You choose to begin at this point, this intersection - Nice Guy Eddie's, Avenue A, Action Painters - not because it's just as good as any other place to begin, but because it instigates a logic, a structure that you've chosen to follow. Choice is a problematic word to use in this instance. Do we choose the architectures, the structures, the strata of the cities that we happen to live in? Do we choose to make what we want of the grid? You walk by a T-Mobile sign, an ATM, Punjabi Grocery-Deli. Katz's Delicatessen across the street, and a sign on the far building: Gateway to the Lower East Side. For all intensive purposes, you won't acknowledge that anything lower than this exists: 1st St. Your New York began in 1809, 1811, when DeWitt Clinton first mapped out what would become the end of New Amsterdam and the beginning of the modern city. You can see the awkwardness as you walk, looking over the filled bike racks, beyond the cars, through the netting of the branches. You can see a straight line drawing itself, but the existing architecture in no way dictates its necessity, its reason for being arising from pure imagination. You know this. You all know this. A small concrete courtyard gives way to 94 E. 1st St: Max Meltzer Towers. "I can't believe, like, all of your friends, like, aren't with us, because they probably didn't know," she says as she walks by. The sun is beating upon you (as best it can in the cold) from the south. In your version of Manhattan, the sun sets in the past and rises in the future. The north is your future. As much as you will talk on about what you wish, as much as you believe that you're making a choice in how you walk, your choices have been made for you. It follows to see what you'll observe: perhaps some evidence of tangible life exceeding the imaginative limits of the grid. Now you're at 1st Ave and 1st St. You stand here and look at Boca Chica and Lucien, which is never as good as it should be, and think of Trotsky's son, Seryozha. Trotsky and his family lived in New York for two months in 1917 and were shortly brought back to Russia after news of the revolution came. History shows him living on 164th St, but an amusing anecdote finds his convalescent son, recently bed-ridden with diphtheria, going out for a half-hour walk one afternoon, not returning for three, worrying his mother silly, until finally a man called Trotsky's wife and informed her that he was a policeman and that the boy, in those hours, had somehow managed to answer a question that had perplexed him for some time: was there a 1st St? Was there really a beginning? A question you ask and which seems even more pertinent the higher one goes in the numbered streets: is there really a first street? The boy answers the question. The only other relevant story you can muster: 36 E 1st St apparently still houses the offices of The Catholic Worker, a Socialist daily, originally The Call. On her first assignment, Dorothy Day, who founded the paper, interviewed Trotsky. Was there really a first St? Is there a 1st St? It's fitting, you suppose, that as much as this instigates the structure that will follow, on street and page, it is not a fully realized street: a provisional swathe, a drawing of a line that, in being redrawn, time and again, until it cuts clean across the island, takes itself for a walk. And so you, a line drawing, take yourself for a walk. You feel embarrassed to say what is obvious: this street, like many in this area, is filled with the sort of juxtapositions that are symbolic of urban shift and change: a Gulf station, a run-down auto repair, and the new Avalon luxury apartments, one of which houses a gentleman that you once refused to have a drink with and have not heard from since. He would be the epitome of the new residents of this neighborhood, living in an apartment like this: an entrepreneur who recently opened yet another wine bar on the Lower East Side. He seems to have done well enough, or have enough sense "Are you going to backtrack?" of the material economy that spirals out, one could say, from the Whole Foods on Houston, though Houston is not above 1st St, so for our purposes Houston does not exist. An alleyway you've never seen, just before we hit the Bowery. Through bad eyes you see a small, graffiti phrase: Skin Disorder. The name of a band that could very well have played at CBGB, which is relevant, because you're about to hit it. And you're here.

And you're here, except now the Avalon is to your Southeast, a light snow falls from behind, and you carry a four-foot long fluorescent fixture: you know the one. 2nd St begins at the Bowery. Behind you it becomes Bond St and dissolves into the new Ian Schrager condominiums, the old Mapplethorpe studio, and as many other iterations as it sees fit until it terminates at Broadway. But you're here. To your left is the Delancey Hotel; to your right, the Amato Opera and a slew of properties that hide what was once CBGB: a Chase, a John Varvatos. The over-façade is so complete, in fact - and so impersonal - that you can't remember which building would have housed the entrance to the club, nor can you say that you ever went to the club. But for 33 years, apparently, people did. In a sense CBGB isn't over, though it did close in 2006. It persists as CBGB Fashions, a label that has done much to perpetuate the myth of the club among a far broader demographic than the club ever saw enter its doors and that, most disappointingly of all, is run by Louise Parnassa-Staley, who was the club's manager for 22 years, and the son of the deceased owner, Hilly Kristal, who is a customer service representative for online accounts. This fashion company is run out of a storage space in Williamsburg, where much of the club went to die. The awning has gone on to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Museum - the only saving grace. The bar is allegedly stashed in a trailer in Connecticut. The snow is beginning to come down, so you're going to move on. Just inside 2nd St, off the Bowery, is Rivington Arms. This is their second location. The artist is Uri Aran. You haven't seen the show yet, so you're going to take some time on the inside...The owners claimed that the gallery would be closing by design after this exhibition, which ends on January 25th, but given how many galleries seem to be going down a certain path, in these tight economic times, you wonder; and given that this neighborhood was for a stretch of the 80s home to so many galleries, cleaned out by the economic downturn at the end of that decade, you find Rivington Arms' news to be particularly telling - particularly poignant. More on that later. At 2nd and 2nd you stand, backed by a wall of plywood, catty-corner from Anthology Film Archives: the big, brick box. On the wall behind are three ads for "Grand Theft Auto IV: Welcome to Liberty City" with a tag on top - a stencil tag in red - that says "itsasickness": grammatically incorrect, but grammatically direct. You've spent a limited time in the virtual world of Grand Theft Auto. You do recall a paper, delivered by some Cornell Art History PhD students, about virtual flânerie and "Grand Theft Auto: Vice City," the assertion made, by these students - prior to "Second Life," mind you - that "Grand Theft Auto" presented the most complete virtual world, virtual metropolis, and that what made it remarkable was not simply its completeness, its thoroughness, but that one wasn't necessarily or explicitly rewarded by following a single path, as is commonly the case in video games. It was the aimlessness of the pursuit that constituted the game's true appeal. Yet even when beating hookers, driving about, walking along the beach, and mauling randoms with your car, you, at least - theorizing aside; "Window Shopping" aside - never had that experience with "Grand Theft Auto," perhaps because if you drove for long enough you knew you would hit the boundary of the city, or because, by cause of processor speed, data compression, or 3D rendering, the visuality became the limit of the game, became the limit of belief, and curtailed whatever sense you had of actual, total volition. That game threw up polygons, left and right, as developers may throw up the facades of buildings, and you couldn't but think of them as limits, not potentialities. You tilt your head. Now you're at Avenue A. These are the old stomping grounds of "Mother" Rosie Hertz, who at the turn of the last century ran a series of brothels along 1st and 2nd St, down in this area east of the Bowery. She was the daughter of a madam, ran the business with her husband and extended family, and despite the somewhat unsalacious nature of her enterprise, was known to be a modest, observant Jewish woman: always in wig, as was the custom. Alas, eventually she was arrested, convicted of running a disorderly resort, sent in for a year at Blackwell's on Roosevelt Island, and came to be known to the public as a "Woman White Slaver." You recently read a statistic that in 1793, when the population of London was one million, 50,000 women participated in the sex trade. This statistic was in a book on walking, you recall. If one were to develop a history of female walking, then as much as courtly love, nobles in gardens, etc. could constitute one half of a classist lineage, streetwalking would constitute the other - this perhaps being the reason why Benjamin devoted attention to it in his study of nineteenth-century Paris. And on the subject of noble walking, you come upon to your right - just before Avenue C, just before the Mobil - "Le Petit Versailles," a small garden, fenced-in, the width of one building, Christmas lights, and a gold-painted tree that rises two stories. You've walked for 23 minutes. You're approaching the "Super Blocks," Corbusier-inflected, that Moses so greatly believed in. As you continue to look down 2nd St, for now it merges with Houston right at Avenue D, you can see the line of cars curl up to the left - perhaps to the FDR approach. This is where the number ends and so this is where you will end.

