

PRESCRIPTION: snake oil

PATIENT:

DOSAGE:



PRESCRIPTION: snake oil

PATIENT: James Kerley

DOSAGE: 34.

apothecaRy

34.

I was staring for a long time at the tower, leaves and ivy covered it and swayed in the wind like a twitching cat. It was the mirror, I was staring and I saw the ghost. It was hiding in the woods, my hands, the woods, and I was hiding in the woods, I was a ghost and my hands were wreathing themselves across my chest. Blood trickled into the sink.

So I plugged it.

It was clear to me that explanation would do no good. I walked into the living room and it was full of ghosts. One that looked like my mother asked me what the fuck, and I told her: "It all happened in the woods." She wouldn't admit that she had lied to me when I was young.

I glanced towards the shower and the blood turned into wings. I became afraid and didn't know if I should laugh or leave the room again. More ghosts were coming into the room and I kept thinking of the visitations when I was a child. My mother would not admit that she knew of the visitations.

They were frequent. I expected them, and I drew pentagrams on the floor. I drew pentagrams on the ceilings and the walls, and my mother would say, what the fuck, and I'd tell her of the visitations and I'd say, look there's one behind you – there are fingers all around your body – and she would laugh and leave the room.

I was staring at the tower, and for a long time I didn't realize there was blood coming out of the ivy. I saw pentagrams in the walls and I crossed the short bridge. The bell rang twice, one for me and my mother. The ghosts kept coming into the room, and I fled into the woods, singing, running, singing and drawing pentagrams and wings with blood.

PRESCRIPTION: snake oil

PATIENT: James Kerley

DOSAGE: 111.

apothecaRy

111.

The drowning girl. I heard her at night.

heardheratnight heardheratnight heardheratnight

She came in threes. Three times I heard her voice. Each time at night. The one who drowned her.

eachtimeatnight eachtimeatnight eachtimeatnight
carried a different weight. a different weight. Her voice carried a different weight –

I thought about mashing letters. I could say that another way. I thought about the drowning girl. The drowning was in a river. The river is close to where I used to work. I heard her voice when I was alone at work. It sounded like it was amplified, coming out of speakers. I saw her in a dream. She was in a white dress, drowning her children.

She had fingers that could combine words.

PRESCRIPTION: snake oil

PATIENT: Adam Perry

DOSAGE: *Ritual Poem: Six Steps To Find Your Other*

apothecaRy

1. Remember when you were an Indian,
speechless.
2. Get fresh ice for your drink,
a spear in your belly,
and warmth from a drug,
the king of drugs, warmth,
like a weapon to love you.
3. Dig for bones with your young wife,
her two beautiful eyes hopeful and wanting,
so many colors in her open mind,
virtual clothes and braided hair, traditional...
so blind.
4. Return to New York City
with no strength too serious
for others to ride into the plains,
into war.
5. Escape to eat cherries in the rain
and watch old America kicking, screaming.
6. Fill Your Cup

PRESCRIPTION: snake oil

PATIENT: Richard Schwass

DOSAGE: *Redbird*

apothecaRy

in sudden flight red
red remain remain
fear and work to do hop to wing
fear and flight twitch
to flight
sapphire go sapphire sapphire streak to start
of pumping
streak break beak fast on seed into air gallop
community of rapid heartbeat gone hot interior palpitate feathering contacts
where do you go with the worm in the hole
where do you sing from the claw and the bald head sleek
with caution sharp
with inquisition
red and black
rotation flies deep in the chest

redbreasted man from the dog with the predator hand
redbreasted v-shaped man from the garden
from the garden to branch in the air
family in the fork all over with air
green in the sky
and green in the sky
long hands reach out unwilling to stop
to meet us
ducks dunk and watch us in separate proxemics
on alert standby in oxygen and grass

It got dark The redbreasted v-shaped man moves across the campus
the sun came The redbreasted shavedheaded man waters his bicycle garden and
sped away

PRESCRIPTION: snake oil

PATIENT: Julie Berner

DOSAGE: *A Postcard*

apothecaRy

They put plastic on everything. Nothing sweet tastes here. This land blistered, the people burnt. Yesterday, I learned complacency. I saw a couple kiss and look at their wrist watches—both of them, over the shoulder of the other. Regretfully, I now long for bitter things.

