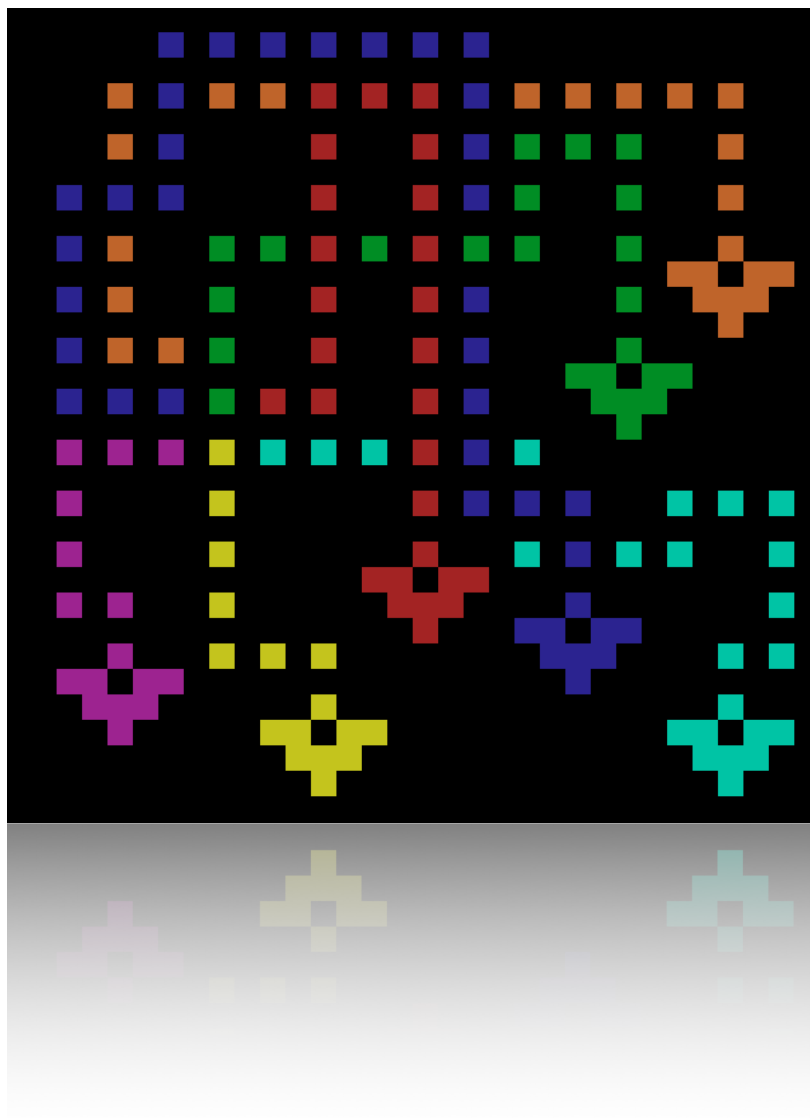


JUVENALIA DELINQUENCALIA

(1995~2002)



FROM THE URBAN RAINFOREST

Downtown, I am hiding in my steel tree
I fly up the phloem to the right height
Then down into the chair, where I can type.
I am unwound into words by the light
On screen. This is the wood and wire axis
Of all my modern organs, where I plan
To dream small, til my stony brain relaxes
And I can dream I see a sharp young man
Like me, but closer to the sky. For I
Have just one giant eye, a boring view
Just this window, but at least I can spy
On all the other nuclei, and you--

My pupil reaches up for your soft fleet
But here, boy and star seldom ever meet.



BACKWARDS COMPATIBLE

Dear Dad
I caught you, once
your hand
turning the crank
at my temple.

Enraged,
I searched the confused crotches
of girls in town
for a place to hide
my response
civilities.

But I know all about
activation energy, now.
Let's have a beer
and talk optimistic
about repetitive genetics.

IDLE HANDS

My new watch is broken on the sill.
I've yet to mail back those grinding gears. Regrettably,
I hear the crooked clicking, and lose my will

To keep some crown pinioned round my face, some grill
To hide my warped motor. But it's arguable what's gone wrong,
now that
my new watch is broken on the sill.

The posters are all leaning off the wall, but still
Never fall, and I feel terribly dull for noticing. Even in
sleep, somehow
I hear that crooked clicking, and lose my will

To dream about new things, or mill
about exotic locales, for the feel that something beyond
my new watch is broken on the sill.

But it's only that. Something small, hard to kill
Like a song I can't forget. One moment I'm determined, but then
I hear the crooked clicking, and lose my will

To do anything but stand stock still
Watch it all go by; dole out my dirty dollar bills, the ones I
should be saving, because
My new watch is broken on the sill
I hear the crooked clicking, and lose my will.

