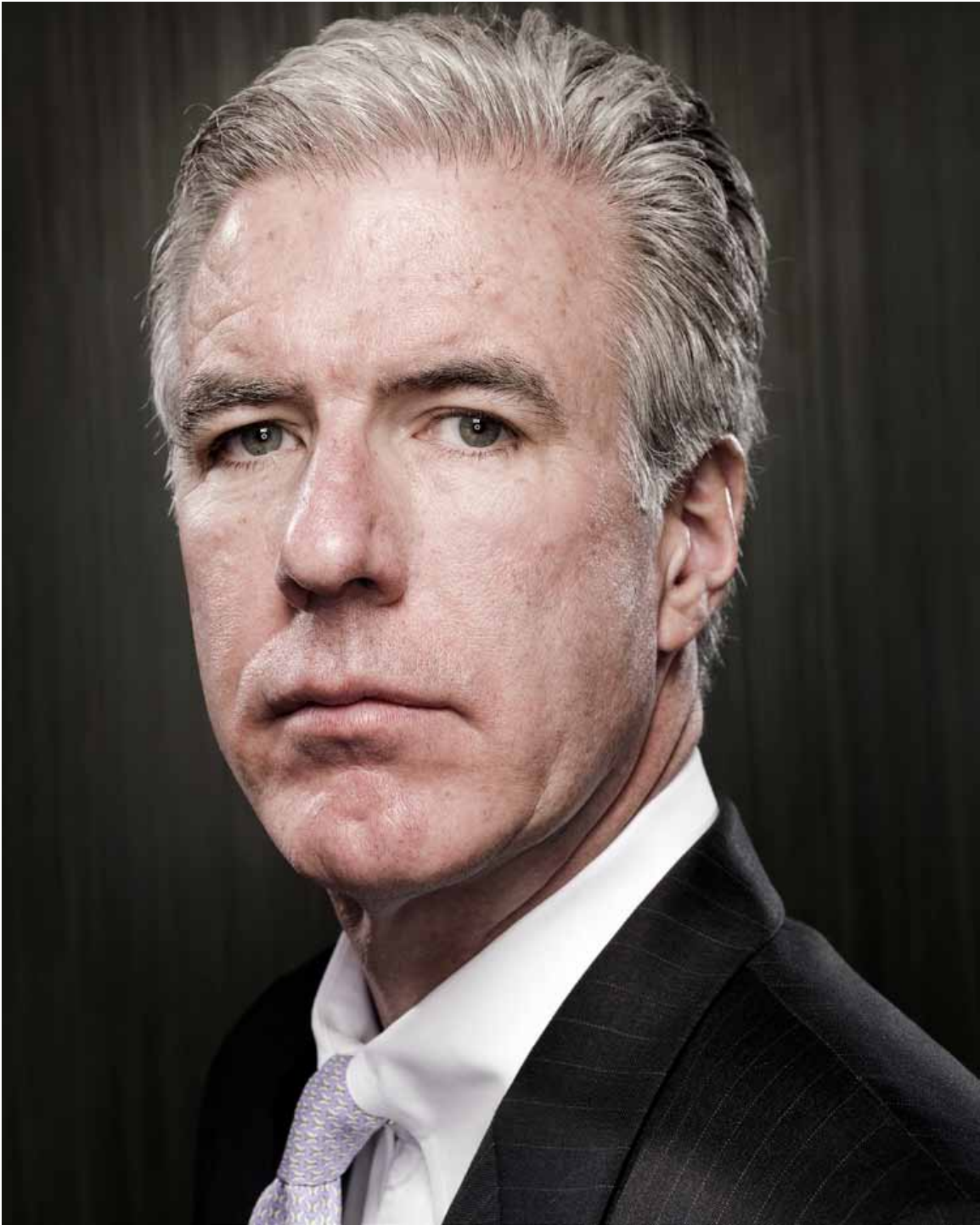


* - not the same frame





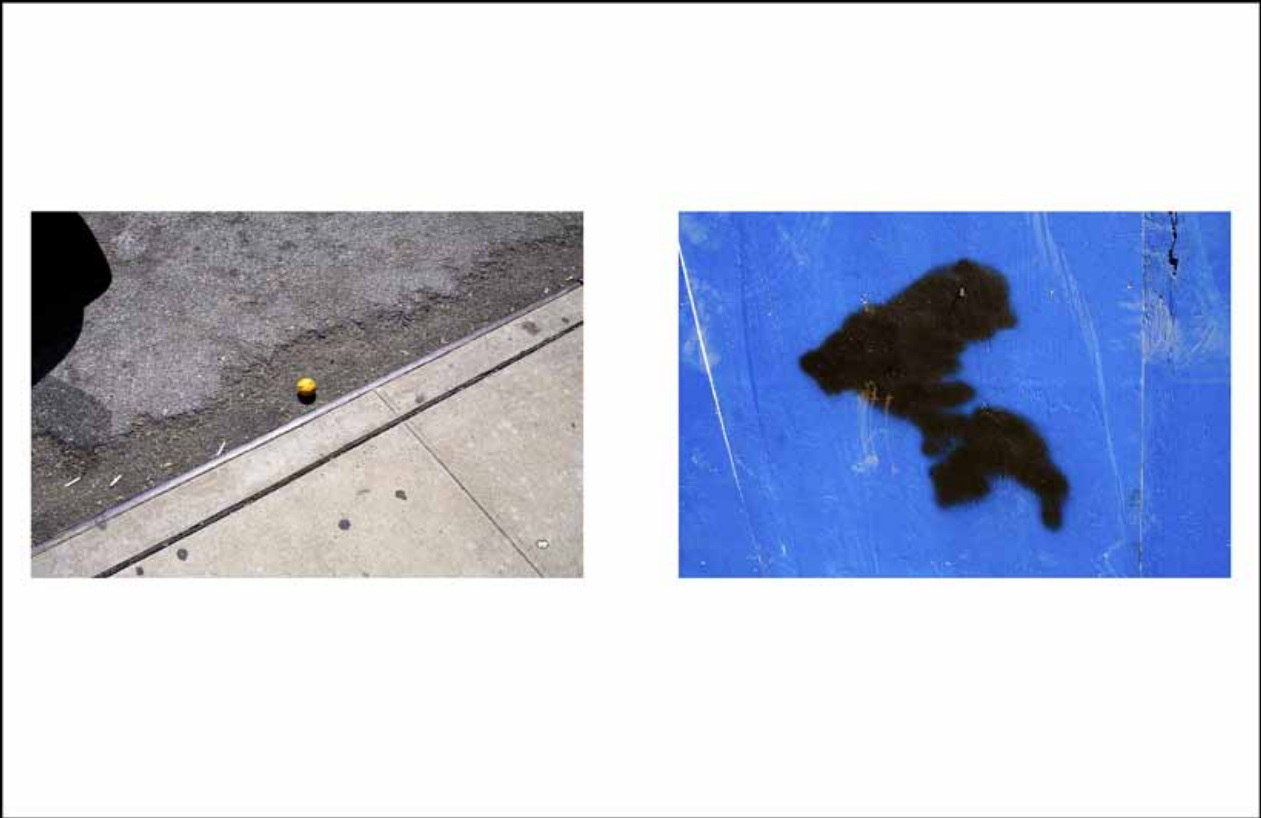
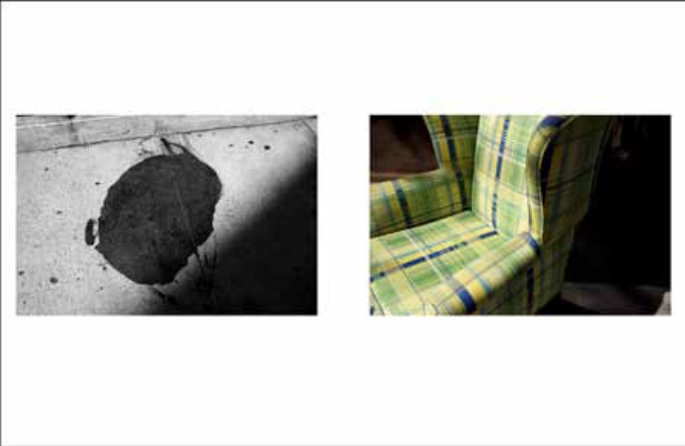
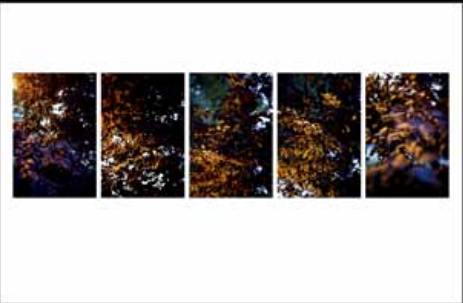
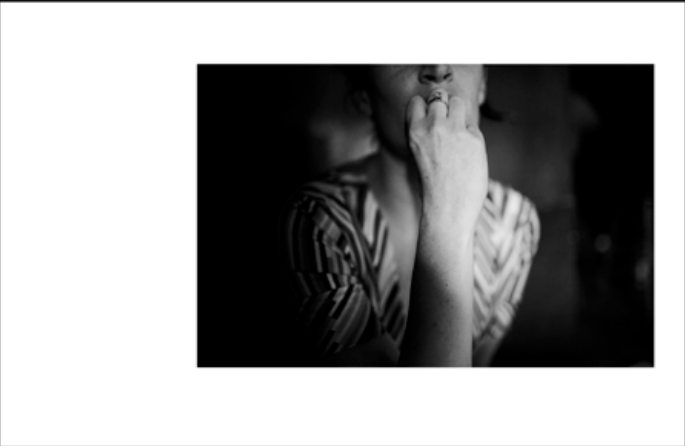
Object belonging to the Jackson Family | for People Magazine



Mike was interviewed for a magazine. This magazine wanted to run a photograph with the article. When no existing photographs of Mike were found that were suitable, the magazine informed Mike at 11:38 AM that they did not have the budget to include a photograph of him. At 11:42 AM, just 4 minutes after hearing the budget for the shoot, Mike said he would cover the cost. It should be noted that Mike has nothing to gain from being in this article or this magazine. It should also be noted Mike is already considered one of the best lawyers here in New York City for his field, so if you are involved in any accounting irregularities in the securities and financial reporting world, you better hope you never meet Mike.

Mike was more dapper, gentlemanly, enjoyable and well put together than most men who wear suits on television playing the type of man Mike actually is... I want to be like Mike and so should you.







8.24.07 4:13 AM you said you were trying to make art. you said this was a perfect opportunity for me to make art, right now, looking at you dance for me. looking at you strip, looking at you naked, looking at you taking your self time. you told me to talk to you. I told you that you standing before me already was art and there was nothing i could ever do to add to the beauty of this moment. that there was nothing i could do to make you more beautiful. nothing i could do to add to the beauty i felt in this moment that i was allowed to stare. nothing made me feel higher or freer in the heart and head as you dancing. it was euphoric and everything i wanted. everything in this moment in the dark a million miles away, i told you we, how i didn't want this end and couldn't believe was a real boot. not a day has passed i don't think of this night. i told you to fuck you. you made me feel lost again, even if this isn't real, in really even for me, you filled me with lust. you gave yourself pleasure and yours. you gave me this gift i so badly needed yet return, you asked me to talk to you. i couldn't find the words needed, so i told you again how much i wanted to fuck you. how to kiss you, how much i wanted to taste you. how much i wanted to make me cum, how much i wanted to cum on you. wanted to cum in you. how much i wanted to make you scream, make you wet and make you fuck me. you smiled, you moaned, you asked me to tell you more, i showed me more to show me everything i could see. the more you showed me, you made me cum i couldn't cum anymore. i just watched you. i just watched get enough, so i just watching. you smiled and said we just a peek. this was special, this was important to me, and you gave me all you could.

9.15.07 9:59pm

That Place You Are From



100 Photographs From Texas On My Birthday





Imagine your favorite athlete. Then imagine that you get to compete on the same field of play with all things being equal. Imagine

the experience of knowing first hand just how incredible their abilities truly are. Then imagine being asked to photograph them.





It was my brother's wedding night. I was the best man. I was to drive the big fancy town car to the reception. We all got in the car. My brother and his wife and her sister, the maid of honor. Just before we left the church for the long drive to the reception the wedding photographer took a picture of us. But just before he did my brother's wife said "This is so stupid" my brother said "nice" "shut up and smile" they did. I started driving. When we got to the highway, I punched it. I drove until that white dotted line seemed solid. The maid of honor was squeezing my right arm. My brother and his wife laughing in the back. I passed cars like they were rocks. I raced through that fucking Texas night like it was my last night on earth and that damn picture is the last one I've ever seen.
R-19695





Ninety eight million two hundred seventy three thousand and eighty four seconds passed between the first image I made of us and the last image I made of us.





All my Love,
MJ.

Flowers by Michael



Mr. Peek, Jeffrey that is, works in finance. I photographed him a few years ago before the term government bailout was a household term. Now Jeffrey works at a different place, also in finance. As I make this, he is making headlines in many major financial reporting worlds for words like bankruptcy, government bailout, billions of dollars gone and other odd, bad words too often associated with white men in suits these days. Look it up, give Jeffrey a peek, decide for yourself what exactly he is doing.



CJ, as in, I don't want Jonathan to use my real name, works in finance. I have absolutely no idea what she does. I did not photograph her at her office. She had seen a photograph of a friend of a friend of a friend I had photographed nude for a very specific project. She wanted her photograph made this way too, well, maybe not this way, but nude and however the mood struck us. Then after many months and very few emails without ever having met in person, she showed up and we made photographs, it was fun.