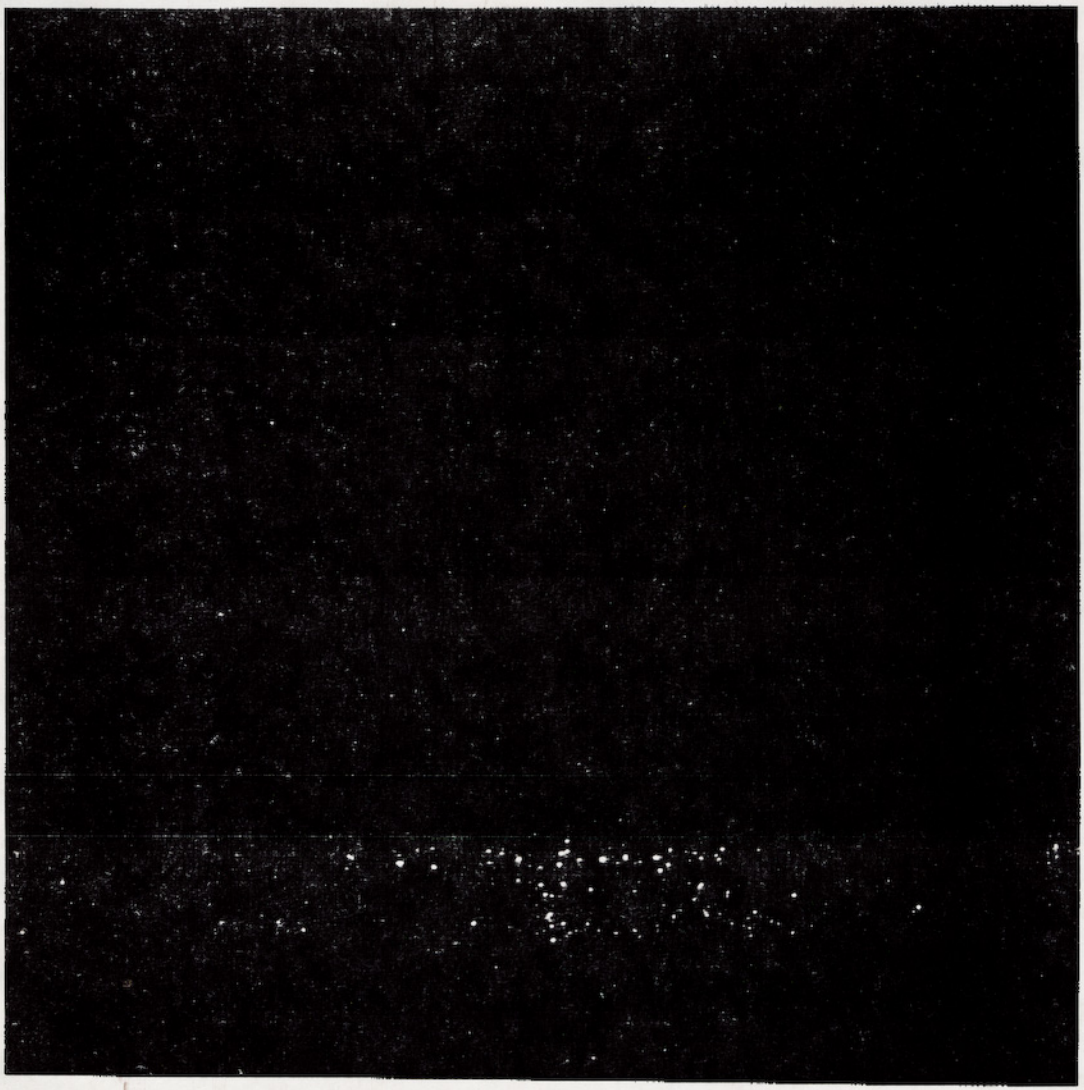
Through a small cut behind a playground you can see the reddening sky, a horizontal band of traffic, small, punctuated taillights like infernal stars. Between that scene and you, on Avenue D and 3rd St, is a "Super Block": four, five, six, seven, burnt sienna, plopped down like the alien spacecraft it is, in no way uncharacteristic of how buildings plop themselves down, of how architects channel ideologies and the representations thereof into structures that may or may not have any consonance, any relevance beyond the discursive limits of their studios. As you walk away from it, along a street that continues the red motif - red painted exterior followed by red brick, red grate, red graffiti on a van side, red painted exterior, red awning - an image overlays the scene. Instead of seeing the street as it presents itself, you see Corbusier's plan - as he intended it for Manhattan, as he intended it, really, for any city that would take it - unfolding almost like a cardboard toy one finds boxed, equipped with the means, the bends for you to assemble. A pop-up city: that's what it is. But again, simply a more dramatic take on the pop-up city. Plan or no plan, Ville Radieuse or Ville Réel, the pop-up will always be the fundamental mode by which these places constitute themselves. Red motorcycle, red bicycle carried out of 248 E. 3rd St, red "No Standing Anytime" sign, red stripes on a flag, red reflectors: a sunset hue for a sunset walk. 236 E. 3rd St, between Avenues B and C: the Nuyorican Poet's Café. One of the more haunting frescoes you've seen in recent times: a series of white-suited gentlemen painted on the façade, their shadows and their faceless faces blending in and out of a wash of blue. To the right is a painting of a Puerto Rican poet by Chico. This, accompanied by all of those headless men - all of those ghostly suits - gives the entire exterior a somber tone, though the café is still open and though you saw two teenage hipsters gingerly toeing the threshold before deciding to leave. What you do know about the Nuyorican is that Miguel Piñero, a playwright and actor, founded the club, and that an artist that has meant something to you, named Martin Wong, was a mentee, a friend, a rumored lover of Mr. Piñero. Wong's art repulsed you for some time: too loud, too brash, too extravagantly indulgently un-self-consciously gay were his erotic depictions of black and Latino men - including Piñero. Wong died of AIDS in the late-1990s, having already come to be considered something of a forefather for the identity-driven art of that decade. Who knows? Thinking about Wong while standing before that fresco reminds you more of the sad end of his life than that which preceded it. Red police lights, red awning stripes, red bar lights. Jane's Exchange, Wild Project, N Hair Salon. The "Super Blocks" give way to an unfortunate outgrowth of the ideas of contrarian ideologue, Ms. Jane Jacobs. Prepare yourself for the blocks to come, for the overwhelming sense of "neighborhoodliness" - or so, at least, developers would claim - that leaves you feeling very little like a neighbor. A beautiful church is on your right. Very beautiful. Red bows on the wreaths on its doors. You look hard at it, but it doesn't tell you its name. You're on the south side of the street, and rather than cross to read the plaque, you choose to allow it to remain in a relative state of indecipherability on this most deciphering of walks. Red trash can cover, red iPod Nano, red "Don't Walk" sign, red light. You've stepped on an urban snake, made out of some rubber material. It looks like it has come loose from the seams of the sidewalk. Night is coming on fast. First Avenue. Red Christmas lights, but less red. This street is small and a little oppressive. "Oh, there he is!" You've just put a foot out into Second Avenue. Yellow takes over as the motivic color, that yellowish-orange that forms the standard complement to the night. Too much to not talk about. Too much to not dwell on. Three men in shirtsleeves talking, through linen curtains, in The Delancey Hotel. The Bowery. 3rd St. becomes Great Jones St - you hope not for long, because there's one more story to tell. ACME, where Tova once bartended. Village Tannery - the red returns, but it doesn't really fit into are you're building for this walk, does it? Great Jones St terminates at Broadway. Bleecker St begins. This alleged corner 3rd St and Broadway doesn't exist - or doesn't exist any more. You have to find out who this Jones was and why he was so great. The only thing you can say about this intersection - Bleecker, Great Jones, Broadway, the ghost of W. 3rd - is that on November 25th, 1864, three famous actors, - John Wilkes Booth and his brothers - put on a benefit performance of "Julius Caesar" here at the Winter Garden Theatre, which apparently has since been replaced by a NYU dorm. The proceeds were to go towards a Shakespeare statue for the then-new Central Park. Happily, the money was raised and the statue still stands. But while the play was under way, Confederate sympathizers plotting to burn down New York City set fire to the theater. Apparently John was not involved but, well, you know where his Confederate sympathizing got him. His brothers disowned him, and if one wants to see an estranged brother, one could visit the Edwin Booth statue in Gramercy Park. You will soon.

Night has almost fully descended, as you stand on W. 4th and W. 13th and Gansevoort, facing the oblong side of the fourth location of White Columns, originally 112 Greene. Ronnie arrives. You start to walk. You tell him he's welcome to make observations, and he responds that he'd rather, for right now, just listen in. You arrive at Christopher Park. That's the George Segal sculpture, "Gay Liberation." You can see, actually standing at this point, the red Stonewall Inn neon through the branches. The inn was at 51-53 Christopher Street. Now you believe it's just at 53: half of what it was. The sculpture was supposed to be installed in 1980 and wasn't installed until 1992, by cause of its supposedly controversial subject-matter. A replica installed at Stanford in 1984 was subject to repeated abuse. Really? The state that the sculpture is in is very strange, you and he observe, with breadcrumbs littering it, impossible to tell whether by means of an overly generous homeless person, feeding the birds; whether by an act of violence; or as a political statement about the work. He remarks that he thought they were actual crumblings from the sculpture. In the 1960s mayor Robert F. Wagner began to shut down a lot of the gay bars in the city in preparation, mainly, for the 1964 World's Fair, which is funny, considering recent accounts of the Chinese government cleaning up Beijing for that limited duration when foreigners would be flowing in for the Olympics. Most of the gay bars were run by organized crime - this one by the Genovese family. They would pay off the police every week, and that was that. Much of the way Wagner cracked down was by having undercover policemen entrap gay men, so a bouncer would look through a peephole in the door of the Stonewall Inn and assess the relative gayness of the man standing outside to determine whether he was an undercover cop. The undercover policemen were known as the "Lily Law," a term you particularly like. On June 28th 1969, police raided the Inn, and the gays collectively protested. The bar was destroyed, and police got violent, but a lot of the gays started chorus lines or physically fought back in the street. Within the year, more activist groups sprang up across the country, and a year after Stonewall, the first gay pride marches were held in New York and Los Angeles. Edmund White, who was living in the village at the time, walked by and commented, "Everyone's restless, angry and high-spirited. No one has a slogan, no one even has an attitude, but something's brewing." You had thought that the politicizing of an identity group would come with considerable deliberation, but here was a scenario of means-without-slogan: a very unexpected and unformalized moment of protest. You feel like such a faggot talking about Stonewall while standing outside of it, you tell Ronnie, but still you quote Allen Ginsberg: "You know, the guys there were so beautiful - they've lost that wounded look that fags all had 10 years ago," this being the first time that there was a public display of gayness, partly as protest, but also in the form of camaraderie and affection. By bringing something into the public sphere of representation, Ginsberg seems to suggest (Habermas might underscore), one necessarily brings it into the sphere of political discourse. The first gay bar you visited was Pieces, just down the way at 8 Christopher St. You went with a female friend from NYU and were so nervous about going that you had to go to a non-gay bar in advance to down several drinks before mustering the courage. It was a big deal, you know? Of course, the bar ended up being such a charming parody of gayness - what with the obligatory drag queen singing Madonna karaoke and men drinking pink cocktails - that you were bowled over. You and Ronnie just passed Riviera Café & Sports Bar, where Lou Reed kicked John Cale out of the Velvet Underground. Too bad for Lou Reed. Let's read what Benjamin De Casseres wrote about Sheridan Square. De Casseres was largely writing in the Prohibition era, which was also the time when Charles Henri-Ford and Parker Tyler wrote "The Young and Evil," a novel about homosexuals living in Greenwich Village and Harlem. Strangely, it seems that during Prohibition, homosexuals actually became more socially accepted, which historians account for the fact that as booze went underground and became an errant thing, it joined many of the preexisting, errant bits of society and urban nightlife. "Sheridan Square is the Parnassus, the Olympus of bob-haired morals. Looking due Bellvueward from a dressing room in the Greenwich Village Theatre, one sees at nightfall the luminous eye of the clock in the tower of the Jefferson Market Police Court." "In the Village," De Casseres writes, "nothing it true but debts." You have no idea whether Jefferson Market Police Court still exists. Or a clock, for that matter, Ronnie adds. But this is what you've been finding, you tell him: an absence and some unintentional compensation for that absence - even when the city bulldozes itself and makes of itself a cemetery. What's the word the Situationists used, that Gopnik borrows? Supercession. They describe the city as a supercession of layers, the implication being that you can look and see the active juxtaposition of these layers. But sometimes there's no juxtaposition; sometimes it's simply that one thing has been buried, another thing rises, and you see what is there to be seen. So you and he are looking at a Blackberry ad, and imagine this is the closest you will get to the Jefferson Market Police Court clock. If that screen were allowed to load, if that billboard weren't static, you're sure that you would see a clock on that Blackberry. Should we continue? Pieces was quite an institution. A man tried to take you home that night. He was Hugh Jackman's personal assistant, in town making "Kate and

