

12.01.22

Williamsburg, Brooklyn

5:30 p.m.

She walks to work bothered, almost comically, by the amount of money she is not making. She feels she has been fucked over. The restaurant was already overstaffed when they hired her. Tip pools are exhaustive and available shifts are null, yet they are still hiring, as if an active cult. Other aspects of the company culture evoke a similar indoctrinating quality (the uniform, a shirt with the owner's mother's face on it).

She texts the owner of a new cafe and wine bar opening in East Williamsburg. A few days earlier she interviewed for a job at his restaurant and he asked for her availability. *I haven't gotten my schedule yet but I will make next Sunday work. Let me know if there are other days you may want me to come in and I will make them a priority. Thanks!* She fears she sounds desperate and overthinks the passivity, wordiness and exclamation point, as if texting a highschool crush or emailing a college professor.

She passes Lucy's Vietnamese on her left and Gran Torino on her right. She looks ahead at a large mural of blue and gray: a young girl is painted sulking, sitting head between her knees, arms around her head. Below is a thrift shack where the clothes are vintage and overpriced and the owner is old and rude.

In reading Annie Ernaux and in wanting to try something new, she attempts to write –which causes her to think–in the third person. It comes naturally, the distance from herself.

12.02.2022

Greenpoint, Brooklyn

8:30 a.m.

She wakes up with energy, despite having stayed up late watching *White Lotus*. Everyone is talking about it.

After finishing the second episode, she wasn't able to fall asleep. She blames it on the screen time before bed though she wore her blue light glasses. In the blue black of her bedroom sublet, she lay awake thinking about a close friend leaving for Thailand, Taiwan, France, Austria, Spain, and London. Something about her friend leaving makes her want to break up with her boyfriend. She can not understand the correlation, unless the throughline is cutting ties.

Today she has a job interview, though she holds three jobs already. *This one may be a better opportunity*, she tells herself. And, *it does not hurt to find out*.

She gets dressed, layering black tights under light blue jeans. She wears a black and white lace bralette and a brown cashmere long sleeve. She decides against full make-up and applies only concealer to her nose, chin, and under eyes. She curls her eyelashes and lightly fills in her eye brows. She makes oatmeal with dried fruit and nuts and pours whole milk over top. She sits at the dining table with a book of experiential essays about language, plagues, and climate change. She realizes the milk has begun to curdle but takes another bite. She views this as a lack of self respect.

She leaves her apartment for the interview and turns back to grab a resume. She also views attending a job interview while already holding three part-time positions as a lack of self respect. She tries to connect this to having forced herself to finish spoiled milk at breakfast but has trouble coming up with a good point. The recurring dialogue is “*you deserve better but you do not know how to get it or give it to yourself so maybe you don’t deserve better anyhow.*”

Over the last two months, interviews for waitressing jobs have become habitual, like doing laundry or going to the store. In fact, she probably goes to more interviews. Last night, she also ate oatmeal for dinner.

She is in a good mood despite the mundane errands ahead and her self-defeating thoughts. She spent the week making strides and watching the World Cup. On Monday, Brazil beat Switzerland 1-0 and she was hired at a new, trendy restaurant with a hot Australian owner. On Tuesday, she applied for an editorial internship and watched England beat Wales and the U.S beat Iran, 3-0 and 1-0 respectively. On Wednesday, she went to therapy and bought a yoga class pack. On Thursday, she watched the first half of Spain vs. Japan (1-2).

Today her thoughts are hyper-active. She is relieved they land on the images that surround her rather than arbitrary numbers inside of her head.

- An old woman walking a three legged dog
- Small children coddled by caretakers through the window of a pretigious preschool
- A family placing a dozen donuts across a park bench, then taking a picture of their bounty
- Amnesty International, or an organization like it, summoning her for a survey or a donation (she won’t know which, because she doesn’t stop to find out)
- Stickers on street poles
- The soup of the day: *Manhattan Clam Chowder*
- A group of middle-aged midtown men, all, she assumes, with porn addictions
- A man in basketball shorts and running shoes scarfing down an acai bowl on a bench in a Queens metro-station

—A man begging for money behind small piles of what appears to be red sand, but could just as easily be anything else

Later, while doing laundry, she listens to a podcast—an interview between two artists, Tschabalala Self & Abdu Ali. Self offers, *living in a city, you get used to looking at people*. She likes the way this sounds and knows it to be true, but does not know how it makes her feel.

12.5.22

Bushwick, Brooklyn

11:40 pm

She finds herself on the floor of his basement bedroom. It's not as dramatic as it sounds, though she is crying. Her boyfriend is upstairs, making her vegetable dumplings. She has finally given in to eating something.

She hears footsteps on the metal stairs in the hallway and hopes it is not his roommates. She can not tell how much he tells them about her, but assumes that they think she is cold, unrelatable, and, in a desperate sense, unstable. Regardless of the validity of her preconceptions, she wishes to provide no insight or affirmation.

She does not know what she is doing or why she is doing it. She tries to make herself throw up, not bullimically, but because she feels sick—mentally sick so she tries to extract something physical, to prove it.

She facetimes her mom and her dad answers. At the sight of her father's happy face, she immediately asks to speak with her mom. She explains what she can and tells her that today is not the first day of feeling this way, that lately her thoughts have been scary and out of her control.

If you are really feeling scared of your thoughts you need to call the police. To her, this is a ludicrous, unhelpful, and unsurprising response.