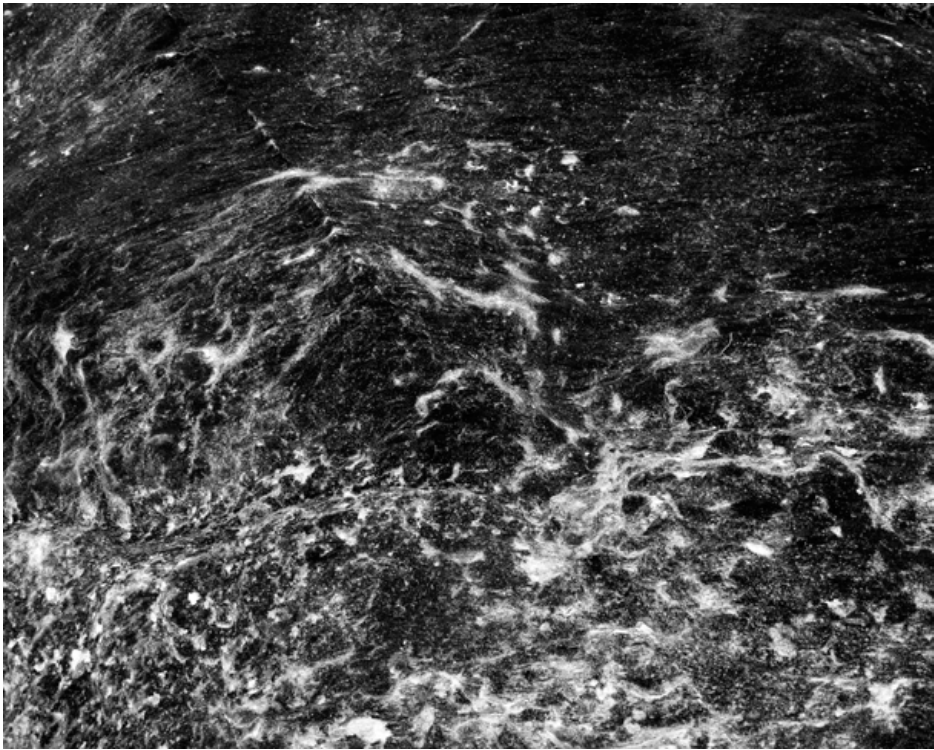
Atlantic City



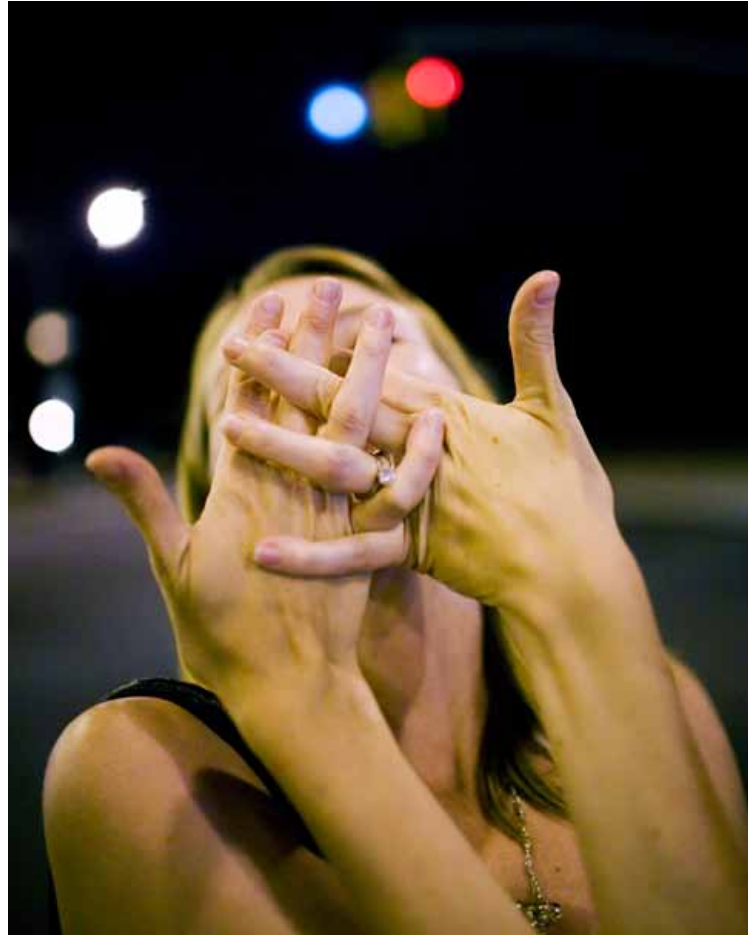
Las Vegas

D I E S S A T U R N I X I J U L I U S M M I X

SATURDAY JULY ELEVENTH TWO THOUSAND NINE





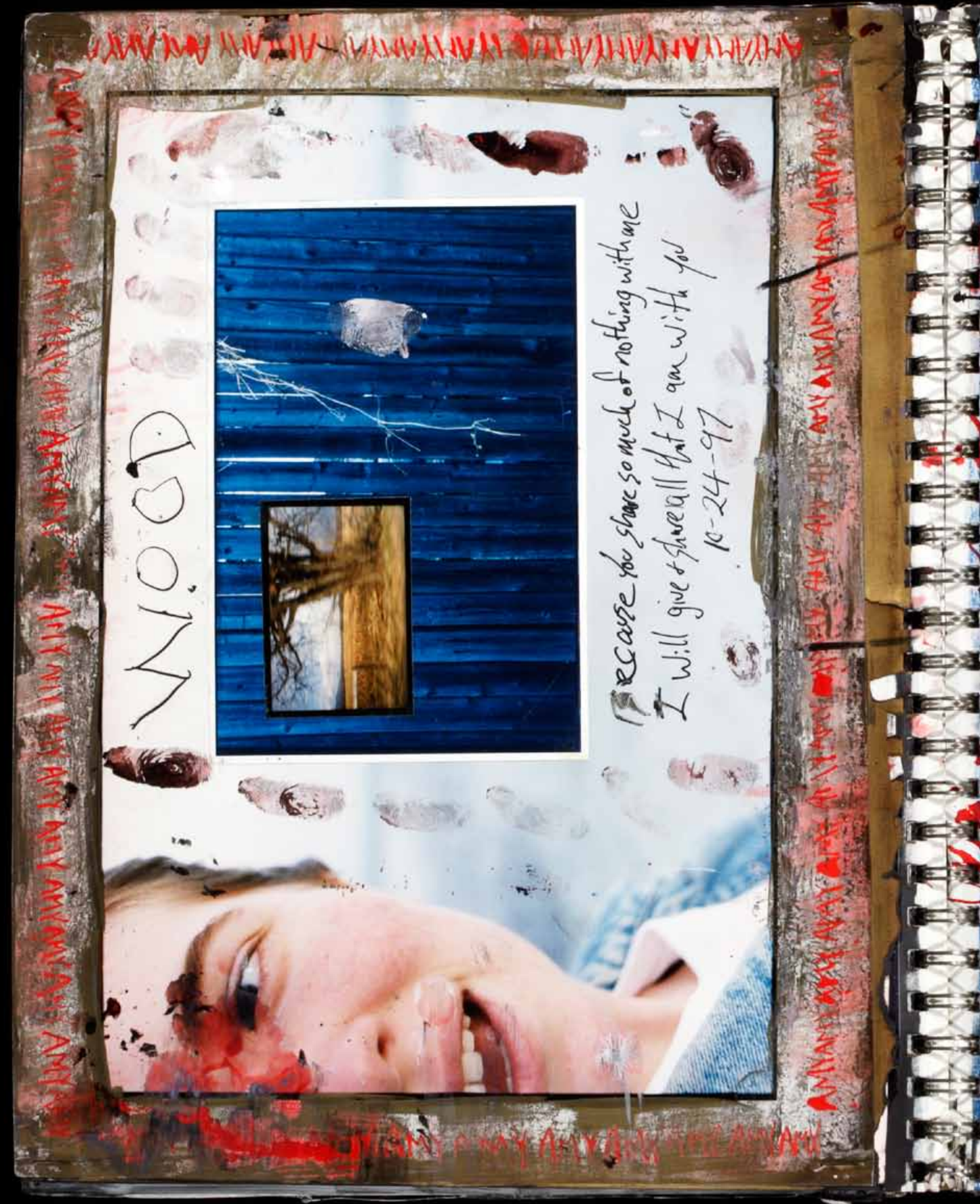


There was a group of us, all of us excited and in various states of happy places, walking through the night streets from one place to another. I've known her a long time now and even photographed her as a bride. Tonight she wanted none of it, constantly hiding her face with her hands from me and my camera. I assumed it was a playful avoidance, but I'll never really know. She was excitedly telling a story as we approached a cross walk with our green light. She was directly to the left and slightly in front of me and followed the rest of the group into the street to cross.

As she turned towards the group and stepped off the curb, I made an image similar to this one about the same time I noticed a large white van with flashing lights coming right at us... then I heard it's siren. It was not going to stop and it was not going to avoid us. My left arm was free and the closest to her. I grabbed her bag strap and pulled her out of the way, close enough that my arm then went around her waist and I didn't stop pulling her out of that white van's way till we were almost back up on the curb.

I've done similar things before at awkward streetlights and always, always, always overreacted, once so bad I never lived it down.

This time, this night, I did not overreact.

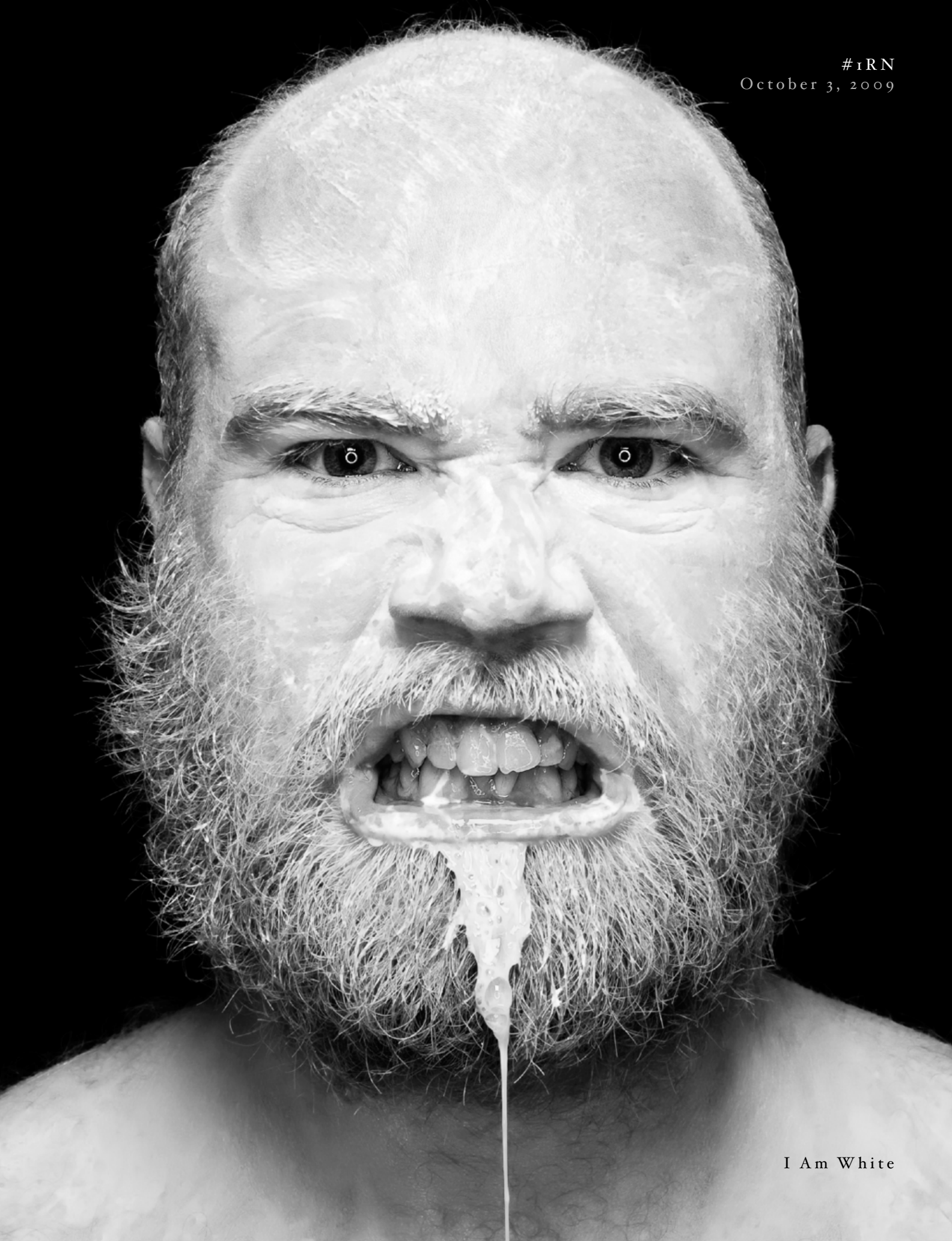


10:18:59 PM

#1RN
October 3, 2009



I Am Black



I Am White



This is Mackynzie Renee Duggar.

She is 2 days, 19 hours and 32 minutes old in the above photograph.

After a period of supervised courtship, in which her parents were allowed to hold hands but not to kiss, twenty-year-old Josh and twenty-year-old Anna married on September 26, 2008 where they kissed for the first time. 377 days later on October 8, 2009, Mackynzie was born.

Josh Duggar is the oldest child of Jim Bob and Michelle Duggar who as of this story, are expecting their 19th child in March 2010 and have a reality show on TLC called 18 Kids and Counting. Mackynzie is Jim Bob and Michelle Duggar's first grandchild.

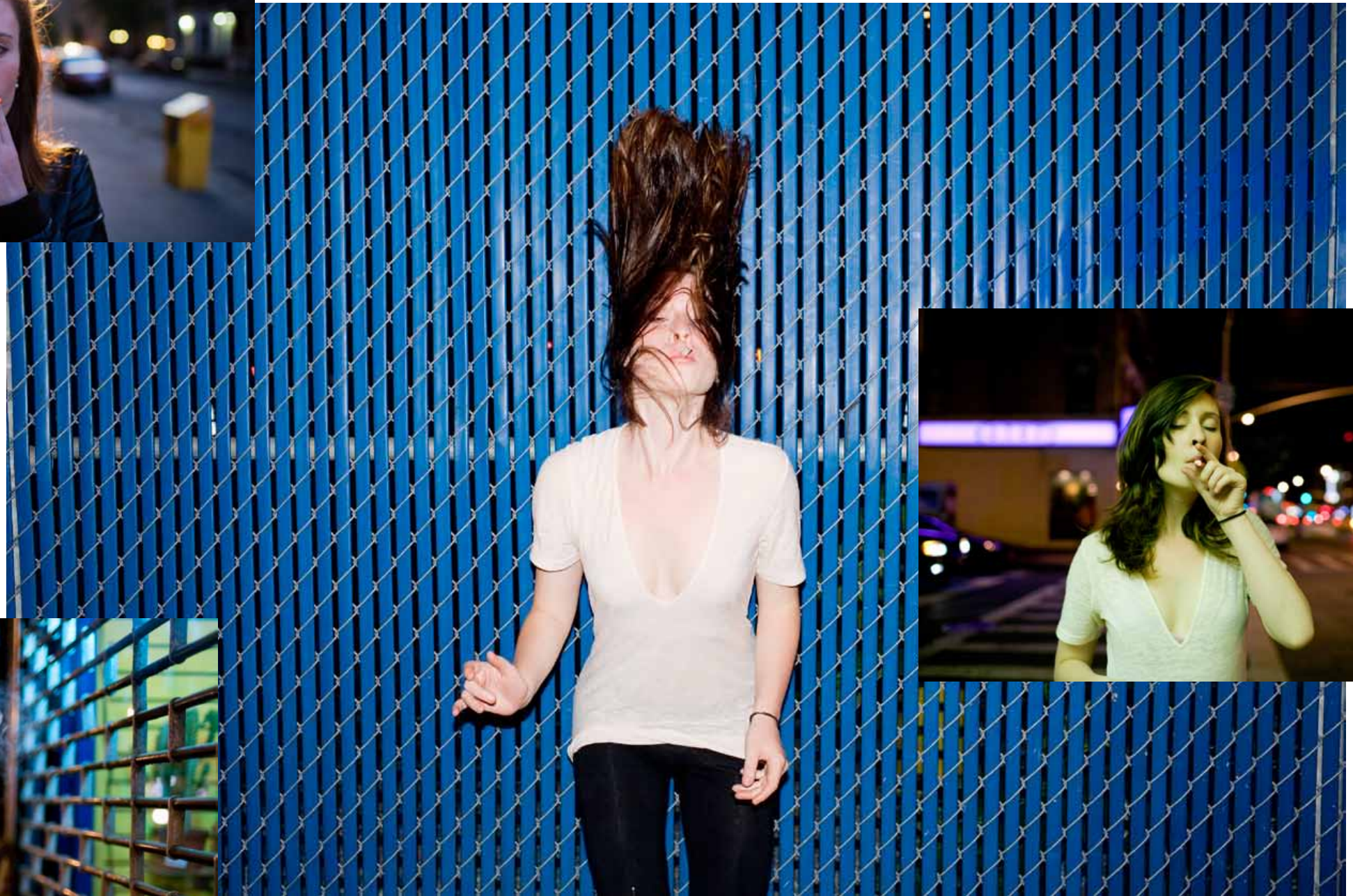
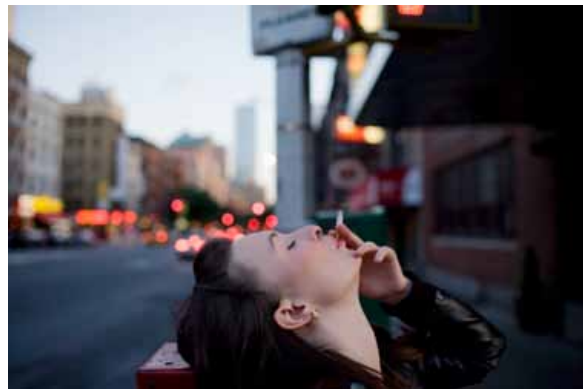
I was assigned to make these photographs for People magazine.





Los Angeles | The End of Summer | September 21, 2009

Shane Likes Smoking Cigarettes
July 12, 2009 | 9th Avenue | New York City



#iRN | Julie G
October 5, 2009



#iRN
(for Irving)





04:43:41 PM & 05:03:50 PM

Rogers, Arkansas | October 10, 2009

We were looking for a bowling alley, I really needed to knock something down, I needed that joy. On the way, the technology passed us by a carnival but I kept driving, I wanted that alley. We got to the address but the alley was not there. I turned us around and drove back past the carnival. As I approached an intersection to the left was a tree making a shadow on the side of a gas station and on the right, away from the carnival sitting alone on the curb backlit in the low yellow sunlight, was a clown. It was a moment, a moment one could be blind and make this photograph moment.

The streetlight changed and we kept driving, stopping only when we hit the lanes and then we bowled. We bowled the best we could and then we went after our cameras, drove back to the carnival racing the setting sunlight and hunted that clown.

We arrived and went our own ways in the blinking lights and setting sun. I didn't want the clown, I didn't want the strangers; my mind was on my photographic task that brought me here now only hours away and I craved its start.

I sat on a bench, my big camera in my hands, my little cameras spread on the bench around me and I stared at my feet as the couples and children raced around. Then I saw him.

He approached me shy and slow with his hand outreached, in this hand was a silver snapper with the manufactures advertising stickers still all over it. He didn't speak English well but I knew instantly what he wanted. He wanted me to take his photograph and I accepted without a word. I made two frames with his snapper as they stood together not knowing quite what to do. I handed the camera back to him and he smiled, he smiled big. As he turned to share the images with her, he looked back at me one more time and smiled with a nod of gratitude.

When I saw this I pointed at my camera and at them and said, "My turn?" His smiled dropped away and he placed his camera on the bench and then went to her and took her bag so it too would not be in my image, he knew this was now a different story. Having placed their items on the bench he stood next to her and awaited my words. I didn't give him any, I just made a motion of an embrace... then they did.

I raised my camera and took one frame and then whispered, "Thank you, don't forget your items on the bench." I then turned and walked away... The dark was coming.



October 13, 2009 | 03:27:34 PM

Eric had an image coming up in a magazine. The magazine wanted a contributor's photograph of him and he asked me to take it. As it was for a magazine, now now now was in full effect. I made 285 photographs and gave him a high res of the first three I felt were Eric the moment we were done. Then he went on his way and I went mine. 6 hours, 6 minutes and 26 seconds later, I received the following email:

Subject: Already framed I love it so much
Body: Thanks again Jonathan. I really love it

This is why I make photographs.







All text quoted below is exactly as it came to me entirely and is unedited.

From male photographer friend 1:

“BDay Steak & Grilled BDay Steak”

From male photographer friend 2:

“Also just got an EOTech 552 for one of my ARs, yummy...”

From male photography representative:

“Your site is always disconcertingly good.
Best,
J.”

I received all this mail the same day, all unrelated.

From female photographer:

“Hi, Please remove me from your mailing list.
Thank you,
J.”



\$42,000 of love.