Leopold," a movie about Hugh Jackman playing a man from, you can't remember, the 17th Century? And Meg Ryan - this was the era when Meg Ryan had cut her hair and began doing a number on her lips - playing a 20th-century woman. Hugh comes back from the past, and has to make it work in the here and now. Hugh doesn't prove to be a quick study. It's sort of like Leopold is the Jefferson Market Police Court station, you explain. Ronnie laughs, humors you. Just imagine Leopold coming back from the grave and squatting atop the Blackberry ad. That would not make a pretty sight, but it might make a pretty decent Hollywood rom-com. Ronnie mentions that he's seen that plot play out before, but can't call another film to mind.

You met a woman named Francine last night at an opening – a Dutch woman - and she told you that she spent her New Year's Eve at a dinner party, down on Wall St, and that on her way down, her route happened to pass the New York Stock Exchange. At that hour of the night, the Financial District was ghostly dead. Francine said that she actually looked up at the Stock Exchange, shook her fist and, from what you would extrapolate, knowing very little of this woman, thought to herself, "You American bankers! Why can you not get it together?" You humored her by saying that her fist-shake might be the single gesture, all the more potent coming from a foreigner, that would shift the economic winds. At the moment you're standing outside 333 E. 5th St. In 1967 at this address - drab, red, brick building, in standard East Village fashion - lived Abbie Hoffman, the leader of the Youth International Group (the "Yippies"). Hoffman, a social and political activist, best known as a member of the "Chicago Eight," best known for the shit he started at the 1968 Democratic National Convention, played fast and loose with the New York Stock Exchange, during the year that he lived here, specifically on August 24th 1967, when he threw fistfuls of dollars – 300 in total, apparently – down into the floor of the Exchange. Some traders booed, and, of course, because this was a metaphorical gesture on Hoffman's part, most scrambled to grab the bills. A fist-shaker and a fistful of dollars: as metaphors, not as far from one another as you would suspect.

You meet Ben on the corner of 6th St and First Avenue, and you walk west on the street as far as it will take you, along blocks heavy with Indian restaurants. You chose First Avenue because it sits roughly between the easternmost and westernmost parts of 6th St: neither London nor New York, but some spot in the middle of the Atlantic that the two of you can call your own. Perhaps you swim more than you walk. You didn't invite Ben to this street knowing how much it would remind you of a very similar street you shared in London until you reach number 308: Brick Lane Curry House. So in addition to rewalking this street, which you've walked a couple of times in your life, seeking a cheap curry or for other reasons, you realize you're rewalking a street from London that you walked and rewalked for six, twelve, eighteen months of your life. You remind Ben of this, and he tells you about Constant's "New Babylon." About five years ago, Mark Wigley did a lecture on this topic. Constant was friends with Guy Debord and spent his life making models of cities that connected in these completely seemingly haphazard ways. It's almost like you take a derive and then chart that out and build a city based on that. Ben thinks that's just about right. But it would really fuck them up if they didn't have a place to drift, if they actually retired that and made it into a site where there's a total identity between drift and architecture. Does the grid become the drift, then, simply by being the antithesis? Or the Hausmann boulevard? He wonders what they would have done in that scenario. You can drift within a street, he supposes: from side-to-side. He finishes. You're standing at the westernmost part of the street, at Cooper Square: the end of your anti-dérive. "Vegetarians, vegans have better sex, better health," she sings, as she hands you a pamphlet. You think about Ben's words, which, of course, were not his words, but Ronnie's, from two days previous, as he accompanied you across 4th St, but which provide a particular comfort when matched with the image of Ben.



Your walk begins with a thak thak thak thak thak thak thak thak thak - the sound of a man packing his cigarettes over a garbage can on the corner - that like a metronome will set the tempo, will mark your pace. Most of the clothing stores on W 8th St seem like they would only get good business in the Halloween season. Neons, bold tones, skimpy frocks, fur, silver, sequin, glitter: these are the stones and beams and bricks of this fantasy row. Somewhere along here time, space, place collapse. Somewhere along here was the second site of SculptureCenter, then "The Clay Club." Dorothea Denslow started it in 1928 in her Brooklyn studio, and in 1930 it moved to a spot on W 8th. At that time, it was more of an educational hub, a place to learn about sculpture and art, and during and after the war - as many of the members fought in World War II - it was a resource for members of the armed forces and veterans: "Sculpture Canteen." You like the name Clay Club. It falls between sounding like the name of a to-do joint in a 1940s-era hotel and that of a venue devoted to the medium. You wonder if Diego Cortez were thinking of it when he founded The Mudd Club, and if the use of mud, as a medium, should only be taken metaphorically. The only time you saw the interior of The Mudd Club was in "Downtown 81," when Basquiat stopped by to witness some no-wave performance - Lizzie Mercier Descloux, you think. Backup singers with teased-out hair, a row of horn players. Mixed: black, white. This reminded you of the Hercules and Love Affair concert last spring. The new New York band doing old New York. The new SculptureCenter doing the old Clay Club. Medium provides the continuity. You've thought of "Downtown 81" a bit in the past few days, because you've been surprised at the fact that there are still some abandoned lots in far-east Alphabet City, and that you, like Basquiat, could be seen set against these backdrops by a camera, a pedestrian, a reader. "The worst they can say is no." The evolution of hip New York is a necrology of the previously hip. The Mudd Club is one example - Cortez is now a curator and art adviser. St. Mark's Place, which you're now approaching, might be the definitive example. Your first stop, the first grave, is Club 57, a late-70s, early 80s club. Home to, as club manager Ann Magnuson put it, wonderfully, "pointy-toed hipsters, girls in rockabilly petticoats, spandex pants, and thrift-store stiletto heels...suburban refugees who had run away from home to find a new family...who liked the things we liked - Devo, Duchamp, and William S. Burroughs - and (more important) hated the things we hated - disco, Diane von Fürstenberg, and The Waltons." "A Punk Do-It-Yourself aesthetic" back when the term wasn't just wielded by advertisers. Among the more memorable of the "envirotheques," or theme parties, was the "Model World of Glue Night," when people assembled to build airplane and monster models, burn them and sniff epoxy. Here it is, number 57: a well-battered awning says "St. Mark's Place Institute," "Unitas." A man with a trench and a moustache smokes outside. First Avenue. Yaffa Café, where kitsch comes to die. A preteen's gateway into the East Village. A gigantic wiener says, "Eat Here." Avenue A...Avenue B. 8th between B and C: 8BC. Who knows what it once was, on this block: the Ringlet hair salon? The charming and charmless walk-ups? The De Colores Community Yard Garden? Performance space, art gallery, nightclub, etc. etc. etc. Early 80s. Closed from improper zoning usage in 1985. A two-year existence starting Halloween of 1983: your year of birth. Always Halloween on 8th St. The Smithsonian has the club's archives - you should make an appointment - but yes, everyone went. 1,500 performances: Steve Buscemi, They Might Be Giants, Leisure Class, Charles Busch. Where is it? Where was it? "Limousines from Condé Nast lined up to see Karen Finley smear herself in excrement and chant obscenities, as others passed round real bloody Mary's - vodka mixed with blood drawn from their veins." Somehow this anecdote shines a little light on the AIDS epidemic. You can't find it here, but there's an accident at 337B E 8th St, a predictive indicator, unsolicited but helpful. On the second floor, in a square window, next to a Buddha, sits a replica of a W 52nd St. sign. W.H. Auden lived at 77 St. Mark's Place from 1953 to 1972, one year before his death. Strangely, the quote about New York you most remember him for has nothing to do with St. Mark's Place or his apartment there, which according to Arendt was a real shithole. His poem "September 1, 1939" begins: "I sit in one of the dives / on Fifty-Second Street / Uncertain and afraid / As the clever hopes expire/of a low dishonest decade."