BIRTH OR REBIRTH?

And then she went downstairs
Small sparks emitting
From all the metallic weight
In her unfilled shoes.

Scribbling out a midnight theory
Writing quietly of love, lost wars
She manages to irk out of her soul
The return address of God.

The TV declares one last decibel
Of synthesized pop music in ears long gone.
“You’ll be surprised at how well you can see
When you’re underwater with the scuba lenz model infinity, SE”

She couldn’t take the car anyhow
The past tense overwhelmed her
And she went walking all the way
From delivery to despair and back again

She couldn’t decide the mood
She was trying not to promote answers from a dying brain.
And a heart of darkness, long lifeless since loss.
Up ahead, ironwork was appearing.

And split screen the battle cry sped ahead to her ears, saying:
“You’ll be surprised at how well you can see
When you’re underwater with the scuba lenz model infinity, SE”.
But it wasn’t loud enough.

3 deductions about society which faltered
2 poems which don’t mean anything the next day
1 still remained the loneliest number
All the way till the old bridge’s edge.

When she dove, frosty river waters kissed her throat.
Froth chilled her eyes, but still
She swam to the hard beach, dreaming carefully

And waiting.

While she waited, an eggshell morning hatched the sun
And the hills flooded endless, yellow yolk, warming her back.
For a sinful moment, time and loss melted from around her eyes-
And she WAS surprised at how well she could see.

DOUBLE-CROSSED

Coming down empty stairs
lost in the bipedal
production of echoes,
ankles panicking, like riders
on
 slow
moving
 bicycles. .

The lobby door opens
On my black pleasure.
I march out, the
best bite from some
apple I found
In my pocket.
I feel the wet, slippery
Flesh of fruit
Against my gums.

I quickly crush it
With the cruel half
Of my mouth.
I scream my eyes,
and stare at the wound
to try infecting it
With my revenge.

Tired of the taste
on my lips,
the apple stops, looks
right through my ribs,
watches me beating
my heart. Then
not the least concerned
With litter laws
the apple turns around
and throws me away.

DULCE DOZEN

I have been living twelve hour days!
In an emergency, I
sleep.
When things are good, I
click.

People tell me, look out
this bus ride takes six hours,
look out, you'll have to be in class
for four more today
I just look that shit in the eyes and say
HAH. I have
on bad days
sat in a chair and stared at the same, 18" screen
watching little figures in red overalls hit
head bricks and follow
strange fungi
across the map.
That's called emulation, mother
fucker, that's called patience, that's called
staring at colored numbers
variables behind backdrops
I have done it
at 12 AM, thinking about noon
until noon, and all I've got to show
is a save state.