PRESCRIPTION: snake oil

PATIENT: Franciszka Voeltz

DOSAGE: *3 postcards between here and there*

apothecaRy

can i come
sit down
with your family
3 generations
for a meal
that takes
muscle, gossip and all day
to prepare?
i'll help:
grind dried corn to meal,
sort lentils from stones,
carry water
back buckling
under liquid weight.

you don't mind
making shit pay,
inhaling toxic fumes,
crawling into the gut of
airless mines
unsure of whether or not
you'll make it out
of the dense dark
just so i can have my
laptop, cellphone, ipod
do you?

will you tell me
what it's like

to have:

18 months

paid

parental/maternity leave,
universal health care,

and

a military which hasn't fought a war since 1814?

PRESCRIPTION: snake oil

PATIENT: Jennifer Phelps

DOSAGE: *Populus Tremula*

apothecaRy

A preen set,
aspens live in groves
grow in large colonies.
A peer nest,
derived from a single seedling
they share the same root system,
spread with suckers
earn steep
growth on soil derived from shale.
A peer sent, aspens
are of the willow family
the poplar genus
as tree pen --
populus tremula. Tall muse our pup,
new stems in the colony
may appear far from the parent tree.
Parent sees an e'er step,
a neat spree,
indicator of
ancient woodland.
This Psalm rule out up
an e'er Sept as
each tree lives only forty
to one hundred fifty years
above ground.
Yet, after fire, a tense per
acre devastation,
aspens re-sprout
from lateral roots, mutual pore plus
mutual rose pulp
long lived, thousands of years:
Lao sure plum put quaking leaves
in the slightest impulse of air
as roots send new trunks up
and older ones die.
Past serene, the east preen do not seep
instead they rise between seven and ten thousand feet.

PRESCRIPTION: snake oil

PATIENT: Jennifer Phelps

DOSAGE: *Populus Tremula (cont'd)*

apothecaRy

trembling of its leaves, which move with the slightest impulse of the air.
A TERSE PEN

PEASE RENT

ERASE PENT

EASTER PEN

AREN'T SEEP

TAPE SNEER

ARE PEN SET

SEA REPENT

SEAT PREEN

ART SEE PEN

AS TREE PEN

A ELM SOUL PUP RUT
A ELM LOT USURP UP
MALL PURE POUT US
TALL ME POUR US UP
MURAL USE PULP TO
MUTUAL ROPE PLUS
MUTUAL POSE PURL
MUTUAL EROS PULP
MUTUAL EROS PULP
MUTUAL SORE PULP
LAO SETUP LUMPUR
LAO UPSET LUMPUR

PRESCRIPTION: snake oil

PATIENT: Travis Cebula

DOSAGE: *Visible Human Haibun*

apothecaRy

In the late 1990's the University of Colorado School of Medicine embarked on an ambitious project to digitize a person and map him in three dimensions. This had been a long-standing dream, but up to that time computer technology had not been fully adequate to the modeling such a project would require of it. The school's goal was simple: provide a multi-layered tool from which students could learn human anatomy at home, in the absence of an actual cadaver. Emphatically, this goal was intended to be an enhancement to, not a substitute for, the nation's traditional cadaver labs. Nothing could match the year-long dissection of a dead fellow human being as a learning tool.

The first step in the process was finding a volunteer; one with no particular attachment to his or her body after death—a task complicated by the added difficulty of finding a volunteer whose loved ones also had no attachment to the body. The solution to the conundrum ended up being a young, strapping, and healthy man on death row. No mention of his compensation, if any, was made.

After the conspicuously anonymous young man's execution his body was shaved bald and flash-frozen, most likely using liquid nitrogen but on that point I never heard details. His entire body was then sliced methodically into sheets exactly one centimeter thick. Each piece was photographed digitally and interlaced by computer to form a model. The programmers then ascribed layers to the different parts of each cross-section, inter-relating the different sections to form independent system layers. A student could click a button marked "skin" and remove it. "Muscles" disappear with a click. Click. "Kidneys" glow magenta at the bottom of the LCD screen.

The final product, released to great fanfare and acclaim, was called The Visible Human. The recommended price for the CD program was \$400. University of Colorado students each received a single copy free of charge.

one man's winter

slices of a frozen person

photographs for learning

PRESCRIPTION: snake oil

PATIENT: Kristi Yorks

DOSAGE: *From the Fall*

apothecaRy

I loved a woman

once

in the mirror

she was electric water

an urban body dressed

in neon lights

taller in heels

she danced in the street

framed by artificial clouds

her hair

a red streaming

a horn

pierced her silver lining

always she is buried in sound

holding a

bottle of wine the edge of the concrete

sparks the image

before I mis remember her

she opens her mouth

I taste thunder

at least you're happy

she says

and drinks