It's 5 o'clock and you're at 9th and Avenue C when David calls you and tells you he's already arrived. You tell him to walk the first block without you, taking note of what he sees. So you wait. 9th and C is flanked, at catty-corners, by public parks: a face-off of junk art, barren trees, weeping willows. You move to the south side of the block, in anticipation of what you know will come, some streets west. You're early, you tell David as he arrives, and you're hardly wearing anything. Thank god you're a Vermonter, or you'd be worried. Yeah this is my use, David replies, though I am wearing some pretty hardcore socks, I have to say. So what did you see? What happened? Well, while waiting on the corner there, at least two guys asked me, "You OK man?" David laughs. I don't really know what that meant, but they definitely walked from twenty feet away to ask me that. There was a guy sleeping in a car, there was a nice-looking studio building. The buzzer said Wool; I think it was Christopher Wool's studio. There were some weird art-y looking platforms that had been spray-painted outside. Really? These are some photos, you tell David. When we get to these places, you might have to tell me what you see. Oh, look at that. That building doesn't exist anymore: the Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church. When's it from? 1939. There used to be women wearing white on the corner there who aren't there any more. Really, that's relevant..."I need trays!" What's happening here? It's for a TV show. Unusuals. Lends itself nicely, David observes. That could be the title of our walk. Does it show solidarity when the walkers are both unemployed, David asks. Does it? Well, that would throw credence behind the Situationist idea, that this is somehow opposed to labor, but your whole thing is that we're units, we're just transforming the terms of. Where are we, 406? Where is it? You thought it was on this side of the street. Are we allowed to go backwards, David asks. You're giving such good quotes, you tell him. Well, let's walk on then. You've nothing to say here? Well, you have something to say. It's obvious that there's a reason why it's preventing you from finding it again. You were in a dire state a month ago, and a friend recommended that you get spirit sticks and burn them in your studio, because the negativity was extending to the point that you dreaded sitting there alone and working. You're not usually one to go into the realm of magic, but in this case, as much as you were aware that whatever would come out of it would be of largely symbolic value, you nevertheless entertained the idea. So you found a place on the Internet called Enchantments, at 341 E 9th St, and gave it a visit. The shop was pungent - it smelled like 400 types of incense burning together, which is not a good smell. Just like how mixing every color makes brown, David observes. Pretty much. This woman there told you that what you needed was an uncrossing candle, so she asked your name and she asked your sign and she asked you to tell her about your situation, then she took out this gigantic knife and for a half-hour carved into the sides of this white candle. She carves your name, she carves your sign, and she carves this complex pattern of all these intercrossing lines. Then she lathers the whole thing with oil, presses glitter into all the cuts, burns sulphur on a spoon - this is when you started to feel like you were in a meth lab - drops it into the bottom of the candle glass, pours some oil in, pours some honey on your hand, makes you eat it, pours some honey into the bottom of the glass, runs the wick through and then gives you the candle. She tells you, think really hard about the subject of this candle and then burn it until it stops burning. It's now about half-burned. You think it's doing its job, and that the shop has closed up and moved somewhere else. It only exists for a person in a moment of need, you tell David, and then it disappears.

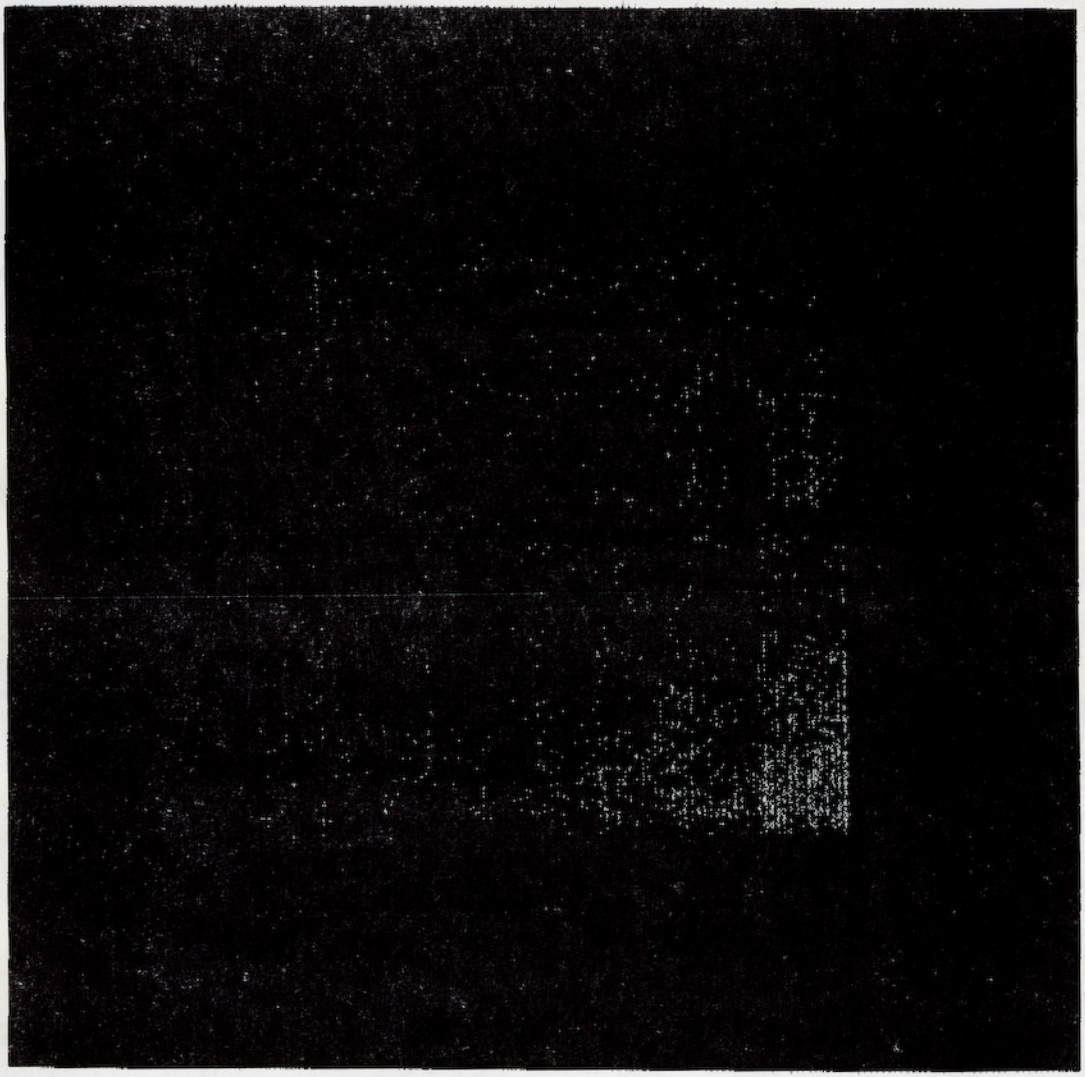
Jeremy didn't want me to get the dog, Ryan says. Why not? Because he was 22, Jeremy responds. I don't think someone needs to be tied down to a dog - or anything - when they're 22. It certainly is a lifestyle choice. "I'm sorry." The dog gets followed by another ten times its size, who looks intent on eating it. "That was so funny because you didn't see us behind you. He's so cute." This building has had these rat poison signs on it for two months, Ryan observes. I think it's just to keep out squatters. Alright Jeremy, we really have to show our worth on this block, Ryan says, as you approach Third Avenue and continue walking east. We know Diane Arbus lived here, Robert Gober, the SVA freshman dormitory, the very disgraced ministry of St. Mark's Church who is very cool and who has an AM radio show about conspiracy theories squats in one of these buildings (I'm not sure which). The Episcopal Church deifrocked him because he was really radical, which is terrible, because that's really what that church was about. The diocese didn't like it. This is our building, Jeremy indicates. Chloe Sevingy, Ryan continues, Robert Gober, Rudy Stingel, Paul Morrissey lived in this building on the corner. You can't believe everything you read online, Jeremy says, but they say that the Freemasons Society was founded on this block. Apparently they had their first meetings in the attic of our building, which we assume is our apartment. I haven't been able to triangulate the story with any other sources. John Norris of MTV. I have an interesting fact, Jeremy interjects. This is the only street - that's my fact! OK, you tell it. Ryan looks down Stuyvesant Street, which meets 10th Street at a slim, triangular apex. This is the only true east-west street in all New York. And this was where what's his name - Jeremy Blake and his wife - double suicide. This is where the Scientologists came to get them - the Scientologists murdered them. You're standing outside St. Mark's Church.

We're about to hit one of your images, you tell Derek. Is he supposed to be keeping track of this, Lindsay asks. We'll play it loose. That one's pretty unmemorable, so let's talk about the next one at First Avenue. What is that? It looks like an old paddy wagon. You run into Brian at the corner and tell him you're taking a walk. You're now an element of the walk, Brian. Can I follow, can I follow along? Of course. You tell Derek and Lindsay that Brian squats in the East Village. It's actually Allen Ginsberg and Peter Orlovsky's old place, Brian explains. It's been this derelict apartment inside a normal apartment building for some time. I have some tacit permission to be there, but Peter Orlovsky's in the process of being evicted. The rent-controlled situation for a senior citizen is hard to get through the courts, though, so for the past ten years it has just been occupied by different drug addicts and artists and squatters of sorts. Right now there's a piano in there that we're trying to remove, so that it doesn't get destroyed. Derek listens with his hands jammed into his pockets, his coffee cup held between his teeth. I think we're looking at this building here, he says. What can you tell us about this moment, he asks. You can't tell him anything about it. You were the one who told us about it, you explain. Well, then I believe we are standing two hundred feet from where a paddy wagon appears to have once stood. That is notable in itself.