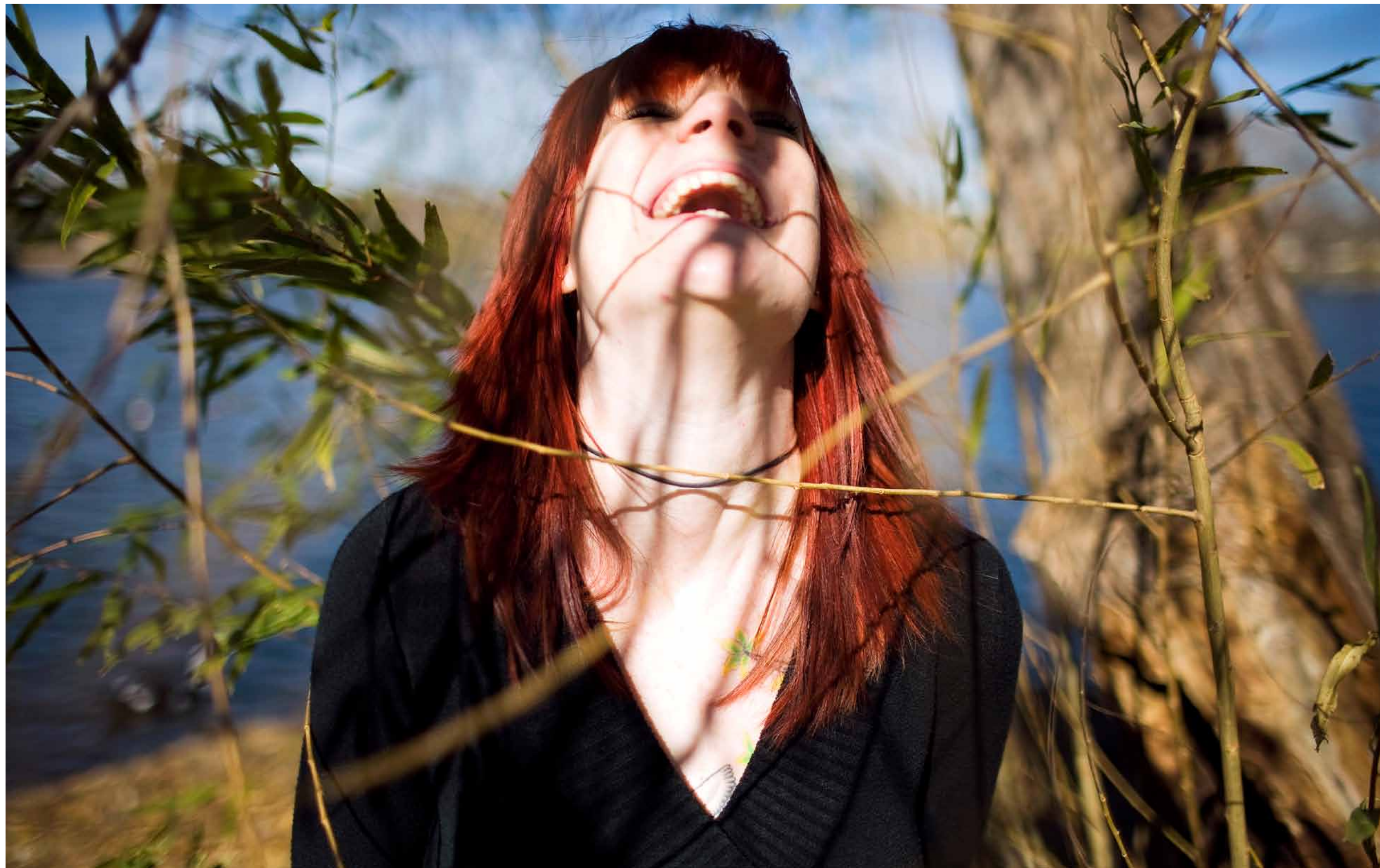


01:01:40 AM

#iRN
October 4, 2009

I Am Red (in the face)







Lindsey

the girl whose name means tree by the water

Just before Halloween she was my waitress at a Chili's® in Texas. I was back in Texas at this Chili's® just before Christmas and she was by chance again my waitress. I asked to photograph her and she agreed. We met for only three short times on three different days and on these days she let me look at her.









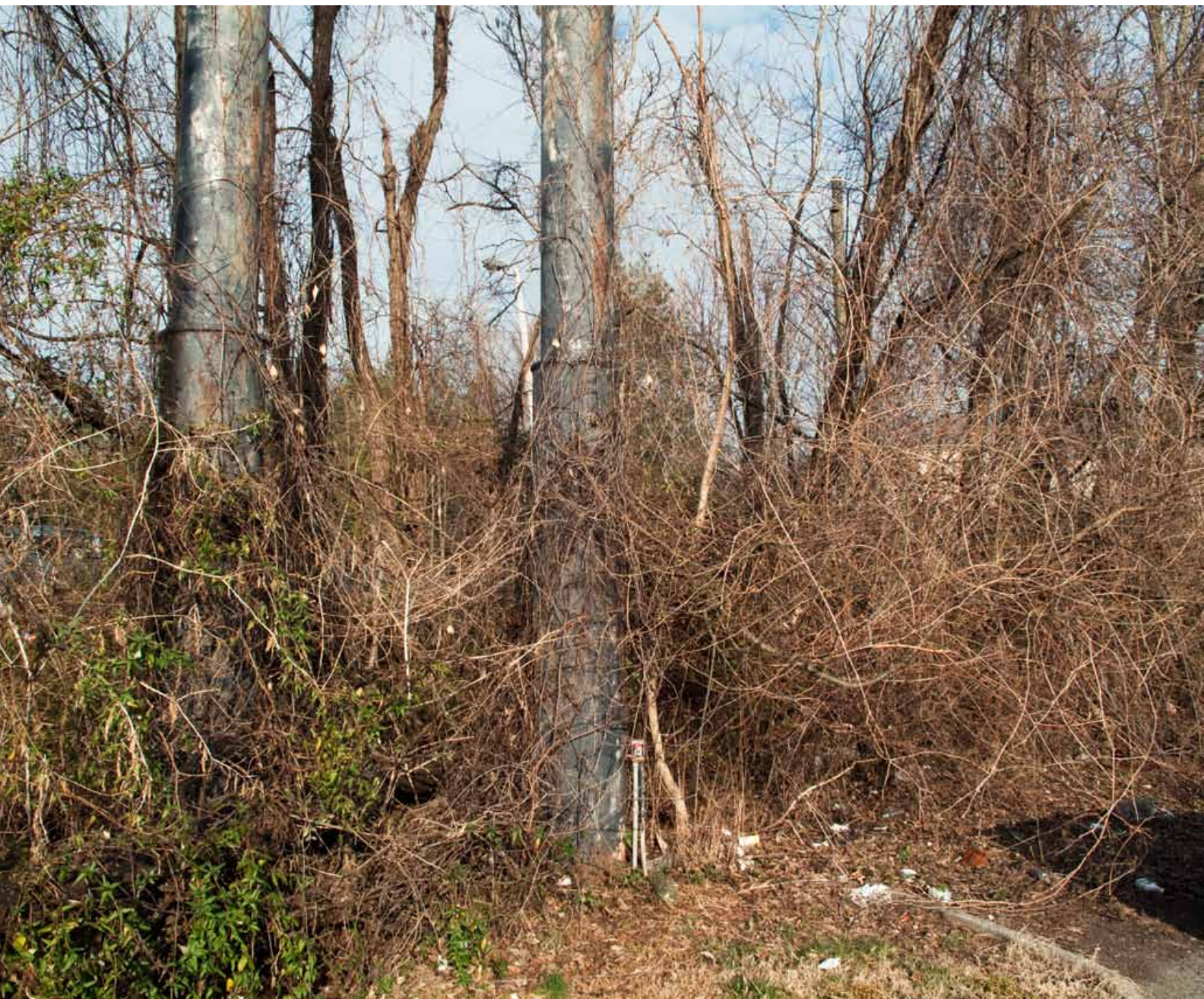






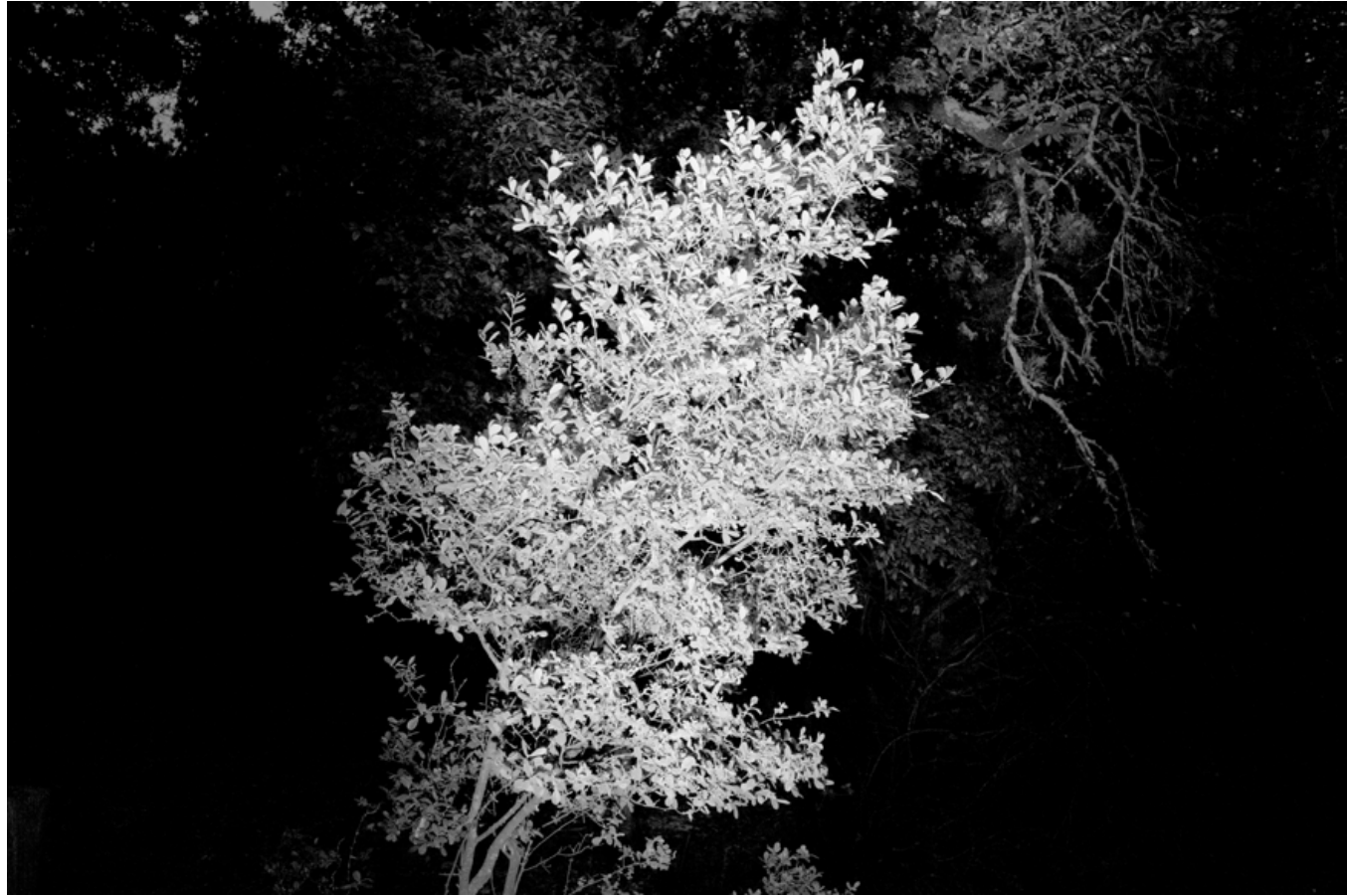






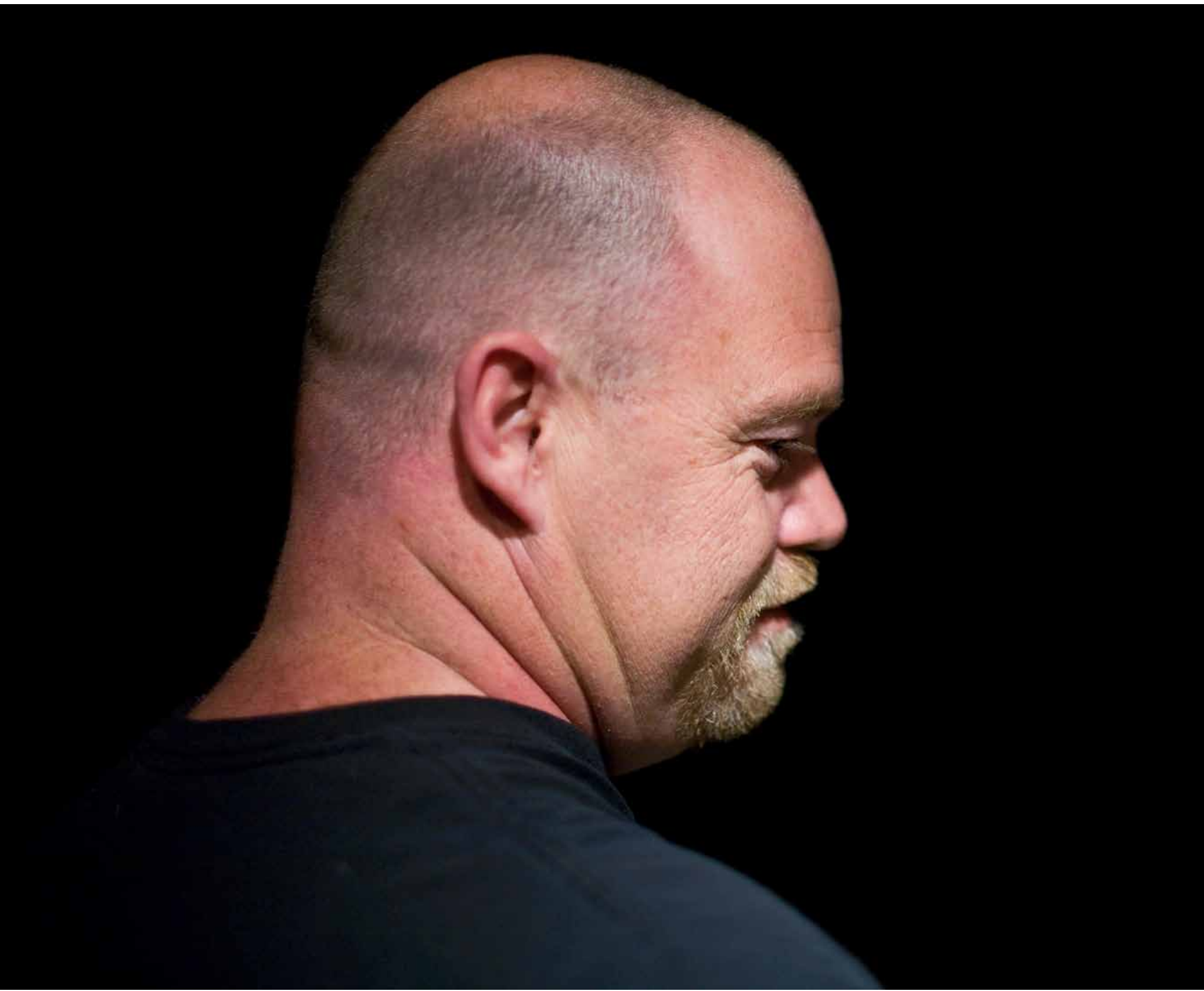














I Walked Towards The Door, I Stopped, I Shut My Eyes, I Took A Photograph Of Myself And I Hoped

On July 6, 2009 a gift was purchased for me at truck stop in Louisiana. In the story I was told, and delightfully also printed on the receipt, this gift was purchased from a woman named Crystal. This Crystal was remembered and spoken of in high regard. I liked this story, I liked this gift.

After hearing this story, I decided then that if I ever found myself along this road in Louisiana, I would take a portrait of this Crystal at this truck stop.

Three hundred seventy one days later I found myself on this road racing towards Texas. It was almost midnight on a day that had already been too long. In the dark I approached an exit and it was not until I saw the name of this little town that I remembered this desire in myself. I almost missed it, I almost drove right by. The road was taking its toll on my mind more than I wanted to admit this day. I did not have the receipt with the address on me nor had I written it down. I went towards the brightest place in all that dark, tried to remember every detail I could and as-

sumed this must be the place. It had to be the place. I stopped, I filled my borrowed chariot with gas and I looked at the clock, it was almost midnight. I wanted it to be the next day as soon as possible.

I walked towards the door, I stopped, I shut my eyes, I took a photograph of myself and I hoped that I was about to meet this Crystal.

I walked by the register, there stood two women, both with their name tags covered by other shirts or jackets and a tingle ran through my body, which one could it be? I found myself something to buy and approached the register. The man with the gun guarding the door was looking directly at me and my big ridiculous camera. I was almost the only one in there and I would be suspicious of me too.

I made my purchase, slowly counted my change and then explained my story. The two women looked at me up and down, then back at one another and then back at me. “Oh, yes, I remember Crystal. She moved to [this place].” We continued chat-

ting for a moment or two, I thanked them repeatedly and explained to them that if I ever happen to find myself here again, maybe I would try to take their portrait. Tonight our story wasn’t complete, for we had only just met.

