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Brooke Cushman: "I used to live in Genoa, Wisconsin, kitty-corner from Zabolio's store. Rudy died the year we moved, but Norm is still alive and well. I wish I were there."
**SUCKERS**

We don't eat the suckers
that swallow and run up
our stream. Their diving back
bones crack in our dog's jaw.
They lie streaming under bushes
where flies wrestle in their
ribs and smell.

In summer when they spawn
Norm nets and strings them
on fish line. He boils
them in salt while his dog
whines on the lawn. Our dog
cleans his teeth of sucker
meat, then lies in the sun
and fly wind.

**WASHERS**

The hard metal rings
strewn on the floor
of my father's workshop
are flat and smooth,
with centered holes
like chinese coins.
They wait
to be inserted
into leaky faucets.

Blue as heron wings
reflecting the sky,
the washers feel
hard as the
flat black discs
in my mother's eyes.

And in late afternoon shadows
I feel my mother
staring at me
from the cellar floor.
Amy Pattullo

AN ACUPUNCTURE

My forehead's an Indian. Sometimes it rests on sheet glass, sometimes hurls itself through to the smack of a river. It bears the cold by grinding its temples on wet cedar stumps.

Climbing a tree, my forehead discovers coconuts, cracks against them till the pulp yields orange juice. The forehead rubs the ice cubes into sickles till they're slippery and too cold, then it needles them through the hairline, little I.V.'s.

The lines don't stop in Genoa, where crickets sound loudest in summer.

NORM JAMBOIS HUMS TO THE RIVER

Norm Jambois hums to the river as a boy in the tide, a pike at his arm.

He once caught a rattler and carried it by the neck and tail down the bluff in the afternoon when his daughter died he buried her under a tree near the foxes in the graveyard.

Norm reels in with the mud and walks to Rudy's to sit in the dusty sun through the window.
The new yellow lines
don't notice Genoa
or the bluffs
on their dash through to LaCrosse.
They move too fast
to see the sign—"Bait".

Even the men knew her better.
Those who held paint rollers
dripping at the back of that pick-up.
They stopped at Rudy's for a beer
and saw prize fish
strung over dirty sand.

The bluffs rise high along I-80,
above the men
painting there in the wet breeze
off the flatland
behind Zabolio's store,

rise tan over Genoa-
milkweed thick
in faded shacks
sinking into the Mississippi.
Traintracks slide in the reeds.
Barges embrace mud.
A snake is sleeping
in the toilet
of the Skelly station.

Norm Jambois fueled that pick-up.
Lilacs bloom in his yard,
flanking bare spots
where men left footprints.
Dogs under porches howl
at owls in summer dark.

Doug Stanton

POTATO CRATE

On a potato
crate
filled with
rough air

Linden sat
picking the
bony grass
until the grasses
broke

and fingers
of an appletree
pulled the sun
slowly down
onto a
far
hill.
SONG FOR GRANNY

Granny turned the tambourine began to sing to me, singin' 'bout her younger days. Jesus knows when Granny sings and plays her tambourine.

Singin' like a cricket in a spring green clover patch singin' 'bout
'singin' 'bout 'bout singin' 'bout singin' 'bout the way folks carried on cussin' and fightin'
all through the night, drinkin' wine and liquor. Only Jesus knows why Granny sings singin' 'bout singin'
'bout the house.

& we get what we deserve, ol' gal,

Yellowstone was fond of quoting.

9

& of course she was born still more quiet than the others in her crib,

but what were we to expect.

Yellowstone could laze around in her half-shadow & lick sweaty persimmon tarts nine times at a time, dayround, & it went on, round of drinks for all, time on, tie him on.

Pop goes the we sail

into the floating light, sitting sun, orange & red & stoneyellow.
Crepe Suzette fed the hogs. Caught Noosegay-Wednesday going through the rye. But that's another story, another time, another child, continues the tape of Yellowstone beat-beating.

In the near future my baby went untouched 27 days & sleepy evenings were spent sipping drinks through slender straws.

Yellowstone: I saw myself once in the better day before taps sucking on a giant prick, a reverse phallic symbol for a light brown bottle of spermy children. Oh yum!

"You didn't have to do that, girl!" "Oh, yes! But I did."

Orgonna was knold beyond her failing ways indications said.

Speak the stories of Victorian rapes into the ears & journals of whispering children held captive.

David Perk
TWO PULP PIECES

SKETCH
Stone porch; he stands on the rail. Gun over his shoulder he looks out across sedate english garden. Monster centipedes to the back hedge. They mill around hungrily.

His is a tiring job. Listens to the radio all day long. Comes in to lunch singing the tunes. "Fribba me thud crash and mumble." He eats roast beef sandwiches.