Bookended by two ruins, you face the small skyline of Jersey City. Ahead of you is the remains of the Cunard Piers, a single plane of iron undergirding here standing in for a façade, here standing in for a building. Strange that this ruin, this monument to pastness, also stands in for a promise unfulfilled. This, after all, was the site where the Titanic was supposed to dock in 1912. Behind you, a monument as auto-ruin: Andre Balazs's new Standard Hotel, which had its soft opening on December 21st, but which is far from complete. This monstrous block of concrete and brick straddles the High Line like an ill-developed adolescent, with windows tinted green and curtains in white and yellow ochre. An auto-ruin that so unabashedly hearkens back to a moment of post-Bauhaus design that you hadn't been informed had come back on the scene as something to take seriously. Newly built, it already looks like it has not aged gracefully - already approaches, already sores the eye. The landlord of The Gansevoort Hotel, the original luxury hotel of the Meatpacking District self-credited with single-handedly - in the realm of luxury hoteliering, at least - transforming the region from gritty to chic, the landlord of this hotel was quoted as saying that with the arrival of The Standard Hotel, the locus of the Meatpacking District would officially shift a couple blocks west. Comparably speaking The Gansevoort is not much to look at. On its exterior: tinted green glass, aluminum or steel. In its rooms, dramatic sheets of backlit glass in muted colors take the place of conventional doors, the material connotation of transparency counterpoised with the luxury of opacity. When Richard Meier opened his Hitchcock Blondes, as one critic called them, and inaugurated New York's current California-style fervor for big glass, people speculated as to the lines of sight that could be established between the two buildings - Jay Z, Martha Stewart, Nicole Kidman, Calvin Klein eyeing one another from their respective apartments, the opaque world of celebrity here being made visible, in large part, only to itself. A glass sheet that takes the place of a door is also a structure that challenges the architecture of living - even temporary living - as much as its function may recall that of a door's. You walk east. 4th and 13th was where you met Ronnie the other day. A ruin that preserves, in fragmentary form, the promise of a luxury ship that never docked. Hotels designed as auto-ruins, their monumentality afforded by masquerading the past; their monumentality afforded by visibly hiding and discreetly showing their constituent parts. Monument as monumental assemblage. Units of luxury, luxuriously living units set on display: doorless, tinted, mute, but visible. You've wandered off course. You're standing outside a brick townhouse, 112 W. E.B. White lived here in 1925 as a young, unemployed writer. That's not why you're here. Years ago you read Dreiser's novel Sister Carrie, which Dreiser may or may not have written some streets south. The story follows a young, provincial Midwestern girl who moves to Chicago, in the late-1800s - a woman of sparse beauty, appealing naïveté, who moves in with her sister and her husband - proper working-class folk - and resigns herself to their lifestyle, works in a factory, goes without. Through a series of circumstances, Carrie is afforded what could be argued as a step up on the social and material ladder, and becomes a kept woman, a position that affords her a new apartment, some of the finer things. She makes mild headway into the Chicago theater scene, possessing, it would seem, an aptitude for imitation and emulation that could befit an actress as easily as it could a social climber. Two men then vie for her attention, and she chooses the seemingly more successful. After an embezzlement scam, she and he are off. He leaves his wife. They eventually relocate, as George and Carrie Wheeler, to this house at 112 W. 13th St to start a new life. At this point, surprisingly, Carrie's ascent no longer comes through the man to whom she attaches herself, but from her theater career - starting as a chorus girl and fast moving up. George becomes a scab in a Brooklyn streetcar operator's strike. Carrie loses respect - or justifies this as a convenient excuse to cut the fat. He commits suicide in a flophouse. She achieves immense success, and at novel's end, Dreiser twists the knife and shows Carrie, in an apartment of her dreams - here you imagine a luxury hotel - wont for no material good, and yet still wracked by emptiness. A bit moralistic, no? Fitting that Dreiser's other masterwork was called American Tragedy, and that he spent his career revealing the seams of the American myth of self-making. Moralizing, but not thereby inaccurate. This is a common arc wherever one finds it - in Britney Spears's song "Lucky"; in the journal you wrote from the perspective of a pop star, in which she, Kiki Thompson, concludes by saying that her life, for all intensive purposes, is circumscribed by the walls of a hotel room. That hotel room need not be specific. It may as well be as generic as possible. So though she tours, she travels, she jet-sets - never wandering, never drifting, always directed, always motivated along the paths of mass-consumption - she, in a sense, is never moving, because what she finds in every place is the same hotel room. A bit heavy-handed, but you were 16 when you wrote it. A friend who worked at the Maritime, the premier luxury hotel of the neighborhood prior to the Gansevoort's ascent, told you a story of Lindsay Lohan's stay, and of staffers being dispatched, at the actress's request, to keep her company. Perhaps the modular parts of The Standard Hotel's monumentality are also the modular parts of its predictive descent. The mastery of imitation and insincerity may be the condition for good theater and good art - as Broodthaers has said - but may also be the condition by which a potential monument becomes an already ruin.

So you logged some time on 14th St. as a bushy-tailed New Yorker, you remark to Thomas. Yeah, I guess I have. Well, I used to live in the East Village, so as a sort of practical measure, I would go to the Union Square subway stop. But it's funny because I kind of think a lot about this idea of dividing lines in a city - especially in a city like New York. You know, people used to talk about someone never going above 14th St. I think Jim Hoberman was once talking about how him or Jonas Mekas and Andrew Saris - how one would cover everything below 14th St., and the other would cover everything above 14th St. It's funny to hear that type of thing now, because the cultural geography of the city has evolved in such a way that that shit is totally meaningless. I can't think of anything like that now. What's that John Sayles film? Brother From Another Planet? Where they're on the A express, and he's like, "Watch me do a trick and make all the white people disappear" and they get off at the 125th St. stop on the subway, and there's the trick. It increasingly feels like a part of history. What you find interesting, you tell Thomas, is that as much as that is becoming the case, the way certain subways like the L adhere to the formation of the grid extends the historical connotation of a given street out into Brooklyn and Queens. So as much as the maps of Brooklyn and Queens don't adhere to Manhattan's, there's a psychological axis that's projected out across them. The current development of Long Island City, for example, largely began in 1989, when the Citicorp building was built along the same E/V subway lines as the Citigroup building on 53rd St.; and the demographics settling at the stops along the L very much coincide with those that historically populated the 14th St. axis from which the subway extends - I'm sorry to interrupt, Thomas interrupts, but I have to inquire about the exploding wand with hand and stone. It's not smoking right now - you know it smokes sometimes, you tell him. How did they get rid of Titled Arc, he asks. Was there a letter campaign? There must have been a big campaign, you remark, because it was a hazard! Robbers were going to hide behind it and shoot at you! I forgot about that. Weren't there also weird, imposing, depressing shadows it cast? People were walking to work, and it blocked out the sun? Oh, yeah. But it was mainly the criminal stuff. It was obviously a threatening-looking object, but also an object that could conceal a real threat. Oh, Thomas stops, I think that's it: the Eat, Drink, Surf Net Café - Copy, Fax, Print. You like the double awning, you comment - trying hard to attract two demographics. The font is telling, Thomas responds. If 14th St. is a dividing line, then the one on the left is really for the uptown clientele, where the more unremarkable awning is for the local schmoes. It wasn't the first time I had been to New York, he continues. I had just turned twenty and was working for this festival in Austin, which sent me to the New York Underground Film Festival, which was happening at Anthology Film Archives. I was staying at some random hotel on 17th St. - Hotel 17. Narrow rooms. I think it was the setting for an awful Woody Allen movie. I was so broke in college that I pawned my laptop, so I had to resort to going to this Internet café just to check my e-mail. I met my current boyfriend - this was practically five years ago - in the lobby of Anthology for the festival. I thought he was really cute, but he was a little - inscrutable? Yeah. I really have a hard time reading guys that I'm keen on. Anyways. This was the spring right after the summer of Friendster, so I remember going to this café and looking him up and seeing that he was, in fact, interested in dating men. So I was, like, aha! Things kind of evolved after the closing night film. It really was an extraordinary week. I think it was also the first anniversary of the massive antiwar protests on March 15th or something - "The World Says No" - so I guess that was technically one of our first dates. I feel so cliché. Well, you're a fag who quoted Ginsberg outside Stonewall, you tell Thomas. This is what New York walks are all about.

So if the center of 15th St is Anthroposophy, and the east end is Quakerdom, then what is the west end? I think we're just getting more heretical as we walk, Julia replies. The West Side Highway has been mentioned in as many hip-hop songs as I could possibly enumerate about the countless blowjob joys of this particular strip. It's true. And let's not forget about all of those Wojnarowicz-era pier boys, you add, or an earlier era of hustlers and creepy gang-types. I have a great quote from the Prohibition era by Benjamin De Casseres that I'm not going to read until the 19th. It's to the effect of: "I don't go much over to Eleventh Avenue, but that's where you go to see all those creepy guys in coats, hands in pockets, looking to make a quick buck or whatever." Hands in pockets, spinning Rubik's Cubes, Julia chants. Hands in pockets. You want to probably pass Passerby, she continues, but it would be nice to walk through the Chelsea Market so we could get warm - and a cupcake - and free samples. We're welcome to do that, you tell her, but if we do, we'll be in the zone of the ellipsis. Why? Just because it doesn't adhere to anything that you adhere to, you explain, but you will walk through the Chelsea Market because Julia wants to walk through the Chelsea Market. We could also talk about Passerby as if we are walking by it. I want to tell you, Julia says, that I spent a lot of time in the market when I was growing up. My Dad used to design the sets for Oz, and the whole prison he built up on the sixth floor of this building - what's going on? You can't hear much over the chatter, but the monitor shows an airplane half-sunk in the Hudson. It crashed right here, Julia says. We can walk out and see it. Let's go out and look at the river. I can't believe everyone's all right. How does that even happen, she asks: no major injuries? Talk about real-time meets real-place, you reflect. How strange. We deviate from the grid, we violate the rules - because if we had just gone out there and seen a plane in the Hudson River, she interrupts, we wouldn't have known no one was hurt, we would have freaked the fuck out. Of course. It's so strange to be so close to the event, learn about it through media outlets, and then be on the verge of witnessing it for ourselves. You can hear the sirens. What time is it? 4:53. I wonder where it is on the Hudson? There's so many police, Julia observes. There's the news truck that we were just fucking watching on the inside. There's the newscaster. We might run into my Dad, actually. He works at the 23rd St. pier. Right up here at the 23rd St. pier you can kind of get around and look at the water. Let's cross here. Wow. That was it. That was the condensation point for the press and the patrols. That must be where the passengers are being transported. Law & Order Way. That's where he is. Does he do sets of Law & Order now? Yeah. Huh. You stop. Well, I suppose there's some statement to be made about how we're given the goods on the broadcast and deprived of it in real life. Just a smokestack and the Jersey skyline.