As I walked out the door, that man with the gun standing guard, he said quietly to me almost too low to hear, “You have a good night.” I told him to, “Keep this place safe,” and I stepped outside just in time to watch it become a new day in the middle of the night. I then made photographs for the Crystal I could not find, wherever she happen to be this night, knowing it is entirely possible that I will never meet her or see her beauty with my own eyes.

I pretended I had met this Crystal, I pretended I had heard from the woman that gave me the gift Crystal sold her and I started walking back towards my borrowed chariot knowing my best efforts had not been enough.

So I made another photograph of myself with my eyes closed.





My camera had been slung around up onto my shoulder and was dangling aimlessly as I walked between the cars. I had walked too far from my borrowed chariot, still sitting at the gas pump from before I walked into the store. As I walked between the cars, I heard her voice before I saw her. “What are you doing?” she asked me. I assumed she saw me pointing that ridiculous camera at myself under the light. “Taking some photographs of myself so I can tell a story later,” I told her.

“Do you make any money doing that?”

“No, not really.”

Then she told me she was on her way to New Orleans so I told her I was on my way to Texas. Then she told me about some troubles she had and how hard life was for her and her babies. So I told her about my troubles and how hard my life was too sometimes although I had no babies. We talked a minute or two more, I thought we were getting to know one another as people do when they first meet over these tales of our shared woe. Eventually she asked me:

“Is there anything I can help you with so you can help me?”

I didn’t really understand the question and thought about it for a moment.

“Where is your truck parked?”

I turned and pointed towards the pumps in the distance, wondering why she thought I drove a truck.

“It’s over there, still at the pumps by all those cars, I wandered off.”

She told me another story about more of her troubles and that she only had \$6. I thought about her question some more. I knew I had \$10 left in my pocket from my purchase in the store trying to find Crystal.

“Can I take your portrait smoking that cigarette before you light it, I can pay you \$10 for ten minutes of portrait time, how does that sound?”

She laughed and asked why would I want a photograph of her smoking. I told her I just like to photograph people smoking and had my whole life. She kept laughing and said:

“Okay, just stand here and smoke?”

“Yes.”

She lit her cigarette and I started photographing her. I did this for one minute and twenty-one seconds, thirty photographs. My memory card became full. I reached for my pocket where the other one lives. It was not there.

“We are done, thank you.” I gave her the \$10 I promised.

“That’s it?”

“Yes, it was really nice to meet you.”

We shook hands and she stomped out her cigarette and I started off towards my borrowed chariot and she went back towards her small, red, dented, two door. As I got close under that canopy of lights, something started hitting me. Softly, but hard, with force, randomly all over my body as I got towards my door, desperately trying to remember her name. It was unique and I realized I had forgotten it at the same moment I realized I was being pelted by insects attracted to all those lights overhead. They were insects like I had never seen, even after 13 years in New York City. These were like roaches but different colors, had wings and were as big as my fist. I jumped into my borrowed chariot as fast I could only to realize I had left the moon roof open.

I jumped out, knocked off all the insects in a panic and started walking back to get her name. Standing there outside my borrowed chariot having a panic knocking insect after insect off me, I saw that dented little red two door go flying by me, windows down with her voice carrying outward as her tires squealed out over the insects littering the parking lot.

I had not noticed all these beautiful creatures when I arrived so shortly ago.

The moon roof now closed, the bugs all knocked off and a new memory card loaded, I sat at the fork exiting the truck stop. Left back to the highway, right to the hotel and food. I wanted, I needed to stop, yet it was clear to me in this moment, I needed to get to that Texas line. It was still many more miles away than I should be driving, I just wasn't yet ready to hit that highway, not yet. I went right, right to the Waffle House®.

I pulled up and there were no cars in the lot but the lights were on and there were two women sitting on the curb out front, directly in front of the door wearing Waffle House® attire. I pulled up next to them, put my window down,

“Are you open?”

“Yeah, we open, why everyone keep asking us that?”

“Because it looks closed,” I told her politely laughing. She laughed too and we all sat there talking for some time, me in the borrowed chariot, window down, the two women sitting there smoking. It took serious effort to understand each word, the accents had such specific beauty, I wanted to be sure I savored it. I didn't really want to go inside. I got out of the borrowed chariot, ridiculous camera still swinging from my shoulder. We kept talking.

A man boy arrived out of nowhere, taller than me (I am six foot one), taller than me by a great deal and skinny as a rail. He said something to me I swear wasn't even English and started laughing at his own comment instantly. I never got him to repeat it. Then it was the four of us, standing outside the door of the Waffle House®

telling one another stories. I could have stood there hours.

A group arrived next to us in a car, put their window down,

“Ya'll open?”

The two women looked at me and started laughing while they went inside. I stayed outside for a moment, watching the new car unload four twenty-somethings that looked fresh out of Brooklyn, but had likely had never left Louisiana, all walk by me as if I wasn't there and go inside. The tall skinny rail was still outside too, thumbing around a burnt out cigarette and looking for more on the asphalt. I asked him if I could take his photograph smoking:

“Helya no you caint.”

He then went inside as fast as he could. I stood there a minute, wondering why, only as he had a minute ago been so curious. My hunger made me forget this and I walked inside. I stood inside the door, the Brooklyn kids were at the counter, no non-awkward spot was to be had there. There were three booths lining the front window, one was empty and dirty, the middle one had a young woman sitting there alone, head to toe in green and the last booth was also empty, but one woman who had been outside and friendly a minute ago, was sitting on the last stool directly next to it now glaring at me. There was no non-awkward spot to choose. I chose to head towards the one clean booth and to go ahead and face the girl in all green, head to toe all green, even if it meant we'd be staring at one another over the empty side of her booth and the empty side of mine.

Just as I started towards my seat, skinny rail jumped up from the counter where he had taken a perch next to the Brooklyn kids,

“Dooode, ya got a craze giant bug on you!!!!!!”

As he said this, the Brooklyn kids all jumped from their seats and ran towards the booths away from me, the waitresses ran away from the center of the restaurant and even the cook I only now noticed ran back from me. There I was, in the middle of this Waffle House® just after midnight, spinning in a circle with my ridiculous camera flying outward on its strap, slapping my body randomly to knock off a giant insect I had not yet seen, still on me from the truck stop. I stopped spinning and asked the skinny rail,

“Did I get it!?!?”

“Naugh maaan, ya arm pit, ya armpit!”

I had practically ripped my shirt off in the middle of this Waffle House®, big ridiculous camera bouncing all around, when I finally saw a large, giant black beetle or roach or whatever fall to the ground. I kicked it over and over toward the door, opened the door, kicked it through and then turned towards the inside of the Waffle House®. The entire place was as far from me as it could be. I arranged my shirt back into place, placed my big ridiculous camera back under my arm and asked the skinny rail, “Anymore?” He just shook his head no and sat down. I stared at my feet, walked to my awkward spot in the corner booth and sat down. The woman who had been friendly outside and only glared at me inside, got

up from her spot nearby at the counter, walked to other side of the counter and sat back down. I ordered and waited. The green girl across from my booth never once looked up at me or away from her phone. She had on a green bandanna of sorts high up in her dark hair, a green shirt with a giant frog on it and green stockings. She looked as if she was dressed for a rave and this girl was not kidding around about it, she was ready for her close up in a rave/club kid movie, here, in Waffle House®, after midnight, in nowhere Louisiana. It was wonderful and I couldn't stop staring. I was the sweaty, odd, oldest guy in the room who had just brought in a giant beetle. Everyone was done talking to me.

I ate my food and waited for the check. Everyone else had left by the time it came. The woman who brought this check was the first woman who had spoken to me outside and laughed when I asked her if they were open. She was really sweet when she brought it and told me to have a safe drive. I told her to have a safe night and looked down at the check. Her name was Karen, just like my mother.

As I was going through the door, looking for the insect I had kicked out earlier, tall skinny rail was there. He made a point to jump out of the way and avoid me but more oddly, the downward facing lens line of the big ridiculous camera still dangling from my shoulder. I asked him why so scared of a camera and his response was that a man was holding it. If I had been a woman, he'd have been posing away for me.

I had only been stopped in Louisiana 66 minutes.

I was on the highway now. Not staying in Louisiana was becoming more and more of a good idea, at least for this night. I had started off on this journey so long ago and it was now just after one in the morning. I wanted that Texas line and it was not going to be easy. The moment that thought entered my mind is when I saw it. On the side of the road, coming up on my right, the only lights around in the perfect dark, was a U-Haul truck pulling a trailer and a car, all filled and bursting with extra items tied to them where there really shouldn't be. It was sitting there idle with a man standing out of the drivers door, high beams lighting up the road in front. There, just on the edge of the high beams and the edge of the asphalt, was a woman in a pink house dress, holding the hand of a small boy with his pants around his ankles, urinating out into the wild.

If that little boy can do that in a moment like this as fearless as he seemed, surely I can make Texas. I put the windows down, I opened that moon roof back up and turned up the music.

I made that Texas line. I again almost missed noticing it in the dark. I started looking for a place to stop. I have crossed this east Texas line twice now this year, both times felt the same and it wasn't the joy I hoped for, both times a total surprise of things I had desired so greatly going so wrong.

I ended up stopping in the one town I didn't want to, almost to spite myself. I couldn't keep my eyes open. I checked into a hotel and went to the room leaving everything in the borrowed chariot, minus the cameras. I took off all my clothes, laid down and thought the sleep would wash over me like a pleasant wave. The moment my head hit the pillow I was no longer tired. I was ready to start the day all over again.

I had been awake almost 24 hours.
I had made 1,493 photographs.
I had made 77 videos.
15 hours 1 minute total trip time.
8 hours 44 minutes driving time.
6 hours 16 minutes stopped time.
I averaged 61.9 MPH.
I traveled 541 miles.
I drove across 5 states.



Looking For Crystal



The Last Minutes Of July 11, 2010 - The First Minutes Of July 12, 2010



I laid there a few hours, shut my eyes and pretended to sleep. I stayed in the hotel as late as I could, ignoring the call of the road to get out of this town. I packed my gear and went to check out, I had received no receipt under my door. At the counter there was a woman who politely helped me. For reasons I still don't know, it took over twenty minutes to check me out of the room I did not sleep in. We chatted, I made jokes, she laughed, she smiled and I told her stories. I didn't want to leave that counter, please have a more difficult time checking me out. I asked her if I could take her photograph and she simply replied that she hated having her photograph made. Yet there I was, snapping, as the camera sat on the counter not quietly making images. Her eyes charmingly rolling and rolling at me.



Then I was on the road again. It was no longer an adventure, it was an errand. I pulled over before the town line. I pulled into an abandon looking driveway and I called that hotel in which I did not sleep. The same woman I had been photographing answered just as I had hoped. I asked her to have lunch with me and I could hear her eyes rolling at me again as she politely declined.



I got back on the road.





My Typical Thumb & The Inappropriate Finger Next To It | August 1, 2010

Two women that knew me well enough and did not know each other have each used different words, single words, to describe me, what I make or the combination there in. Neither of these two words had I thought about myself before and now I cannot forget them.



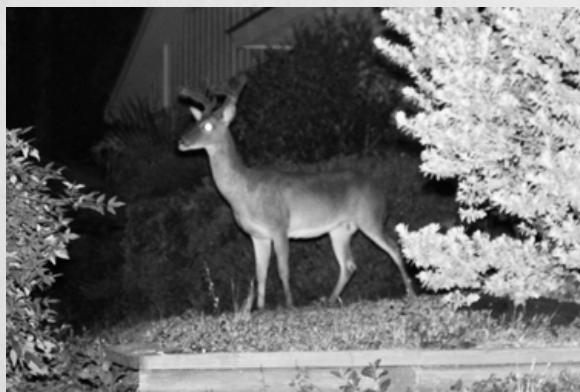
1999 | Los Angeles

One time, long ago, in photo school, during a critique in which I had not done the assignment nor attempted it, as I was too busy printing photographs that had nothing to do with anything, tacking them to the wall anyway, a girl stood up and was defending me. I did not know she even looked at the photographs I made before today. I was surprised. I remember her far across the classroom looking at me, through me, towards the professor. “Jonathan photographs rocks. Not like you or I would just take a photo of a rock, Jonathan makes that rock hurt you.”

I looked at my feet and I blushed. It was exactly what I wanted.

I think her name was Victoria, yes, it was.

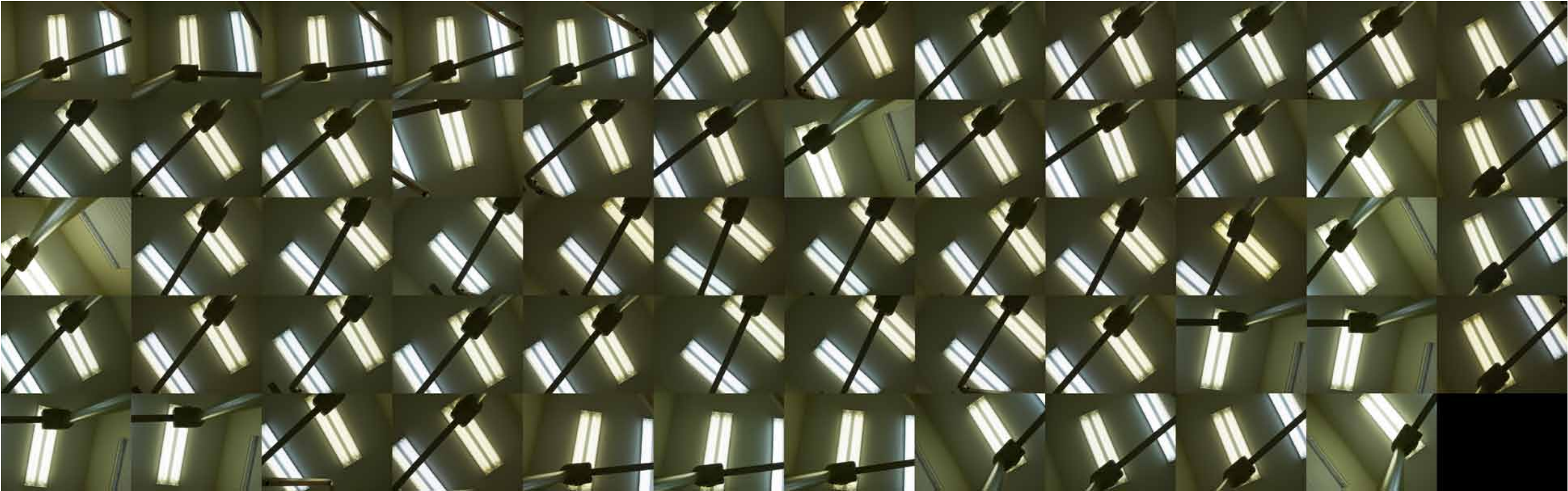
Your Left Eye



F U R



13 PHOTOGRAPHS MADE IN THE DARK



Today I was X-Rayed, I was cleaned and I was drilled. This took several hours, all today, in two different visits.

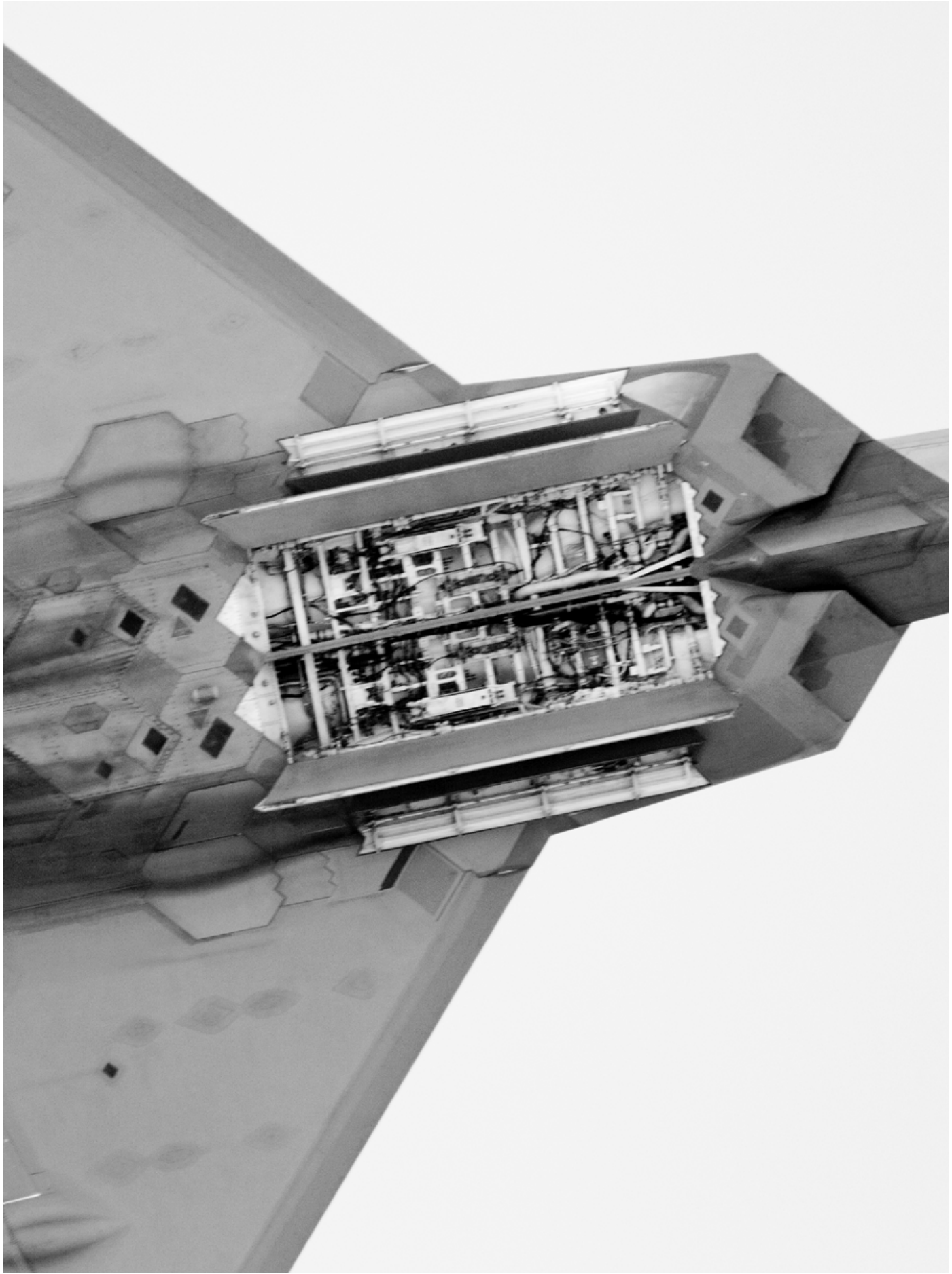
Then I told her every time it (you) hurt me, I will press that button.