Her boyfriend comes into the bedroom and she tries to get off the phone. She asks her mom if she can speak tomorrow or Wednesday. Her mom says Wednesday and pans the camera to their family dog, barking at himself in the closet mirror of her highschool bedroom.

The next morning her mom sends a text asking how long it takes to make paella and nothing more. She thinks highly of her mother, but the incongruencies of their intimacy confuse her.

12.7.22

Prospect Heights, Brooklyn

3:37 p.m.

She sits in the spacious back garden of a cafe on Vanderbilt Avenue, her old street. She is alone in a space that feels out of place amongst antiquated Brooklyn townhouses, akin to a renovated courtyard of a presidential library. The sky is a thick gray, the light preemptively imitating night in the late afternoon.

She orders a kale salad sandwich, a cappuccino, and a lemon fig scone. She reads *The Years*, jots fragments of scenes from the past week in her notebook, responds to texts, and posts a picture on Instagram of a book she noticed left on a bench while walking from the Clinton-Washington station. The title: *How to Talk to Your Cat about Gun Safety*, the subtitle: *And Abstinence, Drugs, Satanism, And Other Dangers That Threaten Their Nine Lives*. Cyclically, she returns to her book, her notebook, and her phone.

It becomes too dark to read. She leaves the garden and, with the intention of buying nothing, enters the home goods store next door. She spots a felt fig Christmas ornament and puts it on her credit card.

She crosses the street to her favorite used bookstore. In the memoir section she checks the likes on her post. Her boyfriend's mom commented: *WE HAD ANGELO ANTÔNIO, A PERSIAN CAT (cat emoji) HIS CHAMPAGNE COLOR WAS SO HANDSOME !!! (cat emoji, cat emoji, cat emoji, cat emoji)*. She laughs, audibly.

In the back corner room of poetry, she begins opening books to sporadic pages and reading the poem to appear. She takes two pictures of poems that she will read on the train later.

The first begins

*what do i make of my face / except
that it is on me.*

The second

*I am trying to practice not dying
in the midst of my life, a concept*

She wonders if saving these poems to her phone constitutes stealing or, at the very least, violates a social code.

She leaves without buying a book and walks to a restaurant in Crown Heights where her friend is bartending. She sits at the bar and orders the spiked apple cider while her friend makes a third round of martinis for the couple in the corner. They talk about their respective restaurant work and what has happened since seeing each other two weeks ago. Other than new jobs and the World Cup, not much transpired.

She has more she wants to say, but this is not the time or place and she isn't sure she would be able to admit it—to herself let alone anyone else. A song by her boyfriend's band begins to play throughout the restaurant. She gets up to go to the bathroom and leaves soon after.

12/1-12/7

Trash Cat

Going Places

Orange Jerseys

Free samples

Crowded Bars

Bad Moods

Joe Biden

A big purchase

Brunch Shifts

The *perfect* turkey

Lindsey Lohan

Collective goodbyes

Breaking a pair of glasses

Someone else's cappuccino

A 1:30 reservation

2 goals in 10 minutes

Cursing on live television

*She had some horses she loved. /She had some horses she hated. / These were the same horses.**

Menstrual cycles

Indecision

To celebrate toxic masculinity, we woke up and just urinated for like 10 hours.

Cheesemongers

Sharing spaghetti

*Remember what it was to be me: that is always the point.***

Face masks

Felt ornaments

Fig scones
Howling at the moon

12/8 - 12/14

First days
Going feral
Mezcal bars
Modern medicine
Full moons
Glistening cheekbones
Penalty kicks
Creme Brulee
Working a double
Aubrey Plaza
Opening weekend
Fig-infused scotch
A striper on the bar
Artichoke Pizza
The first snowfall
Half birthdays
Storage units
A free croissant
Cleaning closets
Salmon crudo
LCD Soundsystem at Brooklyn Steele

12/15- 12/21

Blue light
Bad landlords
Rainy days
Loud talkers
Tote bags
Toxic traits
Shag cuts
Petit gateau
Art bar
Argentina
Pep talks

I took a break to make a sweater for two weeks, and now I'm back on my bullshit.

Losing sleep

Harry and Meghan

Breast cancer

Britney Spears

THE tree

A beanie at the bar

First class

Mrs. Fitzgerald

Margarita pitchers

145 steps

The sun set on a solstice

12/22 -12/28

Panatone

Cacti

Mixed Doubles

Wine

Wine

More wine

Cuba

Jamie Lee Curtis

Arugula and brie

Statement pieces

Cold water

The fog rolling in

Scenic routes

Throwbacks

Roadkill

Rancho Santa Fe

Shared showers

Latkes, apple sauce, sour cream

Holiday bars

Ping Pong

Obscenity

Asking for a cigarette

Leaving your phone in the uber

Ski ball

Hot pink

Small town soccer leagues

Sex before a big day
American football
Papas bravas, paella, Spanish meatballs
Dogs in sand
Your favorite concert ever
Pools of blood
You're the worst.
Poppy seed cake
Potato dish
Batting practice
Buttoning another's shirt
Prime rib
Conjestion
The middle seat
The ER on a holiday
Dog park people
Puppuccinos
Mid-century modern
Record collections
Grandfathers
Squash curry
Walks with mom
Golf with dad
Having daughters
Cloud cover
Closed piers
Peanut butter whiskey
Airport drunk
Airplane sick
Sleep masks
Selling clothes at a thrift store

**She Had Some Horses*, Joy Harjo 1983

***On Keeping a Notebook*, Joan Didion 1968