So, pretty much my first sexual experience happened on the L train while I was riding to this station, Matthew begins. It was with my first serious girlfriend, Amelia, who lived in Stuyvesant Town. We were riding from our high school hangout, which was in Lincoln Center. I went to school in midtown Manhattan - where did you go? - I went to the professional performing arts high school, which was a working actor's public high school which lets kids go out on auditions. So I had made friends with her through high school kids. I went to pick her up there, and we took the L train back down here, and she pulled me. She was like, "Here. Let's ride between the cars," and we went in-between the cars and we made out on the way down from - I guess we were riding from the 1/9 on 14th all the way down to here. And it was like, Woah! What is happening? This is crazy! This girl is out of control! So from then on, there was a bodega on 13th St. and A, and we would go there. It was super sketchy in there. It was just a bodega that would sell to kids who were fourteen years old, and we would get tons of Kool-Aid beer. I have a lot of Kool-Aid beer memories in this Stuy-Town, Alphabet City area. Kool-Aid beer? Yeah, it's like St. Ives. It's this malt liquor that comes in neon shades: yellow, blue, pink. So. That's this area for me. There's also Beth Israel Hospital. Were you born there, you ask Matthew. No, but I have a lot of weird memories about that hospital. More sexual experiences? Does the morgue hold a soft-spot? No. Matthew laughs. What happened at Beth Israel? Oh, my mother was there for a while. She had a weird blood issue and was in Beth Israel for quite some time. I have all these weird memories of being there. It was around that same time when I was with that girl from Stuy-Town: Amelia. So I had this funny relationship to this area, because I was spending so much time - emotional time - with this girl that I was falling in love with, at the hospital, my family was here - and yet you live so far away from here, you comment. It's true. I live so far away from here.

So what are we coming up to, you ask Hana. Seventh Avenue. Look! This is the tinted glass street. Tinted glass may very well be the thesis of this street. This is the ugly nouveau residential street as well. Core Marketing Group. What is it like looking out from tinted glass, you wonder - especially when one window features several tints of glass, Hana adds. It's about dematerializing the edifice, right? A building is no longer a singular form. It must feel like you're in a chapel when you live in your apartment - all the stained glass. Or a Lincoln towncar en route to the airport, she observes. I have this late-80s, early-90s association with all this glass on buildings, she continues. It doesn't look modern to me. Then what is the look of the modern, you ask. Is it the torque? I don't know. In terms of residential apartment architecture, I'm never been drawn to newer buildings in New York, Hana reflects. You used to buy your cashmere scarves at that TJ Maxx. I love that Bed Bath & Beyond, Hana adds. This is an incredibly useful and incredibly annoying street. I find myself here often. What you really like about this area is the fact that the buildings are quite beautiful, the awnings create a festive air, and yet it's Big Box stores. Very functional. Very little attitude. A lot of people getting stuff done. Accidentally charming, you know? That's a new-ish building, Hana comments. The one with the big gold domes. I feel like when I was working in Chelsea, that building was just opening, and they were building it to emulate the older buildings in the neighborhood. Oh really? So it's a fake façade. Fake façade, Hana repeats, with those fake old domes, which are made of...plastic? They look like gigantic wrapped chocolate eggs. Now that is a beautiful building, she remarks, for Filene's! Accidentally beautiful. I know! That's what people forget about multinational capitalism: as generic as the interior and product may be, they've gotta find buildings where they find buildings - or build them from scratch. This used to house Siegel-Cooper, the biggest apartment store in the city, between 1896 and 1914, and the Co-Op used to house the wagon delivery service for the store. Siegel-Cooper was called - appropriately - "a City in Itself." I've never even heard of it, Hana says. The slogan was "meet me at the fountain," because there used to be a gigantic fountain in the foyer, and it now sits in the Forest Lawn Cemetery in California. Apparently you can find the spiritual grave of the Siegel-Cooper department store there. It's funny to think about the fact that this building, in which we find so much architectural grace, is based around a history of consumerism. By virtue of this having been a department store, it somehow doesn't merit having a plaque on its exterior. These sites of past consumerism fall through the cracks of historical consciousness: a store arises to meet the needs of an era and beyond that has no continuing reason for being known. You're coming upon City Bakery. Some say it has the best lunch spread in the city. They do say that, Hana replies. Nancy Meyers is a fan. You're not surprised. It has changed very little in the many years you've used it, you continue. Your mom's art studio was once around the corner on 17th St., so you'd come here for lunches when you were working there one summer - when you were insanely depressed and going through a bad breakup. This was the home-away-from-home. Hana stops and laughs. Will you describe what's happening here? Two beautiful, 50s-era fridges are sunning outside a shop, she explains. What would you call this - a Meyer lemon color? Yes. Oh, the insides are all new. Do you see those gift-boxes floating on the walls of City Bakery, you ask. Ghosts of gifts past. You think it's funny that the Siegel-Cooper fountain was moved to that cemetery, you continue, because it seems like these buildings are cemeteries to themselves and their histories. As much as those fridges are new and shiny, they're also gravestones. Fridge-corpses with new innards. But that's what we want as residents of New York who don't favor this new type of residential construction. We want the character-filled façade and the modern, internal amenities. Those fridges really are mighty metaphors, Hana observes. They are! Now this, New Andy's Deli: what used to be here behind the scaffolding was a department store that spanned the entire block. This was the other big department store of that era, called Arnold Constable. What's most surprising is that both department stores closed the exact same year: 1914. Why, Hana asks. That's the question. When you do these necrologies of New York bars and restaurants, they all disappear in the Prohibition era. The only reason you can think of in this case is World War I. In any event, there's a fact about Arnold Constable that's relevant to your walk. Its customers were the Carnegies, the Rockefellers, the Morgans - it was pretty upscale - and it offered "everything from cradle to grave." That was its slogan. What a macabre strip. Floating gift-boxes and floating sneakers in the window of Paragon: there's a lot of Surrealist content on this street. For lack of owner or for lack of use, these objects have taken on lives of their own. The other thing that creeps you out, above the Fiehs Eddy sign, is the scaffolding covering for that building. There's something about

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I love that Bed Bath & Beyond, Hana adds. This is an incredibly useful and incredibly annoying street. I find myself here often. What you really like about this area is the fact that the buildings are quite beautiful, the awnings create a festive air, and yet it's Big Box stores. Very functional. Very little attitude. A lot of people getting stuff done. Accidentally charming, you know? That's a new-ish building, Hana comments. The one with the big gold domes. I feel like when I was working in Chelsea, that building was just opening, and they were building it to emulate the older buildings in the neighborhood. Oh really? So it's a fake façade. Fake façade, Hana repeats, with those fake old domes, which are made of...plastic? They look like gigantic wrapped chocolate eggs. Now that is a beautiful building, she remarks, for Filene's! Accidentally beautiful. I know! That's what people forget about multinational capitalism: as generic as the interior and product may be, they've gotta find buildings where they find buildings - or build them from scratch. This used to house Siegel-Cooper, the biggest apartment store in the city, between 1896 and 1914, and the Co-Op used to house the wagon delivery service for the store. Siegel-Cooper was called - appropriately - "a City in Itself." I've never even heard of it, Hana says. The slogan was "meet me at the fountain," because there used to be a gigantic fountain in the foyer, and it now sits in the Forest Lawn Cemetery in California. Apparently you can find the spiritual grave of the Siegel-Cooper department store there. It's funny to think about the fact that this building, in which we find so much architectural grace, is based around a history of consumerism. By virtue of this having been a department store, it somehow doesn't merit having a plaque on its exterior. These sites of past consumerism fall through the cracks of historical consciousness: a store arises to meet the needs of an era and beyond that has no continuing reason for being known. You're coming upon City Bakery. Some say it has the best lunch spread in the city. They do say that, Hana replies. Nancy Meyers is a fan. You're not surprised. It has changed very little in the many years you've used it, you continue. Your mom's art studio was once around the corner on 17th St., so you'd come here for lunches when you were working there one summer - when you were insanely depressed and going through a bad breakup. This was the home-away-from-home. Hana stops and laughs. Will you describe what's happening here? Two beautiful, 50s-era fridges are sunning outside a shop, she explains. What would you call this - a Meyer lemon color? Yes. Oh, the insides are all new. Do you see those gift-boxes floating on the walls of City Bakery, you ask. Ghosts of gifts past. You think it's funny that the Siegel-Cooper fountain was moved to that cemetery, you continue, because it seems like these buildings are cemeteries to themselves and their histories. As much as those fridges are new and shiny, they're also gravestones. Fridge-corpses with new innards. But that's what we want as residents of New York who don't favor this new type of residential construction. We want the character-filled façade and the modern, internal amenities. Those fridges really are mighty metaphors, Hana observes. They are! Now this, New Andy's Deli: what used to be here behind the scaffolding was a department store that spanned the entire block. This was the other big department store of that era, called Arnold Constable. What's most surprising is that both department stores closed the exact same year: 1914. Why, Hana asks. That's the question. When you do these necrologies of New York bars and restaurants, they all disappear in the Prohibition era. The only reason you can think of in this case is World War I. In any event, there's a fact about Arnold Constable that's relevant to your walk. Its customers were the Carnegies, the Rockefellers, the Morgans - it was pretty upscale - and it offered "everything from cradle to grave." That was its slogan. What a macabre strip. Floating gift-boxes and floating sneakers in the window of Paragon: there's a lot of Surrealist content on this street. For lack of owner or for lack of use, these objects have taken on lives of their own. The other thing that creeps you out, above the Fishs Eddy sign, is the scaffolding covering for that building. There's something about it that's incredibly erotic. Normally you get the full cover and can't really see through, but there's something about the black sheath - it's very sexy. It is. It makes you uncomfortable. You're fine with skyscrapers and cocks, but you don't want to think of that building - slowly revealing itself to you, Hana finishes. This is a building-as-striptease. Is that painted copper I see in there? Show me more. Show me more!