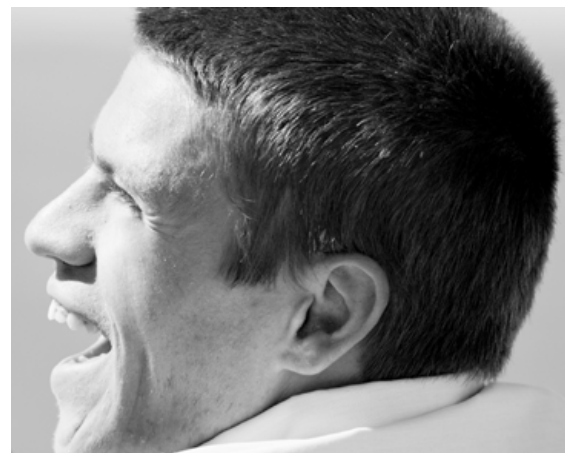
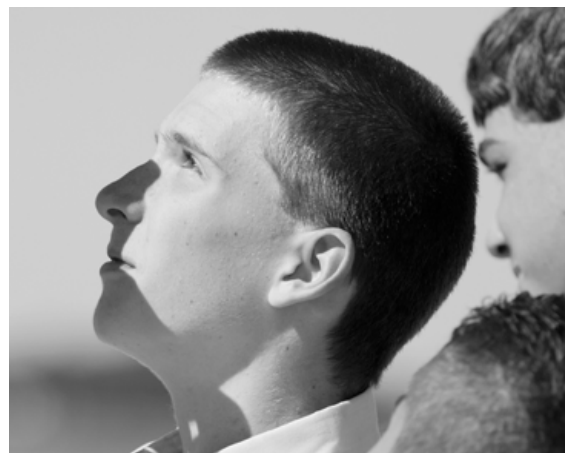


















We had hundreds and hundreds of phone calls, many many video chats, uncountable texts and thousands of electronic letters totaling some maybe 100,000+? words. (I again tried to count and gave up, my first estimate here was so very wrong). This was all in far far under the last two years. Yet, I only met you, saw you in person, 5 times. We stayed in 5 hotels and you were welcomed in 2 homes of those that love me and sometimes share those homes with me. You, you never invited me, to any real you.

After our 4th meeting and before our 5th, I was planning this next trip of ours, excitedly looking at maps. You know how I love maps. I was planning my drive as your car was broken and you were on the way between where I stay and where we were going to go. So finally, I asked you, what I should have never not known, directly and simply,

“What is your address?”

You said, “I live in ##### StreetName St., CityName, StateName #####”

The street address did not even match the zip code. I pretended this was all okay, even though I knew this address was not real. I still wanted to see you. See you in person. None of these calls, none of these texts, none of these electronic letters mattered anymore. Who are you, when you stand in front of me.

We would still meet just days later, not where I stay, not where you live, not in the empty lot you told me you did, but at a place almost half way between us, found as we drove towards one another. In this meeting I almost didn’t come to myself, after a photograph I had made of us this day sank in, a photograph I asked if I could make, sank in, after the good and bad of this day sank in, after the words we shared sank in, after I watched and waited for you to sleep, or pretend to, while curled up in a ball next to me, I quietly left in all that dark when I didn’t really want to. I had decided you were correct in what you told me last time I left sooner than expected, so much time before this day, you said, “You don’t even know me.” That was all I was trying to do, all along. Know you. I never learned and you never wanted me to.

When I last heard you, you said it was funny experiences mean different things to different people who were both there. The last time you wrote me, you were proud that no one you know even knows you know me. There were so many things I asked directly, that I would only learn, later, on the internet, didn’t match. These were things that weren’t what I was allowed or taught to believe, all along. All along, you knew I was wrong and you didn’t correct me, once. I learned more about you from the internet, than you ever told me, directly. There is so much more, so much more, so much more – but my heart, my mouth and my brain are tied and tied by me alone.

Months after I last saw you, I did find where you really live, from a map, on the internet and I told you so. As you long ago told me, everyone, on the internet, your small neighborhood. As you long ago showed me, everyone, on the internet, what your home looks like. As you sent me long ago, a picture of a street sign, closer than you likely even know... All I did, was learn, to put all these things together. I learned to doubt. I learned to doubt my eyes. I learned to doubt my ears. I learned to doubt your everything. So long ago, I stopped looking, at your everything. All this meeting you has taught me, was to doubt, everything, in a world I once found very beautiful. The world on the internet and the world not. Yet, you never stopped clawing me for it, teasing me for it, using parts of my specific me only I could see, for your others, time after time and times three on your birthday and the day after. Who knows for who or for how many or for why. Know not I. Today, this day, was the day I was born and tomorrow is the day after.

What + How, Do I Pretend I Didn’t Ever, Now, Clearly See + All

I Am 1 Of 1, Whatever I Am, I Risked More Than I Had For A Chance I Didn’t, I Told You True

“I can no longer see the point in making images I cannot share.” – Me, Being Read Back To Me, By You

Read Once Again After I Made A Thousand+ Images Of You & Before I Made Thousands+ More





Turn the page.

Stand in this place of a

Dead man who was once a Living man

here. Look in the opposite direction of North.

Then turn in a circle, slowly, all the way around.

Do this until the opposite direction of North

is once again the way you look.

This Is The Inside View

Of A Circle

Inside View Of A Dead Man Circle



Sun - 19 March 2011 - 15:23:38



Moon - 17 April 2011 - 21:35:49 + 21:37:12



I Got Down Low



Late this afternoon I visited my grandmother. As I approached her door, I saw that there was a small bird directly in its nook. I could not open her door. I stepped closer, the bird tried to take flight in all its fear of me but this bird could not do so, it was broken, its wings would not work and no amount of its will would matter.

I got down low, I approached from an angle I thought induced the least panic in its heart. The bird got to the side in the leaves before I could make a difference, it would not let me close. Then it simply sat there stunned and staring at me. I took this bird's photograph.

I went inside to be with my grandmother, all my thoughts couldn't focus. My brain was filled with this bird, only this bird, there was nothing I could do; I could not will it well, I could not photograph it well, I could not tell its story well.

My visit was not long, minutes maybe. I stepped out the door and looked for where it had gone. In the first moments of not seeing, I felt joy. Where had it gone, had it taken flight? Then, taking a few steps, I saw a peek of feather again. There it was. Lying motionless only feet from where it had been.

I got down low, I approached from an angle I thought induced the least panic in its heart. Before I was too close I pressed my lips softly together and gently blew all the air from my lungs towards it. The leaves, the brush, the feathers, they all reacted to my air... This bird did not react to my wind, this bird was no longer stunned, this bird was no longer staring at me.

4 April 2010

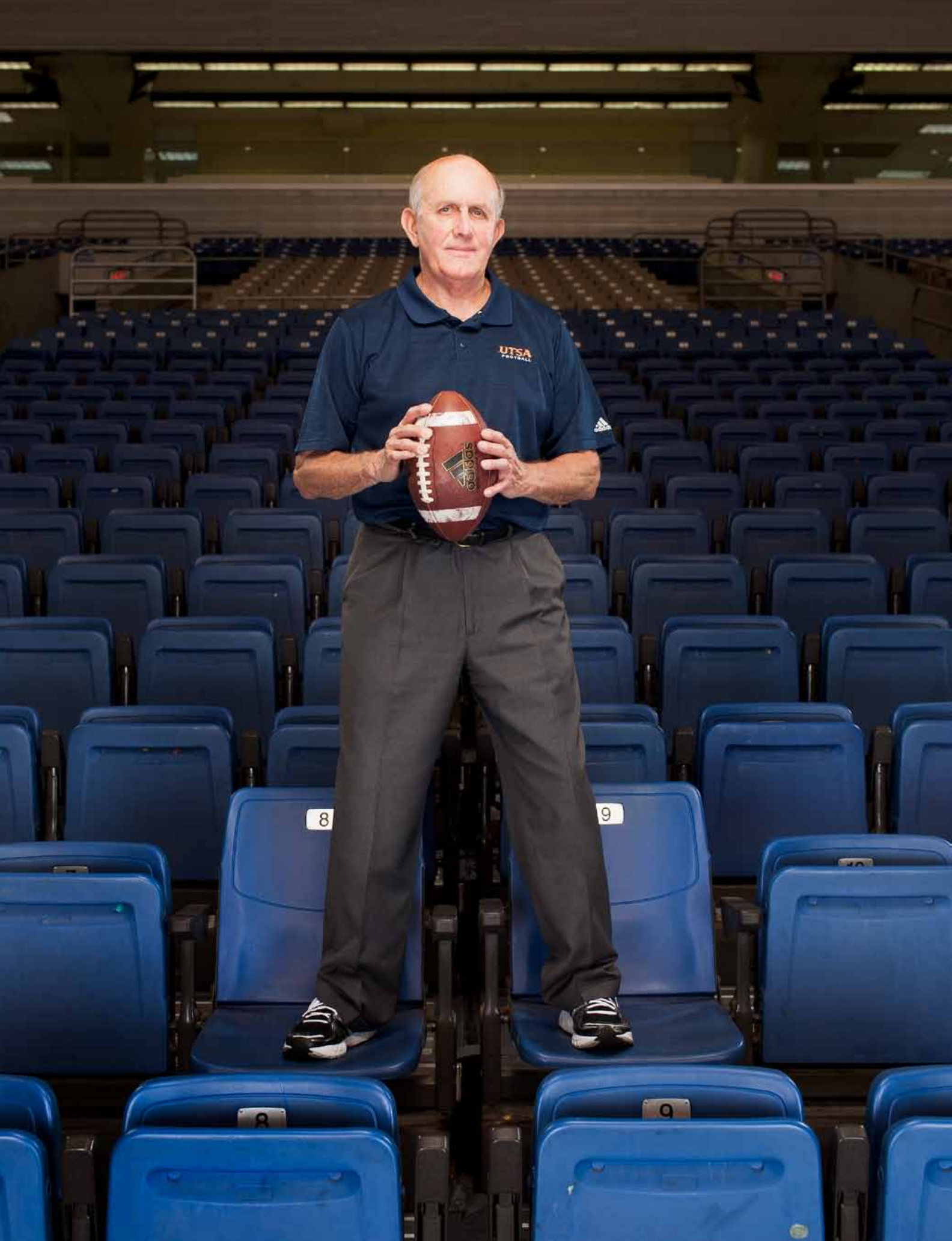
The day I know I was born was the day I think you may have died.

9 May 2011









Remember that scene in that movie where there were all those men and there was that one man leading them who yelled at them:

“What makes the grass grow?”

Remember what all those men who were being led, said, in unison, back to their leader:

“Blood, blood, blood.”

This man here, he too is a leader of men. He has a long, storied history of this proof as well. This man here, he was sought out and hired to grow something that had never existed before. He was tasked with planting seeds that would forever grow through the sweat, the tears and yes, the blood of those men he must lead.

Follow him, for he is now the first where before there was no one.

UTSA 1st Ever Football Coach Larry Coker

Inside The Heart Of Texas, Inside The Alamodome, Yes, That Alamo, Remember ?



This Is My Trophy, I Planted It In My Grass





May 21 [2011] would be the date of the Rapture and the day of judgment, “Beyond the shadow of a doubt.”

It would occur at 6 p.m. local time, with the rapture sweeping the globe time zone by time zone.



Something More Than Mockery

(I Came Through A Door Of Green Only When Requested To Do So)

21 May 2011 - one before and one after 6 p.m.

"Dropping a suspicious person weapon call, caller reported a male pointed a gun at the caller and threaten to kill him. Caller stopped the suspects fleeing. Hispanic male, white shirt, khaki pants with tattoo's on arms. No other information.



"That is clear, caller is reporting suspect standing across his business with a rifle. It is going to be a Hispanic male, white t-shirt and blue jeans. Said he was there earlier, um.."



*"Two suspects, men dressed as women, pointed
a gun at the caller and took their wallet and cell
phone."*

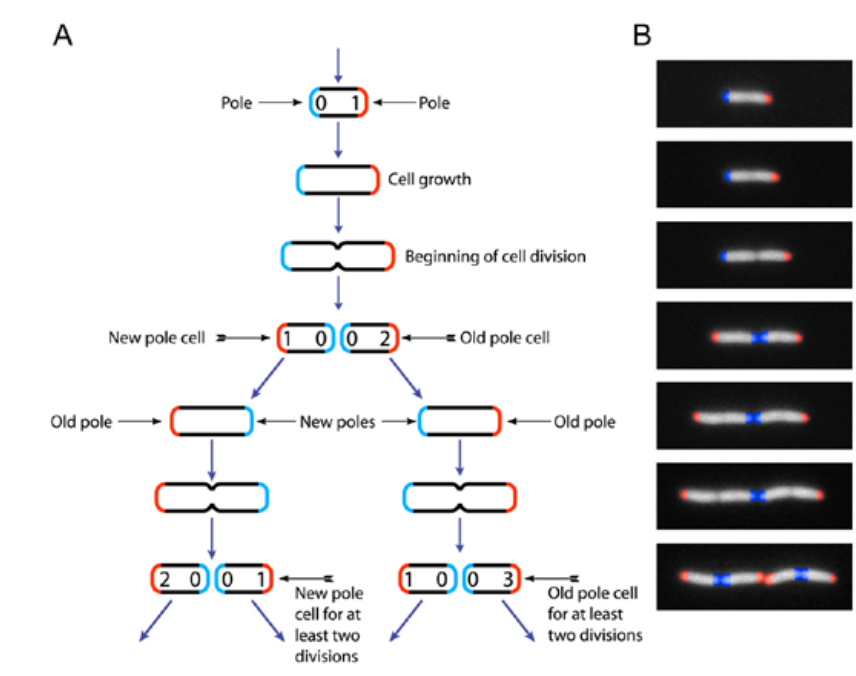


"Suicide with a weapon just occurred."



Bacteria

11-11-11 & I.C.U.



LAST NIGHT WHILE I WAS SLEEPING, BACTERIA ATTACKED YOUR BLOOD. THIS BACTERIA, IT RAISED YOUR TEMPERATURE, IT SLOWED YOUR HEART AND IT SHOCKED YOU.

YOUR
BLOOD
IS
MY
BLOOD,
SO
HERE,
I
GIVE
THAT
YOU
GAVE
ME,
BACK

MY TEMPERATURE IS LOW, MY HEART BEATS TOO MUCH & TODAY, NOTHING SHOCKS ME.