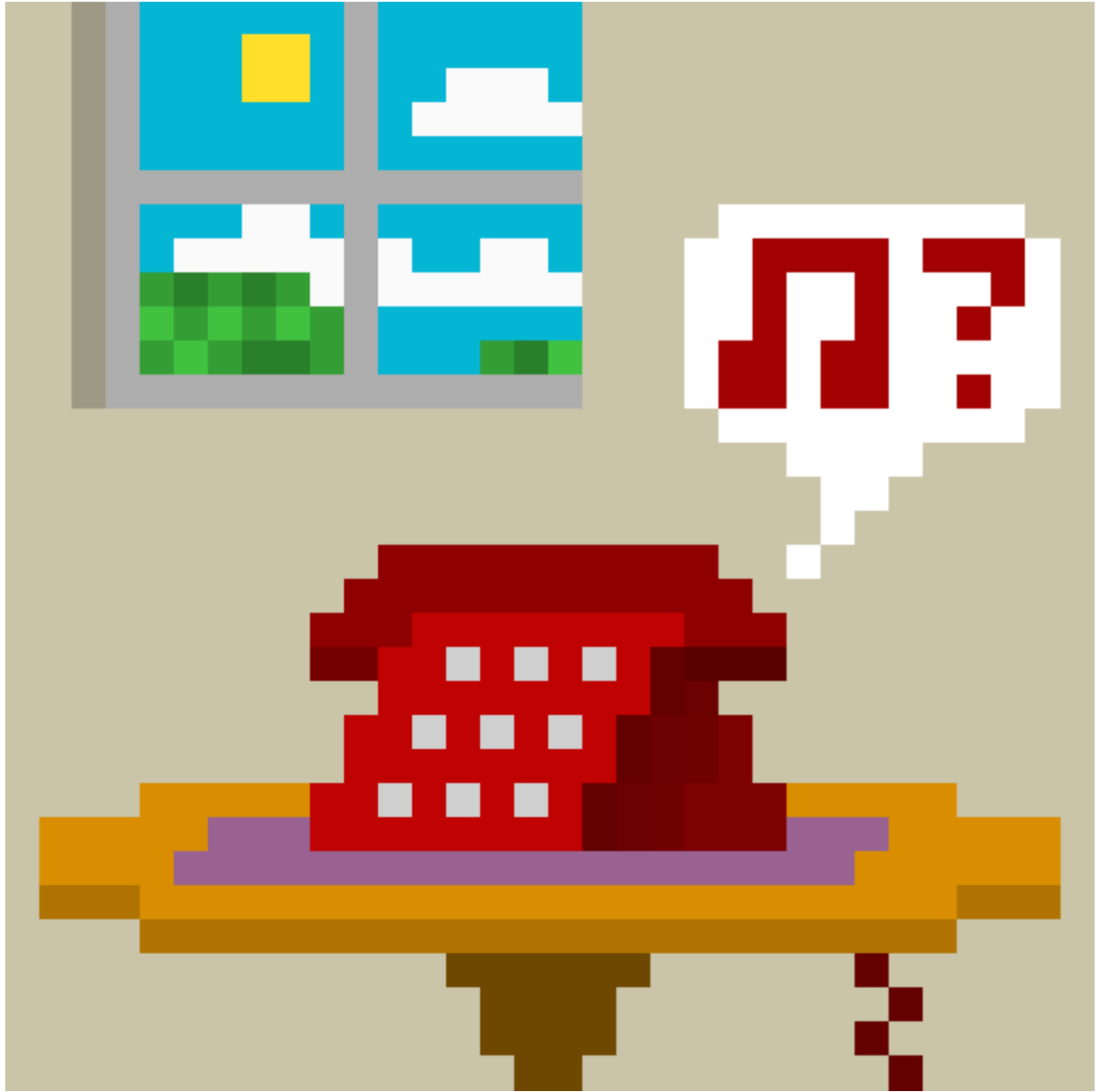
For the last twelve hours
I have been dodging myself
to get this shit done
And see behind all these applications
to the unfinished essays
that will graduate me.

FAT TO FRUIT

Eating grease meat
On soaked Styrofoam
Shit in my pants
And bleach in my dreams.

I'm sitting at the bottom of myself here
In a little dirty chair
But when the last bell rings
Terrible through the air...

I will stand up!
I will shave all my hair off!
I will be aerodynamic and air conditioned.
I will cut into the new dance I do not know.



THOUGHT #4: ME AND MY MEGAZORD

I always have this thought like
my brain is just an obese power ranger
who can't get out of his giant robot,
my body.

My brain's kind of funny, because
it's just this lumpy thing
that sits around like
slippery fish innards.
It probably doesn't even slither
or make a squishing noise.

It has to depend on my hands and mouth
to get the word out, so I don't know
if I'm ever really speaking my mind. Like
Maybe my body censors out
what it thinks will get it fired
and then speaks, or hears,
or sees, and I am
none the wiser.

ORANGE PEEL

It's a minute in the morning
and I am having a topless
warm hat winter moment.
My room is small.

The speakers are big.

The windy sounds in a song
roll around in my grassy
feelings, carelessly altering
a signpost.

Friends stop in, take ten hits
In three minutes. They ask
and I smile, say
I wasn't counting anyway.

I listen as the breeze
causes a paperback cover
to speak for itself.
Phone and fish
Are asleep in their corners.
My stuffed bear leans back
And stares at the lightbulb,
Drowsing.
PLATONIC

They told me to drop by,
you were just really
something else.

You needed a little help,
it was true. I slapped wet grip
on your shirt,
where you had been something else
all over yourself.

As we walked,

you called me names
lover, abuser,
Steve?

I took you home
to your tub
and was careful
not to look too long
though to be certain,
I was curious.

SOFT BLUR

I do my best
To keep the people around me
Pasted to their proper scenes.
On a good day
I can clearly see my father
Smiling over a sandwich
Of wet leaves, dead nettles
And forgotten dog toys.
My mother
Is always sitting up in bed,
Wire frame glasses
Under a scribble of hair,
Asking about the day...

Just today you landed
on the bridge of my nose
and began dancing
towards my center.
I have to cross my eyes
to see you. So I do.

But now, my mother has spun out of place.
She's eating , while the dog
Adjusts the dials on our dryer.
I can clearly see
That my father is curled up on the floor
With his favorite Frisbee, but
I am much more worried
About you
And your delicate dancing.
I feel unsure of every shape
And I question the taste
Of all my favorite fruits
Except the one
That you keep feeding me-
Small and wet, like nibbling
On a favorite grape
Over and over.