Cranes like big brontosaurus necks. One, two, three. Going up and down. The familiars of Jean Nouvel, Annabelle Selldorf, Cary Tamarkin. This single block of 19th St., abutting Eleventh Avenue, was this year named "Block of the Year" by curbed.com - the most condensed hub of starchitecture currently manifesting in the city. Feats of architectural excess realized with the aid of Jurassic technology. Snow falling along fifteen vectors. An iceberg juts out from one corner, as if to upend a ship. Nearly a century ago, or some walks past, such a ship may have moored on this avenue only to find itself upended by an iceberg of the future. Only a few days ago, or a few walks past, a plane upended itself in the waters just west of here. The avenue was then awash with the blinking red flotilla of police lights. Uri arrives. Thanks for doing this, he says. Well, you do it every day. I thought I should get ready for this, he continues, so I looked around a bit and then I decided that maybe I should let this go. I like 19th St. because it goes in a straight line across and is really narrow, so it's nice to walk on. It seemed like a good choice. This is the starchitect's node, you explain to Uri. You were just talking about it before he came. This is quite interesting, isn't it, you remark, pointing at the fencing surrounding a construction site - it's not plywood, but bamboo. This must be the building that Shigeru Ban is building. He's a Japanese architect who uses a lot of wood. He also builds structures made out of Portakabins. What an architect! To insist not only about how the building looks but how the construction site looks. It supports the cranes-as-dinosaurs: he's creating a naturalistic setting. Look how the bamboo covers the barbed wire, Uri notes. It's like a stage set. This is a bit of a tangent, you say, but Jonathan Kozol wrote a book, "Amazing Grace," about Mott Haven, a neighborhood in the Bronx. He said that because it's such a depressed area, public officials once painted the sides of some of the buildings that faced the highways - they painted on windows with nice displays of flowers - so that to a commuter coming in from Connecticut, it looked like a nicer neighborhood than it was. There's a part when you just go out of Jerusalem, Uri says. You have to go through some Arab villages. Basically there are a few ways to go to Tel Aviv. I haven't been there in years, but there's the main road which you can go through and it's pretty safe, but everybody commutes there and there's always a lot of traffic. It's supposed to take twenty minutes, but normally it takes an hour-and-a-half. So then there's another road you can take. Sometimes people throw stones there, so not everybody takes it. At one point they built a separation wall. It's not a big separation wall, but a mini one. It's a very narrow piece of road between both sides of the wall, so all across they built arches, and inside the arches it's painted with a horizon line and grass and sunlight. So it's repetitive. Grass, grass, grass, grass, grass, grass, grass, grass: all painted through the arches. You come at the wrong time of day, you comment, and the light would be entirely wrong. Sometimes there would be fires behind, Uri continues, so there would be smoke behind the wall and grass and sunlight in front of it. That's very strange.

Inquires from News Media

• Contact (818)-244-8080 Mark Good

Public Relations Policy

We live in a time when media – newspapers, radio, television and Internet – touch us more than ever before. Reporters may approach any of us at any time for a statement or comment that presents the Public Storage point of view. Therefore, it is vital that any information provided agrees with company policy and philosophy.

To avoid potentially unflattering and even embarrassing press reports about your property or the company, Public Storage has established a public relations policy that all employees must know and follow.

- Refer all media calls (newspapers, radio, magazines, TV stations, etc.) to Chief Operating Officer (COO) in the Corporate Office.
    - No matter how trivial the question or how small the station or publication, politely refer all inquiries to the COO.
    - If the reporter is persistent, simply reply, "I have no comment." Repeat again that the COO's office will help him/her.
    - Be prepared to describe to someone in the COO's office what questions are being asked, the reporter's full name, and the organization that he or she represents. Explain other facts that you believe are relevant to the situation.
    - Inform your District and Regional Manager of the situation.
- If a media representative comes to your property unannounced and insists on a story immediately, politely inform him or her of our company policy and try to contact the COOs office. Be courteous at all times to any media representative, but be firm and do not answer his/her questions.
- If a situation is developing at your property that may erupt into publicity, contact your District Manager as soon as possible. This includes criminal activity or other volatile situations.
- If a catastrophe occurs that might affect the building (e.g., earthquake, major fire, flood, etc.), contact your District Manager before the press arrives on the scene.
- Refer all requests to shoot a movie, commercial, video etc., to the Marketing Department in the Corporate Office.
- Refer all calls related to property appraisal, tax assessments, etc. to your District or Regional Manager. Ask for the person's name, position, company or organization, and phone number. Tell him or her that your District or Regional Manager will call him/her back.
- If you receive calls or in-person guests who claim to be friends of the Corporate Office management team, be skeptical! If someone from the Corporate Office is sending out a friend or business associate for a special reason, you will be informed first. In any event, be pleasant and courteous but do not provide any information that you would not give to a regular customer. Refer him/her to your District or Regional Manager for more specific information.
- Treat investors or lending institution representatives as outlined in the step above. If investors or representatives request information that you would ordinarily not release to a customer, find out what information they want, ask them to wait, and contact your District or Regional Manager. If your District or Regional Manager is unavailable, take the visitor's name and phone number and tell him or her you will have your District or Regional Manager call back.
- Information regarding occupancy, vacancy rates, or rent increases is absolutely confidential. Treat any information you would not discuss during a typical customer presentation and space rental as confidential.
- When in doubt, do not divulge any information. Be courteous and friendly at all times.

If you have any questions regarding this policy, contact your District or Regional Manager.

I want you to open your right palm and make a good strong wish. Don't tell me your wish. And when you're ready I'll read for you. If you prefer it to be private, he can wait for you outside, and if you don't care, I don't care. No, I don't mind him being in here, Summer says. It's up to you. I would hate to send anyone out into the cold. I want you to open your right palm and make a good strong wish. Don't tell me your wish. And whenever you're ready I will read for you. Ok? Whatever I'm going to see, good or bad, I'm not going to hold back from you, and if you have a question, please stop me. As I'm reading the lines on your hand, I'm picking up the energy from your eyes and I'm looking at you. You yourself you're a very old soul - that's what these lines are right here - but within this life you've done the most soul-searching and seeking, not for love, for fame, or for fortune: looking more for closure, for harmony and peace. All your life you've been the first to give and the last to receive and all your life you've been a people-pleaser, but now at this point you're moving into all different areas, looking for more than just financial comfort, but if you can bring that more creative side out of you, because all your life you've been pushing in the wrong area, working for the paycheck and not the passion. This is the year to get more vocal about expressing yourself, because many financial opportunities are growing. You have money coming in the month of August. It should be invested into something, but beware of partnership. You are not a person to love often. When you love, you really love and you give your whole heart and soul. One that you love and trusted, he devastated you and disappointed you tremendously. This is not the time to fear or doubt love, because it is a very very good year. Your soul mate, your true love is searching all about you, looking to give the passion. Fear not this year. You've got two years of hard work and love, and after that I see marriage, love, commitment, fulfillment and also the possibility of two children in your future. A change in your living environment could be amazing for you at this point. You're not feeling so comfortable in your surroundings and the people that you're with. The change right now would be really good for you to open your heart, mind and soul. I also see a journey to California. Are you planning that journey? Summer hesitates. I was just talking about possibly taking a trip to California, she says. Your journey is a very positive journey and have no fear of that journey. There's actually an opportunity of finance coming from there. Beware of a past relationship coming into your present. Nothing good will come from a previous relationship - even pregnancy. I would be extremely cautious of that. Change in career is something right now that you should take the risk with. You have many jealous negative colleagues and people around you, but nobody is giving you the opportunity to grow. You want to work with people and make change, so go out there and do a more creative. Your character, your personality is saying it's a selfish, stubborn, demanding year. You have been nurturing and looking more for closure, for harmony and peace. All your life you've been the first to give and the last to receive and all your life you've been a people-pleaser, but now at this point you're moving into all different areas, looking for more than just financial comfort, but if you can bring that more creative side out of you, because all your life you've been pushing in the wrong area, working for the paycheck and not the passion. This is the year to get more vocal about expressing yourself, because many financial opportunities are growing. You have money coming in the month of August. It should be invested into something, but beware of partnership. 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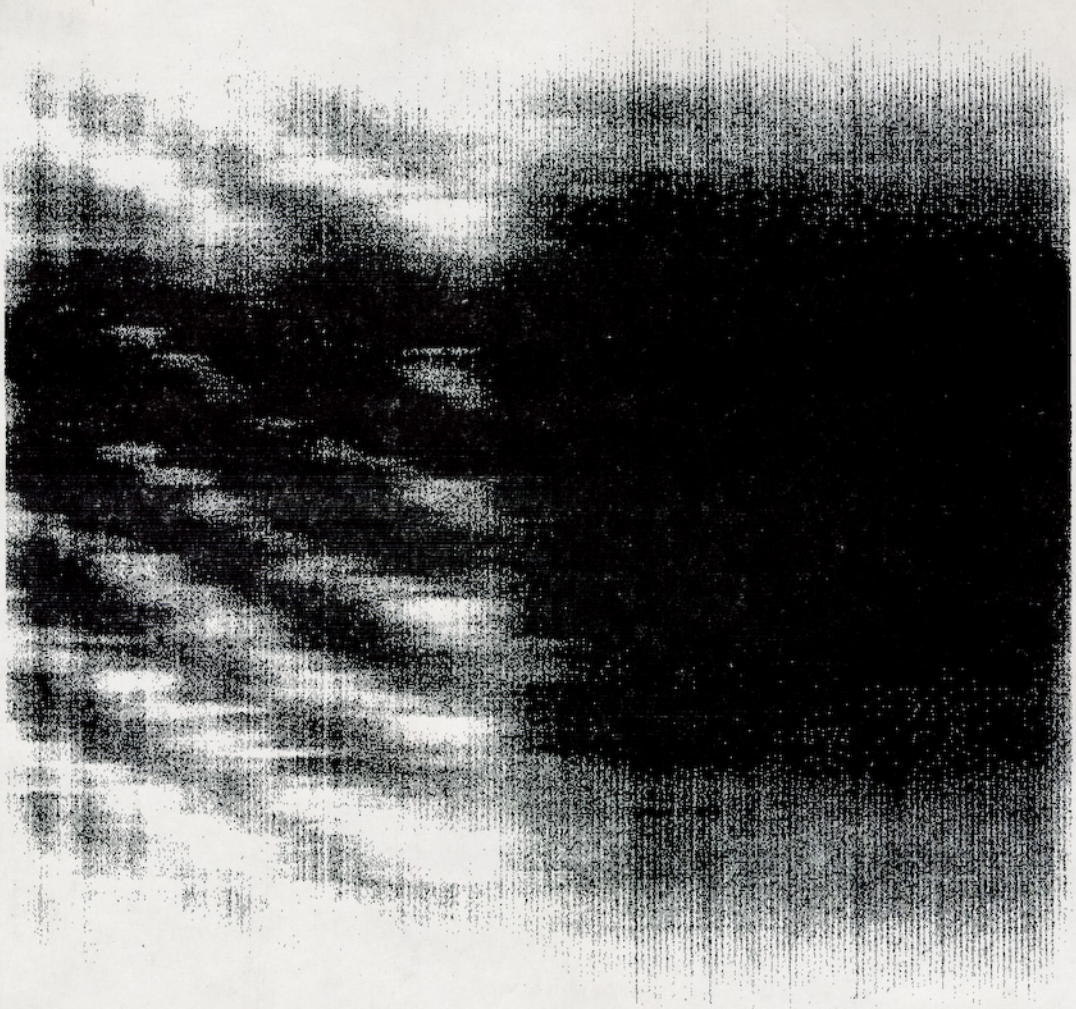
Joshua has lived on 21st between Ninth and Tenth since 1986. As you walk, he points at plaques and buildings and recounts histories. You confess you didn't know those histories. He exclaims, "She knows nothing!"