When Everyone Is Connected To Everyone



CFO
LinkedIn

I Feel Blue

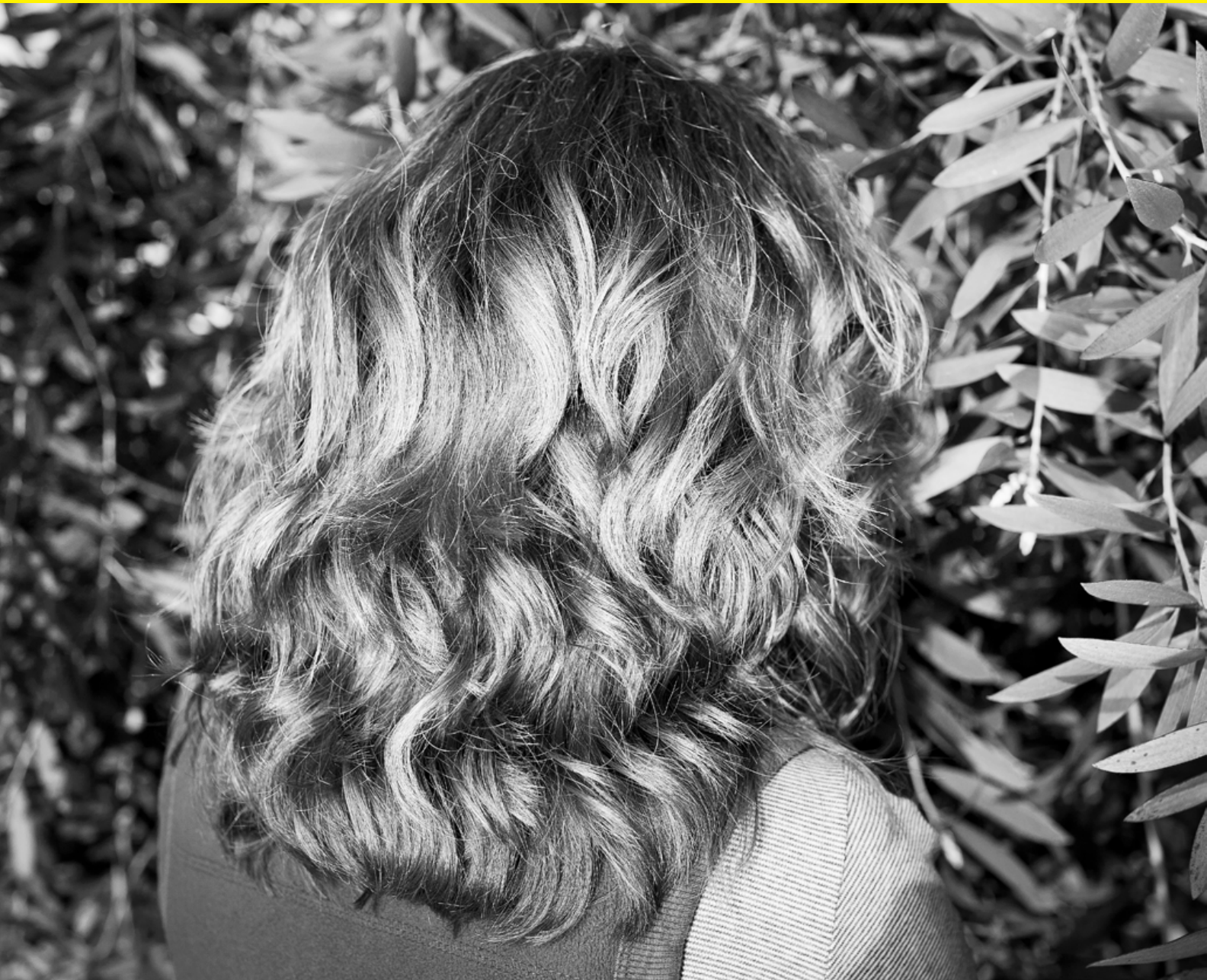


You Died 5 Days Before Your Birthday



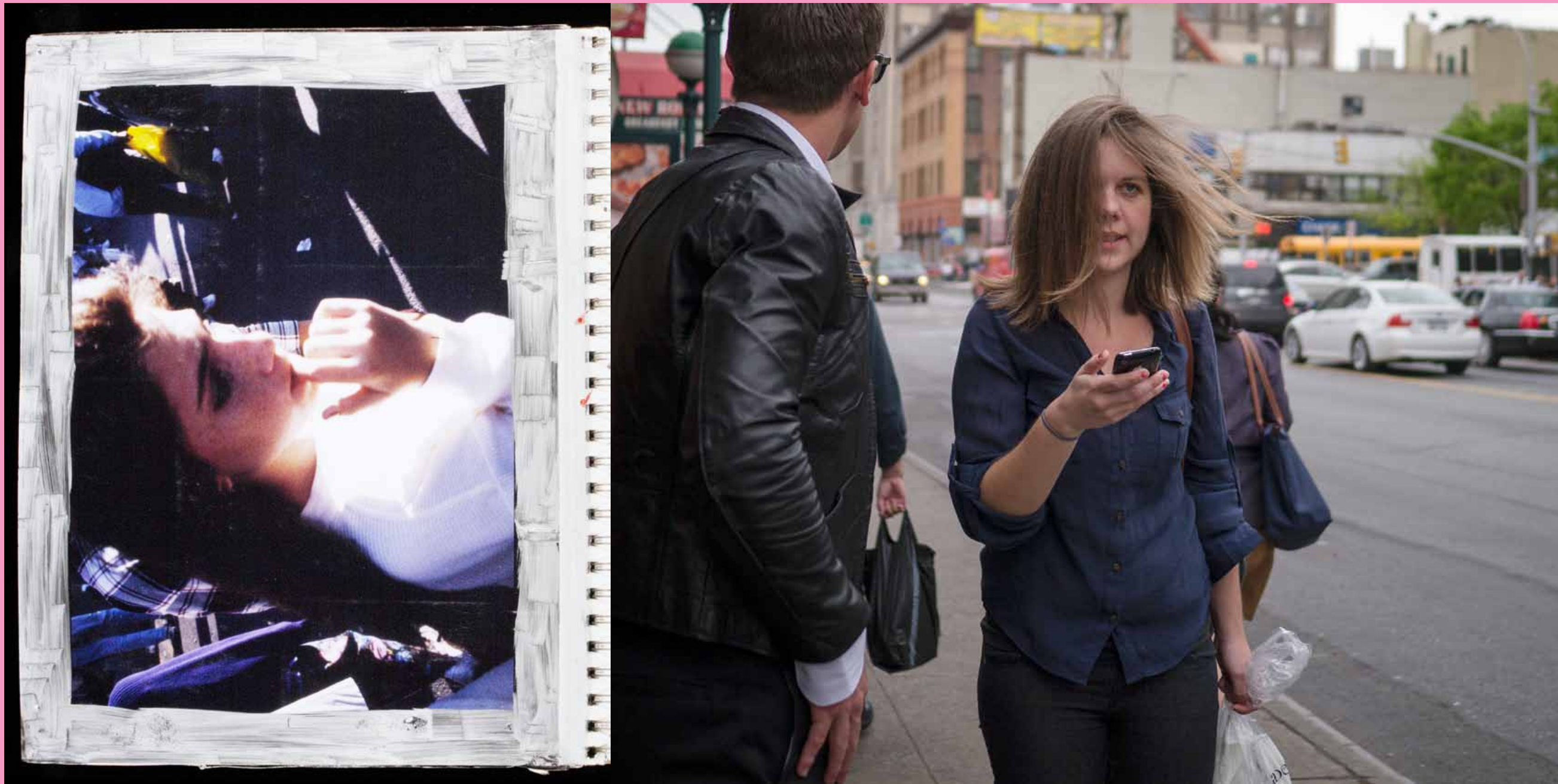
Happy Birthday

fifteen years



fourteen years





New York State Fair 1994 & New York City 2012



M.F.

N.E.X.T.



sixteen years



twenty years



That song says:

“Did they love you or what?”

That song says:

“They love what I do. The only one who really loves me, is you.”

All Around Us In The Dark There Was Water Falling From That Sky

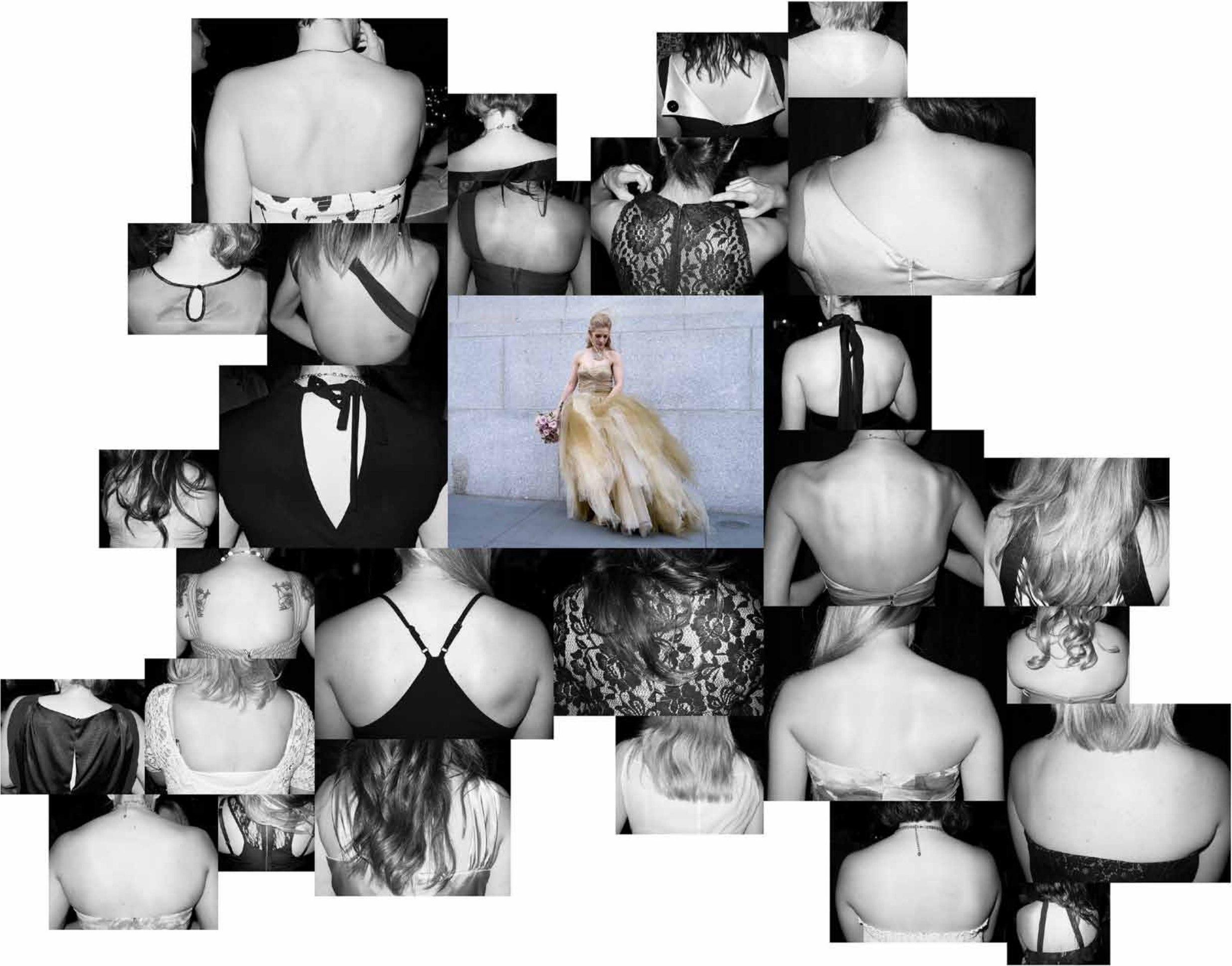
But Here In Only This Place, We Were Dry

We Could See The Lightning Up There Too But We Could Not Feel It, Either

Because It Was This Night Like No Other Before It, I Made Some We Could Try To



No Longer Known As April



Just Before You Became A Source



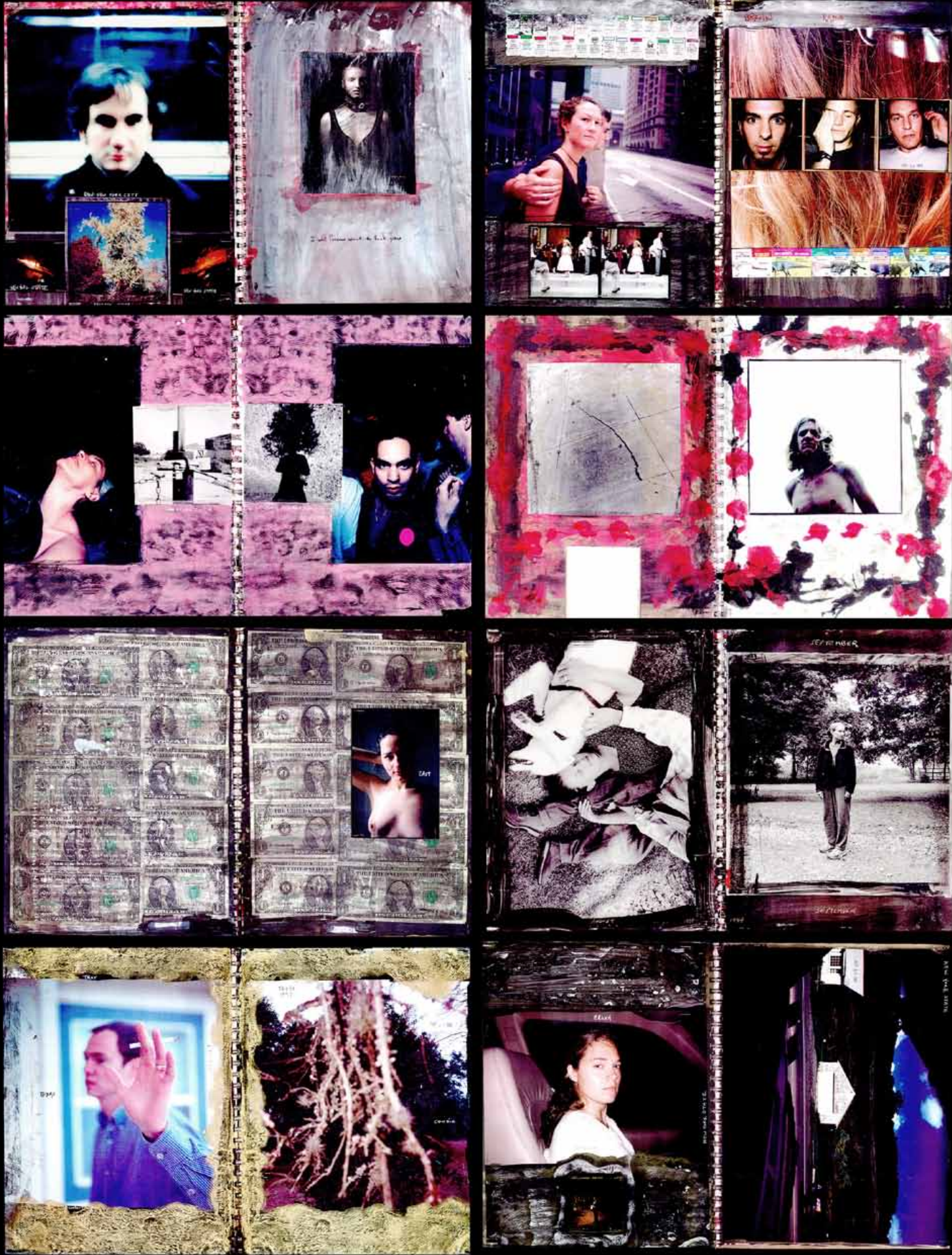
Your Name Means Tree By Water, So This Is What You Allowed Me To Make You



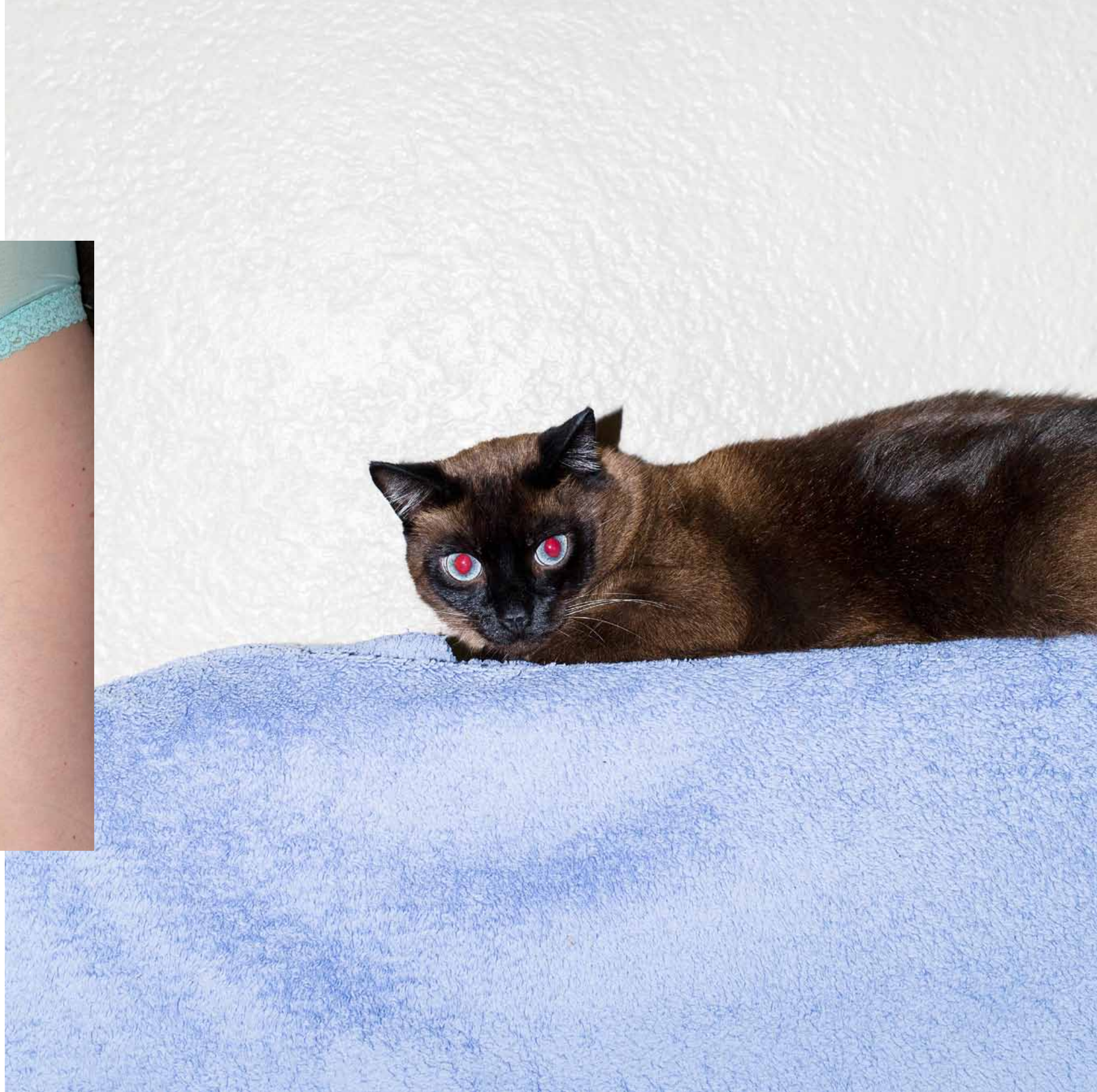
Yesterday I Learned Two Loves Have Now Birthed A Son They Each Named Sky