SPACE SHOT

To me, every question about space
Is like asking for a random number
Between one and infinity. It is true
The answer may be something small and simple
Like fifty-seven, or three, or pi. But
it is far more likely, even entertaining
when someone asks about the space between

this light

and that one

and suddenly they are thrown to the wall
by a long blast
of exponents
emptiness
and footnotes in Greek that
they cannot blow bubbles at.

SPHERE BETA AND THE TENTACLES

And then, DNA
went new into you
pieced back together with evil glue
while I sat back and stared.

Are you really cured?
Or blinded by the momentary moon's eclipse?
Only time will tell me, and tell me too late
whether you will stay afloat.

From my corner
where I have shined and waxed the wall,
momentarily swiveling towards truth
discussing God with troubled youth,

Here I am, God!
Spiraling towards the center of your web
Ready to be sucked dry of blood
And shot back to earth.

Big wheel keep on turning
Fossil fuel keep on burning
Solid... Melting...
Slipping off the sidewalk and into the sewer.

STATION (Charles Sheeler, "Water", 1945.)

Titanic steel boa laying dead for a hundred miles, hollowed out
breathing the wind
through the empty teeth of paneless windows. Spinal and
encrusted, wind blows between ground and clouds
as if the entire sky was the dry path of something
that used to go.

The cement panels of the pumping stations stand tall and thin,
like playing cards stuck on end
in the sand, periodically
to latch down the shiny line
a bundle of tight tubes
headed straight.

Somewhere, water pours out of faucets
and wets tongues. Places that have new, soft black roads, but

none of them come here. This
is the middle of nowhere, the only things
here
are sun warmed metals
and gear shafts.

Old padlocks and sunlight
duke it out.

One man in a city
with a small key kept round him
a hundred miles from this lock,
the man to whom
this is a workplace.
A place of shade. He is
the inspector, and he comes once
in a year, to make sure the water is still working its way
without him, so he can go back
to his soggy garden hose
and his kitchen sink, and his other
jobs.

THE SITUATION

We lounged late into the afternoon
strange tastes in our mouths
from free booze we downloaded off the internet
and dusty cans of tuna
left by previous tenants.
We were thinking of looking for a plan.

Time passed like a joke
that the world kept telling us.
The punchline might have been deadly,
but the telling took forever.
We played video games in the morning
or at night, or both. Either way we were wasting time
and not trying, though we could have been.
I told my father, "You're shitting all over me!" when he
explained
it might not be a good idea
to move to Saudi Arabia,
though they were hiring teachers there.
I didn't want the job, but still.

Time passed. A week. Maybe a month.
Soon enough, even Arabia was looking good.
We didn't do much. We went to the public library.
We used small computers to set up dates with girls
with whom we hoped to drink water and climb trees--
things which didn't cost, and therefore had no choice
but to mean something.

Our profiles and our resumes
claimed we were qualified to be everything
which we were, but it still didn't mean anything.

TO DOUNIA:

The other prisoners here
Will not stop reading out loud
From their manuscripts,
All of which drool the sad,
Innocent insanity
You came to know in me.

Do you remember
Those winters we spent,
Slurping borsch on the hearth
With skinny tongues?
My chamber here is filled with winters.
They grow on the ceiling, like spikes.

You will be excited to hear
I have absolved myself of all crimes
And forgiven punishment for itself.
After waking up so many mornings,
My inedible dreams steaming and freshly risen,
I have found my prison.

Still, I am grateful
That my heart wishes to beat
By itself--personally, I would rather ignore it
And think about my brain. These days,
I consider my thoughts to be
More valuable than freedom.

Yours

Raskolnikov.
S_____sky Prison.

UNIT

As humans
we love a clean house, an empty trashbin.
We love immutable facts.
One hundred percent
or zero.
We are suspicious of more or less.
We love
indestructable units of color
and form
we love immutable dates,
the knowledgee that certain things are past
and that other things are ahead of us.

But seconds
leave their slimy trails
behind them.
Aliases
wear the clothes of our friends.
Color
bleeds.

WILD PASS

hey, remember
the low stone walls
at home?

orange stripes fueling flowers
the engine at the bottom of the garden

sticky candy in the gym
hardwood spooning.

a memory with missing walls
remote-control wrecking balls

the view from the couch
cat calls from the couch
I know this arrangement
of furniture.

but

someone special passes by.
a random event.
ma'am, could you please
pass the cement?