One day I come downstairs and the rail is suddenly empty. Out the french windows to screams and twelve-gauge shots. Drag him back, one leg gone. "Damn worms," he rasps through gritted teeth, rocking on his ass.

New man now. Eats corn beef on whole wheat bread.
a clever trick used during the war,

our war, of course, luv.

Molting leaves, tarbaby black, the Building of Supreme Science, bottle, row upon row of bottle & bottle, artists over here, halfbacks over there, doo-dah.

Don't look any closer than you must, dear. The light can hurt, & you're not entitled to see all you see. Marvelous light, eh? It's trained, bright as a wildstar, prismfocused, it does the trick.

5

Sitting kneed together, back bent, another $2 flask ripped out & smashed,

the formaldehyde running down the chairleg onto the floor.

I've done in another bottle YS admitted with a mouth of closed over bum teeth set fence-white & straight.
They come in tubes & don't last long, corkian nights, astop
the lid, skimming through the astrobelt, a night at a time,
seeing this seeing that seeing this again, candybar to me, to you.

Yellowstone I said is myself in a better light. Dark hair &
modonna teeth closely watch my mirror from a distance measured
only in physics & dreams.

Step off time, step & step. I'm missing me kid, cobaltblue,
greasy eyes, camelbrush cheeks. I kept a smile for old times.
Sakes, landleive.

A new batch crammed into sardine tins & numbered according to
astrological signs,

star light, star brite.

Today's number is between the covers of a matchbook,

ANOTHER SKETCH

When we come to work in the morning we feed the cats milk.

Then we take off our jackets and begin. The dead people are
piled in the center of the roof. We select a blonde one.
Hands and knees, we carry him to the parapet. There we take
his rings and his glasses, dropping them into the trough.
Swing, heave, and we watch him tumble through the air. He
lands heavily in the rushing crowd.

When the radio is on, we pick them up, a wrist and an ankle,
and dance with them, swinging them around in circles. They
spin out of our hands, arcing into the air above the street.

"These are your dead," we yell.

But we are too busy now to watch them fall. We are afraid
people in the street will not understand what we yell, we
must speak so fast. When the new ones come up, a day or two
dead off the street, they are still warm from the elevator
ride past the boiler rooms.

Now we are lining them up on the edge. We will push them all
at once. "One day you will go this way." "Yes," I say, you
too." We laugh, pushing, shoving, and pausing a moment to
watch them drop.
John Jackson

DRIVING BETWEEN SCHOOL AND THE AIRPORT

Every time he makes this drive
his life comes back
like a lost scrapbook. Pointing
to a green frame house

that used an oak for a crutch, he says
"That's where my wife grew up
and where we both went to school." He sees
the grey picket fence

white again. Down the road
a clapboard shoebox with a ragged lid
sits tight against the hill.
"That's the dance hall where every Saturday night

we'd have a dance." A chipped vase
sits in the brown window. Railroad tracks
pick their way among the grasses.

"Those took me to World War II." He grins
and the train tugs him along. The telephone poles
pass like flipped pages. "This hill

was once sand. With a big load

and your best team you couldn't make it up."

"In 1919 my father had a model T
that he made into a camper.
We went to Colorado. It took us

five weeks, the Lincoln Highway
was nothing but dirt." He swings onto the highway
here, staring, without a word
holding the wheel with both hands.

Randy Signor

YELLOWSTONE

1

Yellowstone, her eyes & hair nut yellow, long sweet strings
& lines grey & sincere,

the influence of crepuscule suns.

She was born a bride, satin gown & lace, walking slowly isle
to aisle, a ribbon in her hair.

The lady is fair, fair lady, the lady is fair.

She is fallow, Fallopicio & you know the ropes. I know the tubes.

2

A marathon child, Milky Way, I kissed the skin of your hand once.

"Yes, child, & deja vu to you to."
A WOMAN GETS HER PICTURE TAKEN WITH HER BABY MONKEY
(After a photograph by Diane Arbus)

The old woman
with false lashes
and bright lipstick
sits with legs crossed
on a pink and gray couch,
ready to have
her picture taken.

In her lap
she gently
folds her arms
around a small baby monkey
dressed in diapers
and a white smock.

She smiles
into the camera
and the monkey
putting one arm
on the woman's waist
hides its head
into her breast.

MORNING BUSINESS TRIP

Something brown moves on a far hill
near Michigan 110 North to Traverse City.
"Cows," I say. But a quarter of a mile
down the road after reading a billboard for
Hank's Radio Supply
they become buffalo. "Buffalo?"
I ask. Their large heads sway as
they watch the highway.

They drift across the
rear view mirror. "Buffalo?"
I will look for them
when returning home tonight
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Brooke Cushman

THREE POEMS

INTERSTATE 80, GENOA TO LACROSSE

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don't notice Genoa
or the bluffs
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They move too fast
to see the sign—"Bait".

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