DIES MERCURII
XI JULIUS MMXII

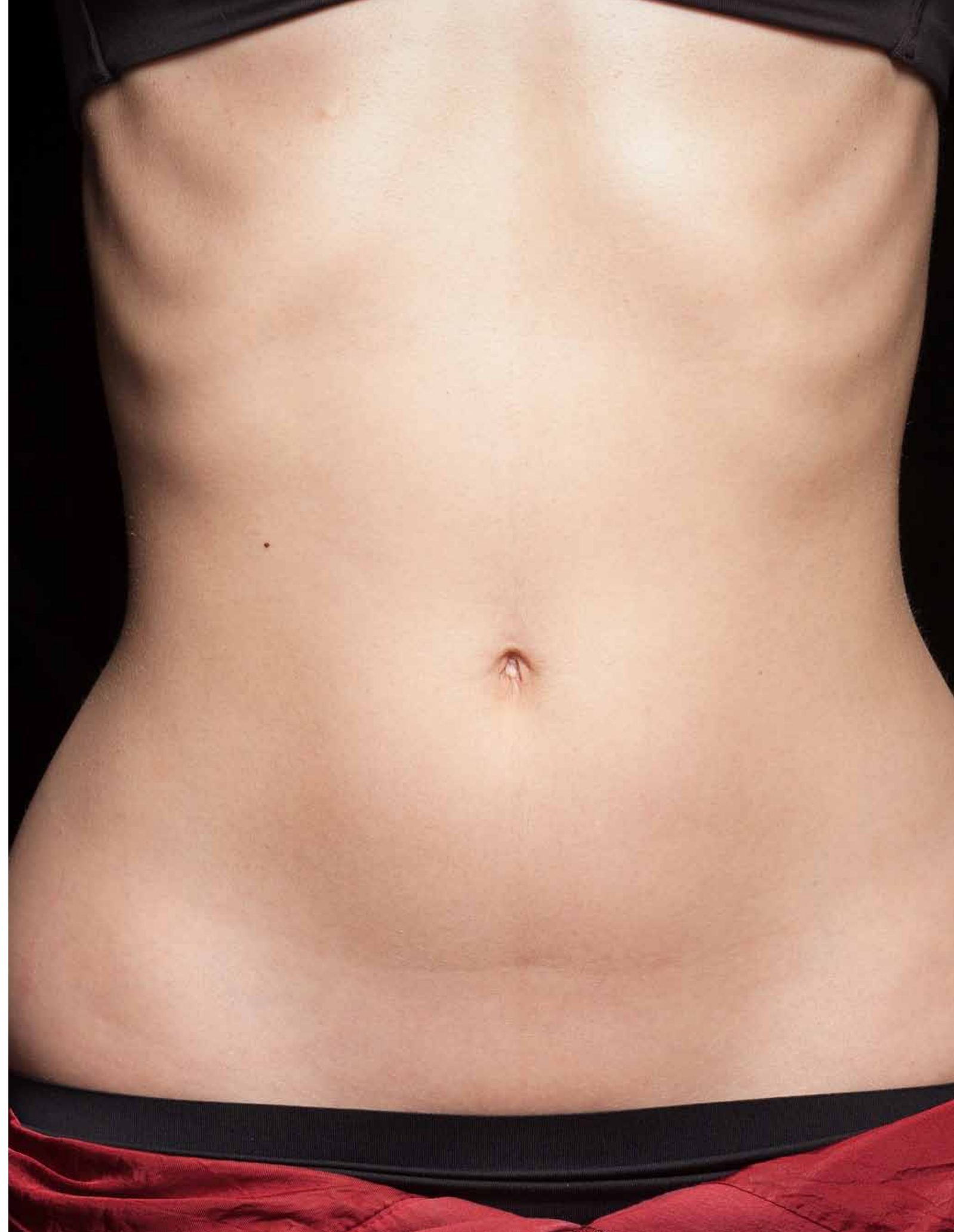






Day Of Or Days Before

Circles Equal A Sum Of What Has Become
Precisely As A Science I Wish Couldn't Be Measured





Natasha

Blue



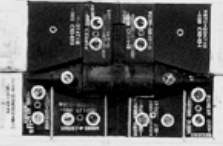
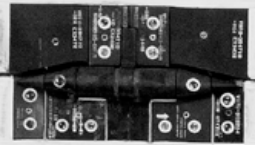
I SAW A SPACESHIP







Endeavour



F/C PURGE PORT

TO REMAIN CLEAR AND OPEN
AT ALL TIMES

- 1 REMOVE TWO FASTENERS
- 2 PUSH BUTTON TO OPEN DOOR
- 3 SQUEEZE AND PULL T HANDLE TO JETTISON

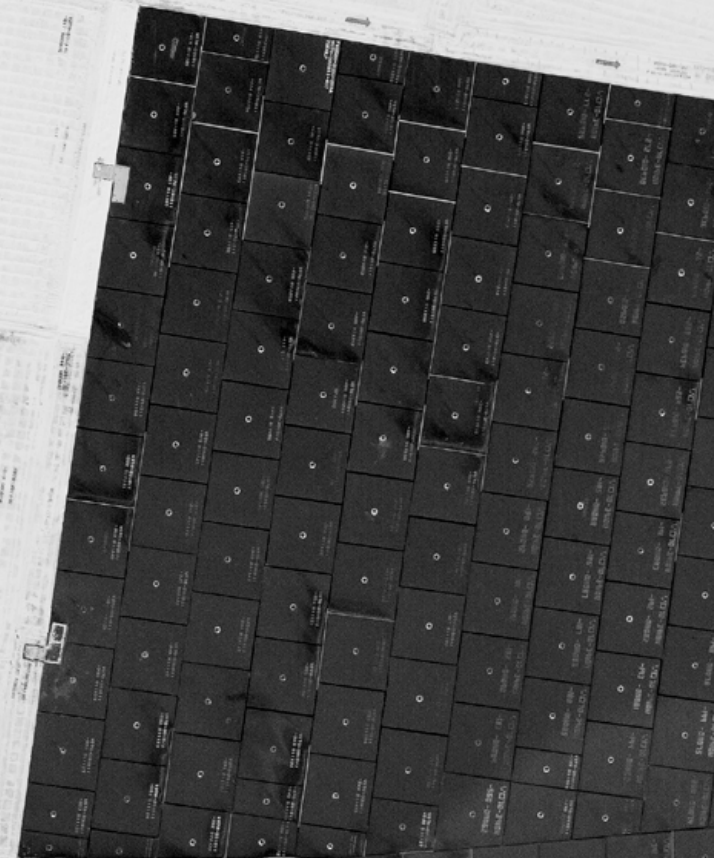
OVERHEAD

RESCUE

EJECT PANEL



CUT HERE
FOR
EMERGENCY
RESCUE





My shopping cart.
My rules.
Rule #5:
Buy more fruits
and vegetables.
CHAMPIONS
for CHANGE

Endeavour

United States


EVERY DAY
I'M



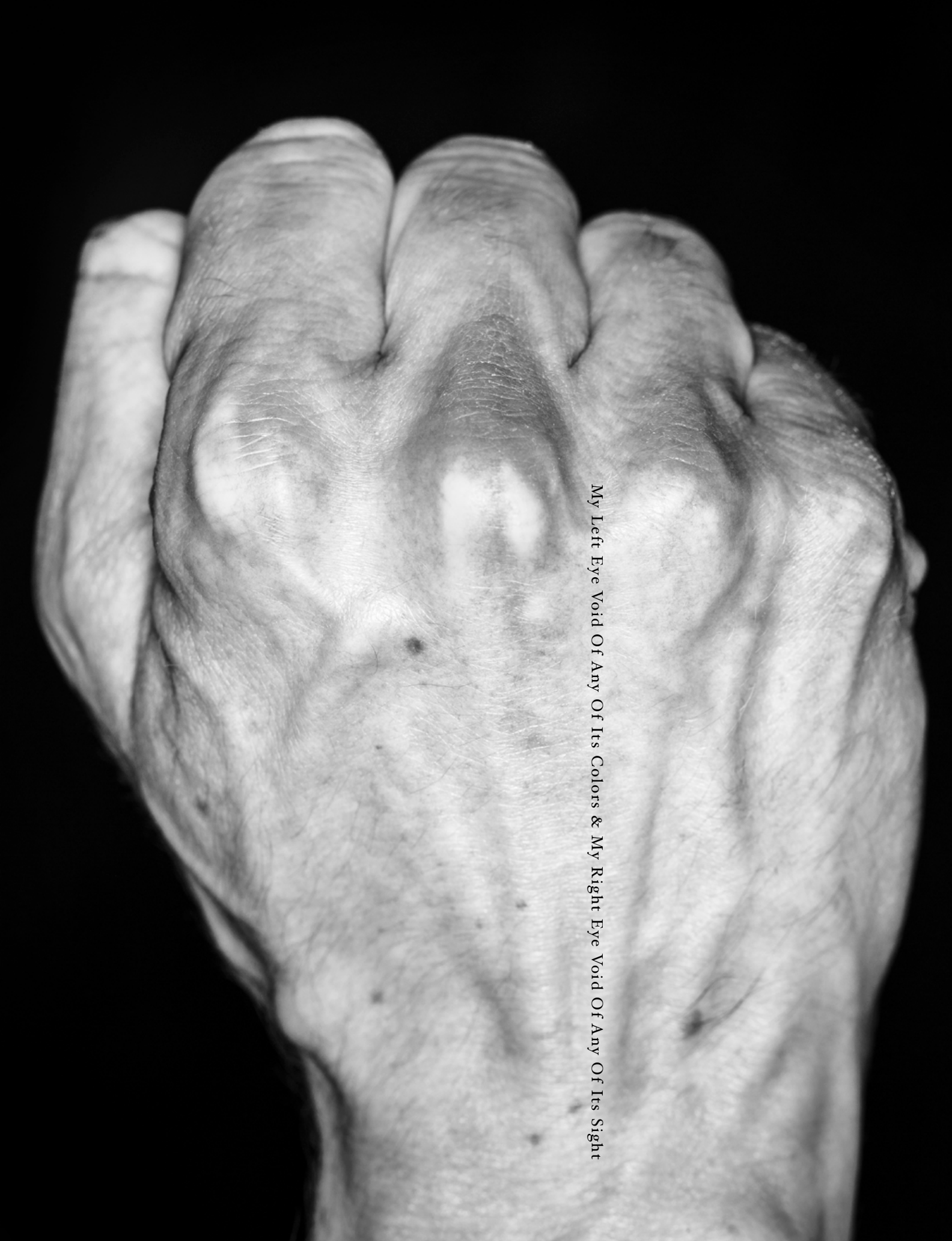








The Face I Saw Is The Same For Everyone & I Put All Five Of My Fingers In



My Left Eye Void Of Any Of Its Colors & My Right Eye Void Of Any Of Its Sight

















1 Hour Of Mine & 30 Fingers That Aren't



Jessika



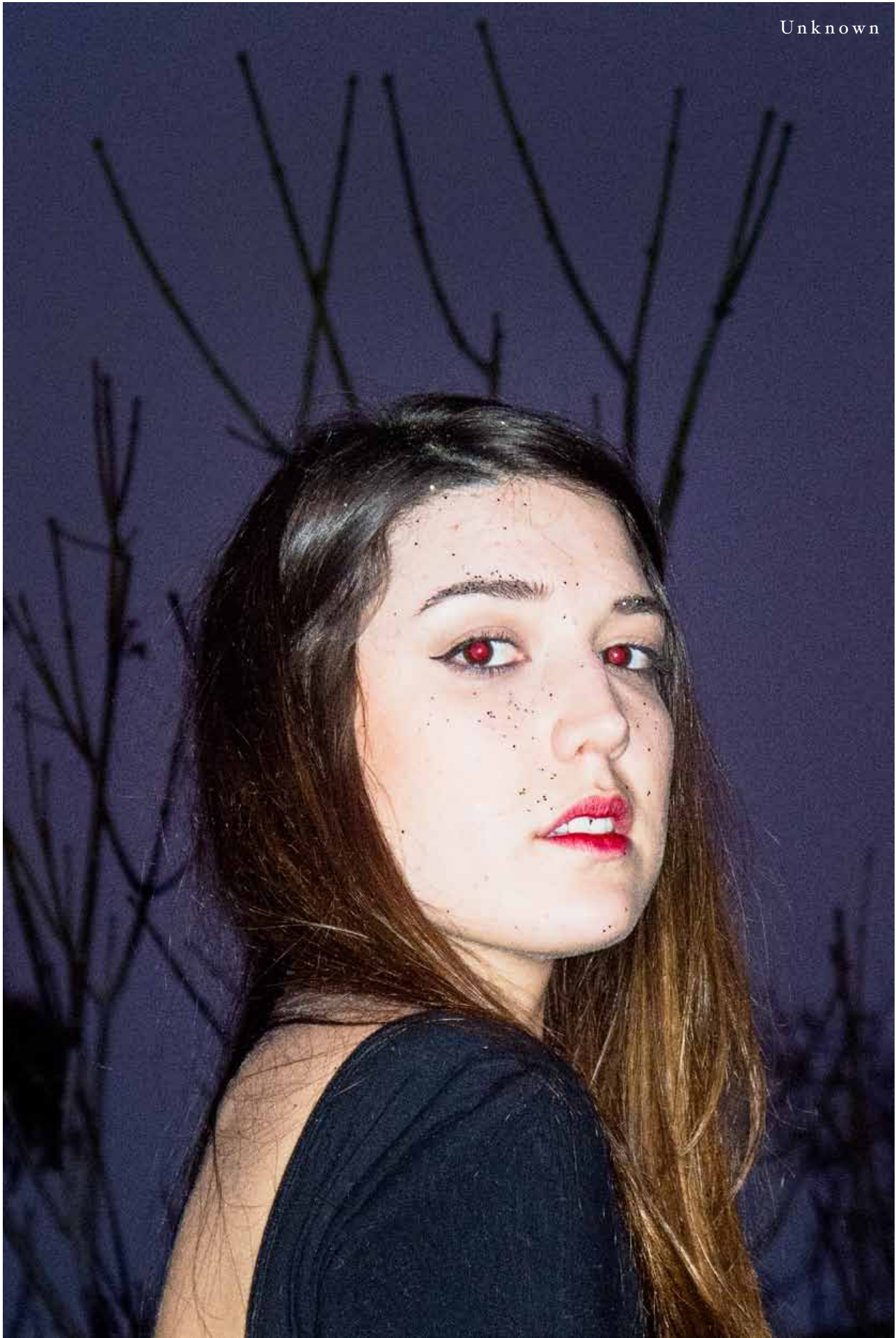




Emma



Unknown



Six maybe seven years ago I was in the bodega across from my home, waiting in a line. I looked behind me as I was bored and frustrated and impatient. There, directly behind me was a woman towering over me, so it seemed. I am six feet and an inch, yet she was even taller. I had to look up to see her eye to eye and I liked this, a great deal. I was frozen. I couldn't stop staring. Her hair, her features and her stare, her stare forward and as bored as I felt, I was frozen. I was staring at her and I didn't care and she didn't notice. I remember her clothes, the way she shifted her weight with impatience in that same damn line directly behind me. I remember her fidgets, the way she sighed, the way she played with her hair and the way she walked by me when she left, each movement as if planned to be full of nothing but grace. The woman I had come here with noticed all this and laughed at me for being such a fool. I laughed too. Over a short time, back there, back then, I would see her only 4 more times. Each of these times I became as frozen as before. I didn't find it funny anymore and neither did the woman I had been there with for all that time so long ago.

Then some years went by. The woman I had been there with left me and I left that place to live in the home of my grandmother far far away, a woman whose first name belonged to only to her. In all my time alive, only she had this name and I had never met another. I lived in her home for over a year waiting for something it took me far too long to realize wasn't real. So when I knew this, with all my heart, I left it and went to another new place, far away from the there of being frozen and far away from the there where I had waited. Then, right after I arrived here where I now am, this woman of only this name, my grandmother, died before I was ready and moments before her birthday.

Then some days went by. I received a letter of electronic from a stranger on a place where lonely look to cure it. I looked, I read and I saw a photograph with a description of height. I recognized her immediately when I would later learn I was nothing but a stranger to her, I was frozen, again... It was the woman who had been behind me in line, 6 years prior or maybe 7 years prior. I didn't know how to tell her, I wasn't sure I should tell her and knew I didn't want to tell her. But I did tell her, all because she found me first not knowing what I can remember...

I was about to meet the only other woman who shared my grandmother's name.

The second time I met her we ate a meal, we told each other stories and we went for a walk and a drive. Just to make things. We found the light we liked in the dark. We parked my chariot close and left the music up, loudly. Then I would walk up behind her, place my arms around her and with her forever machine I watched her make her hands dance, just for me while I stood too close watching the forever machine's screen through her hair as she leaned back into me.

Before we met for the first time, we discovered that we were born just days apart, the same year. We discovered our fathers started their lives the same way. We discovered that some of the same people were in our overlapping circles from lives long ago and we discovered that we once lived across the street from one another, for a very long time. From my old there of frozen, if we were to have looked the correct direction from our doorways, we would have seen the home door of the other. We were this close for that long so long ago, yet I only saw her five times, back then.

Before we met for the first time, I told her, "I'd like to take photo of us, standing side by side, full length against a plain wall anywhere outside, two strangers side by side but holding hands." During our first time together, she asked me why I hadn't taken it yet. I told her it was because I was shy. She told me the light was fading and that I better hurry. So I did. I stopped us right where we were. There was a brown wall and there was a place to set my forever machine. I set the machine, got it ready, asked her to set her cup down, pressed the button, walked over to her, stood next to her, held her hand for the first time and I waited. I would only notice the pickle, at my feet, moments before I first sent it to her.

When we met for the first time, we talked and talked and talked.
We would discover that many of our lives greatest and worst moments, had the same timeline.
Sometimes just days apart.

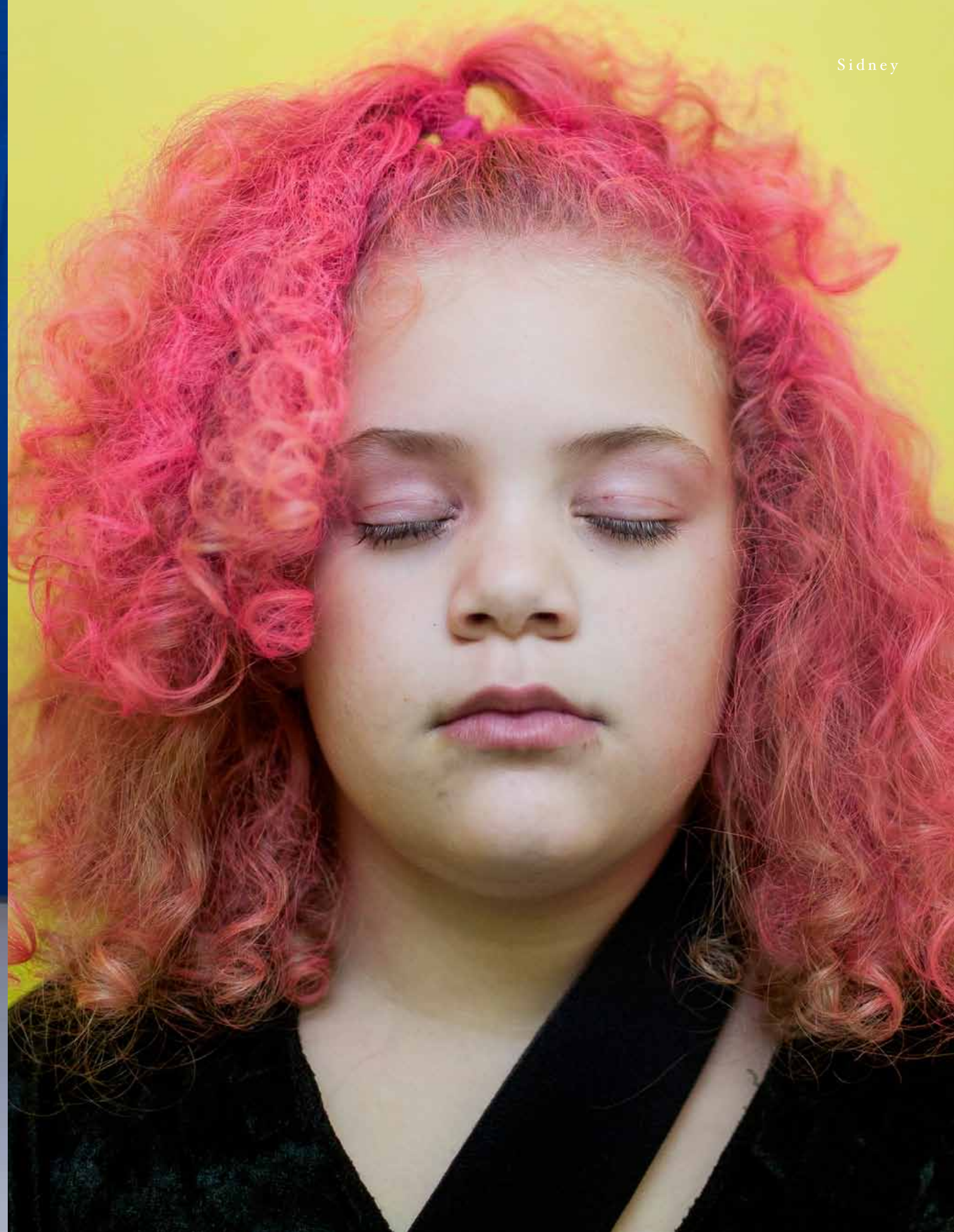
- - -

When we met for the third time, I didn't know it would be the last.

Savannah



Sidney



JOY
(before)



JOY
(before)





















My name is Jonathan.

I will wear what you ask me to wear.
I will stand where you tell me to stand.
I will look like you want me to look.
I will say what you ask me to say.
I will be who you ask me to be.
I will become everything you want.
This is what I want to do for you.
All for you, because being your dream, is mine.

This place was made for you to believe.

When you shut your eyes can you see me?

Why are you here?

What is your name?

Who are you?

Where do you want to go?

Does time go forward?

Does time go backward?

Do you want to love me?

Do you want me to love you?

Was this all pretend?

I will become everything you want.
This is what I want to do for you.
All for you, because being your dream, is mine.















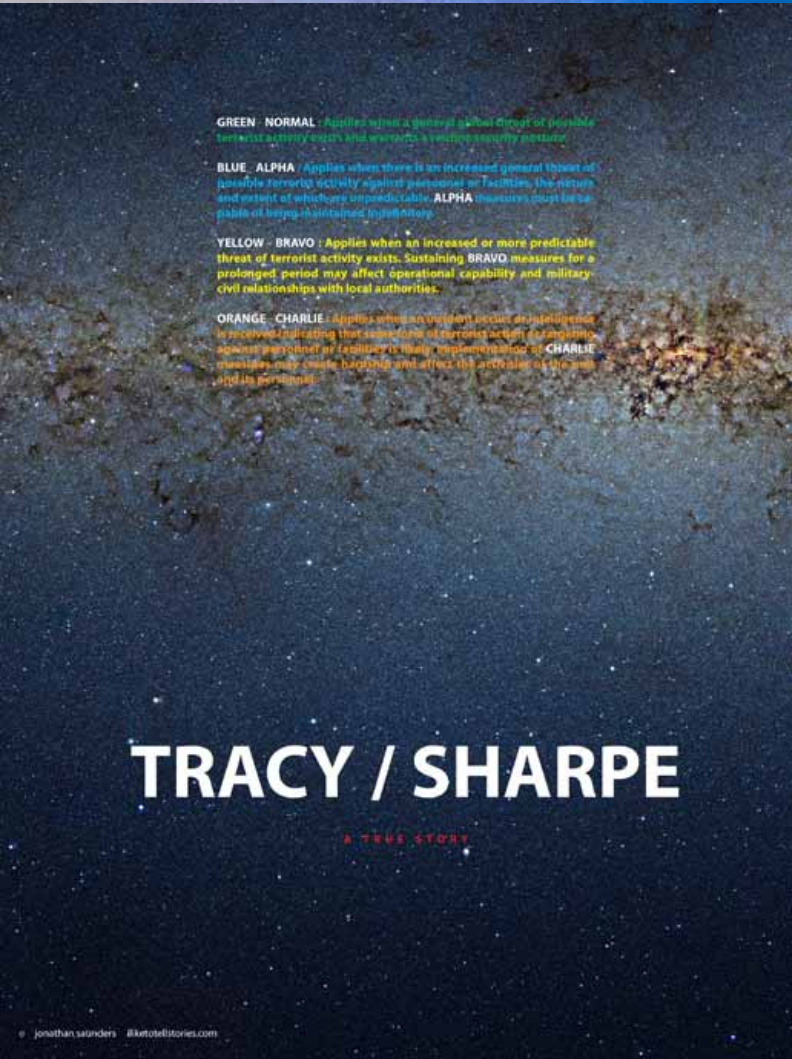






RED DELTA: Applies to circumstances where a terrorist attack has occurred or where intelligence has been received that credible evidence suggests a specific location or person is imminently DELTA is always observed as a localized condition and is not intended to be sustained for extended periods.

JONATHAN SAUNDERS



GREEN NORMAL: Applies when a general threat of possible terrorist activity exists and warrants a routine security posture.

BLUE ALPHA: Applies when there is an increased general threat of possible terrorist activity against personnel or facilities, the nature and extent of which is unpredictable. ALPHA measures must be capable of being maintained indefinitely.

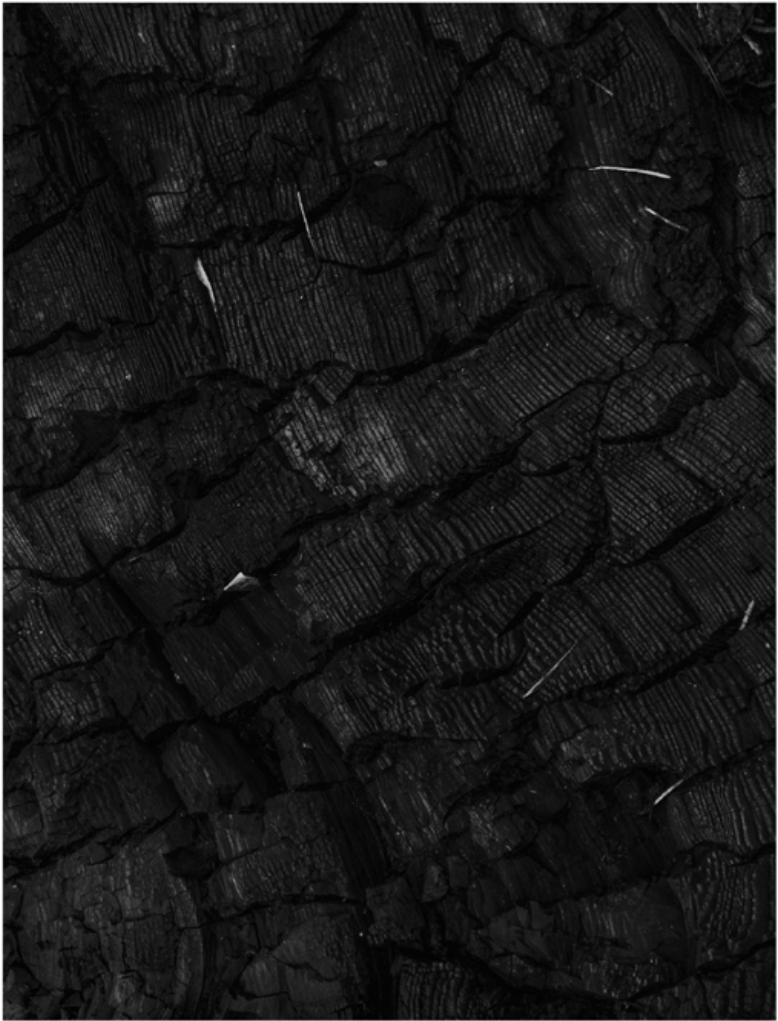
YELLOW BRAVO: Applies when an increased or more predictable threat of terrorist activity exists. Sustaining BRAVO measures for a prolonged period may affect operational capability and military civil relationships with local authorities.

ORANGE CHARLIE: Applies when an imminent threat of a terrorist attack is perceived, indicating that some form of terrorist action is imminently against personnel or facilities is likely. Implementation of CHARLIE measures may create hardship and affect the activities of the unit and its personnel.

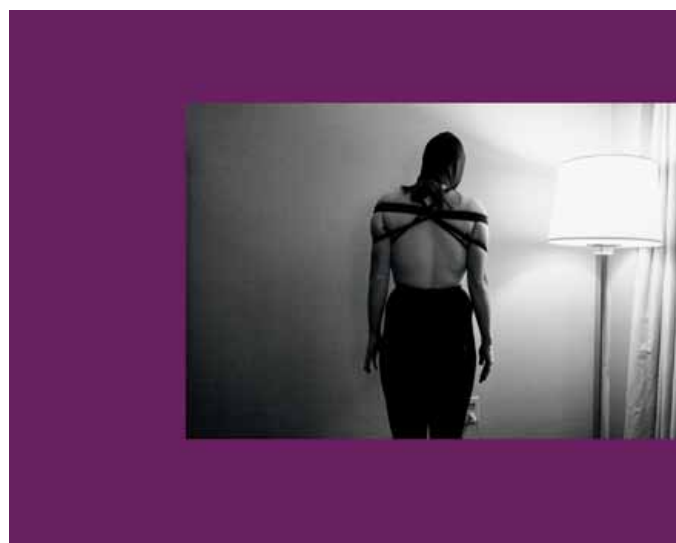
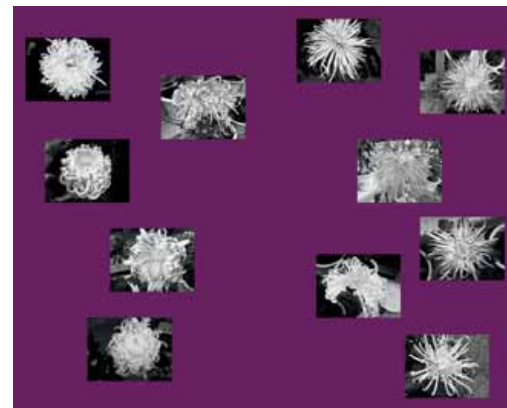
TRACY / SHARPE

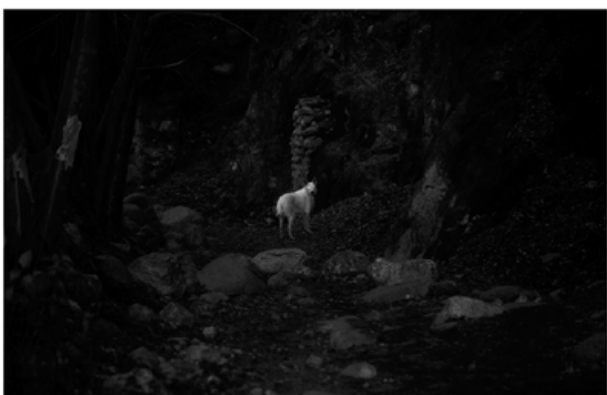
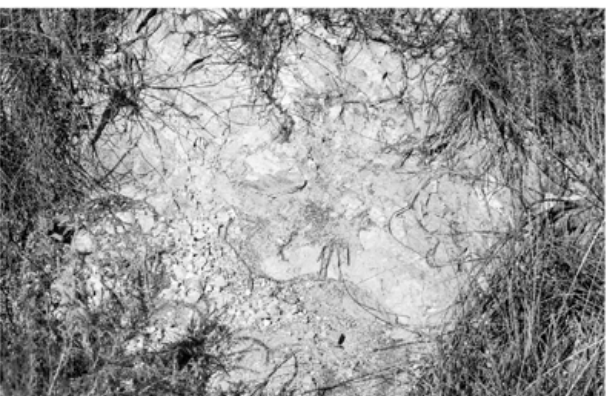
A TRUE STORY

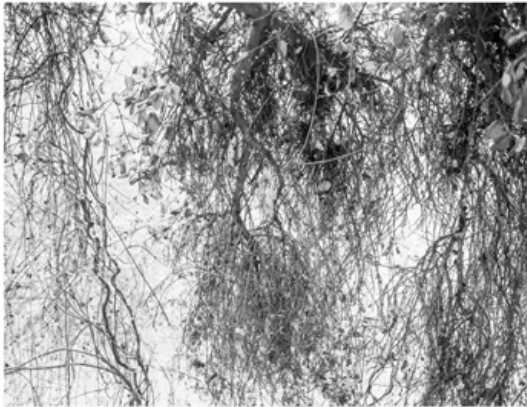
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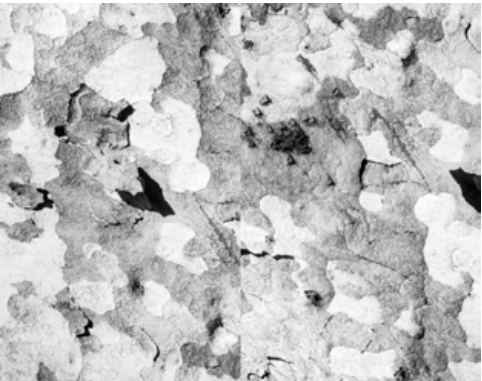






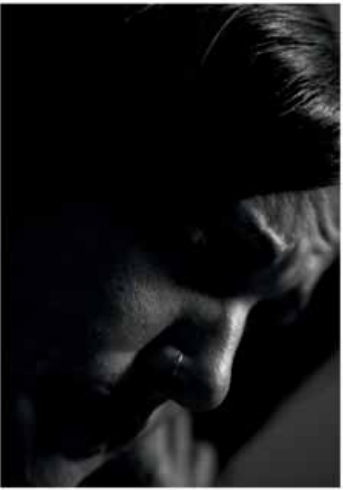








A Christmas Story



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