This is considered one of the only successful examples of Modernist church design. Huh, Josh remarks. Let's just quickly go over and look at the plaque. There's that man: Kosciuszko. He has a bridge named after him in Greenpoint, you tell Josh. There's a street named after him near me too, Josh says. So this was the former site of the estate of Horatio Gates, who won the battle of Saratoga. You think his mansion was named Rose Hill, so technically this area is called Rose Hill. You were supposed to spend a summer visiting Modernist churches in France - this was like ten years ago or something - because Corbusier built one. I just use these as earmuffs, Josh explains, taking off his headphones. I don't have anything on them. Do you find this to be one of the more successful examples of Modernist church design, you ask Josh. I don't really like churches, he responds, but I've been interested in going to Mark Rothko's chapel. Have you ever been to Rolf's German restaurant, you ask. No. I've always wanted to go, though. It's pretty amazing. A friend of yours has his birthday there every year. You hazard to say...(a boy wearing headphones walks by vigorously playing the drums with his hands). That boys was really hitting the drums, wasn't he? You want to know what he's listening to. Is it a protracted, epileptic fit, a really good drum solo or a whole lotta cold? Somebody told me - it's not a real statistic - but I really believe in it, Josh says: probably three out of every ten New Yorkers are crazy. You laugh. What's the parameter for craziness? You would say that craziness would have a particular scale in New York. I feel like it had to do with the crosstown bus, Josh responds. That definitely sounds like a fact that you'd readily believe. It's probably completely made up for sure, Josh continues, but I take great comfort in it. Yep. The great stabilizer. That's what you liked about when hands-free cell phone mics came into vogue. People just walked around with the wire dangling. From a distance it looked like well-heeled people were talking to themselves. You appreciate the fact that it added to your daily anxiety, when walking around on the street, because you would see people talking to themselves and wouldn't immediately assume that they were talking on a hands-free mic. You just assumed that they were crazies who happened to be well-dressed. Well just wait, Josh says, because where all this technology is going is Augmented Reality: AR, as opposed to VR. What you'll have is a pair of glasses - sunglasses - and the frame is packed with a computer, essentially. It will just pop stuff in. The glasses will be your computer. And people will be interacting with it with their hands and their eyes and watching it while they walk around and interacting with things that other people can't see, so it will seem like everyone has Tourettes or MPPD. Inadvertent Public Tourettes, you remark. The Tourettes Awareness Organization has to jump on this. It's communication, Josh continues: radio to TV to hands-free cell phone to computer eyeglasses. You really appreciate the advent of the hands free, you comment, because it allows you to walk around alone, and people can assume that you're either crazy or accidentally crazy. You think it's relevant, you tell Josh, that he is talking about Augmented Reality while walking around using headphones as earmuffs. It's like you're preparing for it: with the sunglasses and the headphones, and me with my wires. You're thinking of POV shots from the perspective of The Terminator and The Predator. AR is going to be like that, right? It's going to be a full interface? I guess so, Josh replies. Well, in that case, you just don't want your glasses to target certain people and give you directives like "Terminate." As long as that doesn't happen, you're fine with it.

If you could transport yourself to the corner of Eighth Avenue and 23rd in 1933, this is what you'd see: Wallace Beery was starring in "Chinatown Nights," and a night at the Cornish Arms Hotel cost a buck fifty. If you could transport yourself to the corner of Eighth Avenue and 23rd in 2009, this is what you'd see: tall men in black hats and slim glasses, staring suspiciously; lines massing outside the Clearview Chelsea, one of the first modern cinemas in Manhattan; a New York Sports Club; a man with a jaunty step; the modern taking another turn on this crowded strip. Here it is - this modern Chelsea. Perhaps 23rd St., more than any other, elucidates a particular contradiction of modernity, as taken up one generation after another, for this street's modernity is just a dressing-up of the old. Even its namesake, originally that of Captain Thomas Clarke's estate, derives from an area of London: an old soldiers' home, once-swinging place, and now-bourgie ghetto. Modernity would make The Chelsea Hotel something fundamentally other than what its seedy history purports it to be. You'd like to believe that you've contributed to the legacy of the hotel, not because you killed your girlfriend there, or have written anything of worth, or put some illicit substance into your body. You've seen boys, true - you've seen seemingly prepubescent boys emerge, in towels, from an apartment adjacent to one housing an art world party and which apparently housed the artist for whom the party was being thrown. True, you've taken your clothes off in a crowded room, an unorgiastic congregation in the name of Ivy League tradition at the appeasement of a douche-y photographer. That apartment had apparently once been Viva's? Michel Auder's daughter, Alex, had this past year unsuccessfully attempted to leverage the story of her Chelsea Hotel upbringing into a book deal. You knew the girl - an agent - who peddled the book around. Why was no one interested? A noted undertaker opened an institution called the Funeral Church across from The Chelsea Hotel in 1898. Why is no one interested? A man fasted for forty-five days in that building, in 1890. A man fasted for forty-five days; a woman reclines, in a bikini, across three of its stories; and you can now send mail here, addressed to your favorite gay porn stars. The body of the building is here an image of the body, spectacular in suppleness and decay alike. You had always thought that flânerie arose in response to Hausmannization: the sanctification of the old medieval streets of that giant shell of a city. But you recently realized - how stupid of you not to before - that flânerie was built for the arcade, and that that motherfucking turtle - whether it appear studded with jewels or left bare to show the opulence of its extrinsic structure - was chosen as a pet, as a walking partner, a companion because it set the pace of the flâneur. Isolation within a crowd of isolated walkers was not enough to provoke the melancholic register of the flâneur. A turtle sets the pace. In slowness, one finally realizes what it is to be out-of-place. These papers are your turtle. You don't look as you walk, except backwards, downwards: a grid laid out in 8 ½" x 11". The arcade was straight but filled with digressions. Flânerie transformed, went underground, changed terms, gained new allies, new enemies when the boulevards were complete, because the boulevards were arcades projected onto the screen of the city. The stroll may thereafter be no less of a stroll, but the spatial confinement that was the condition of its theatricality fundamentally transforms. And so the flâneur transforms. You had hoped to spend all of these walks not saying that word once, not referencing that type, but the sheer compression of people on this street, your sheer textual slowness makes it impossible not to speak. So as you approach a site where you can, at best, speak through borrowed words, you approach it as a borrowed character, a relic, a redundancy, a superfluity. You're not yourself today. Even the dogs walk faster than you. Standing at the slim, triangular apex, where an Indian footpath meets the future, you announce yourself to the winds, not in so heavy-handed a fashion as the dramatic look of this vertex might invite, but because those borrowed voices, soon to manifest, speak of this as the point-zero of a moment of modernity and as a very windy place. "It was said that someone standing long enough on Fifth Avenue and 23 Street might meet everybody in the world. The scene was Parisian in its kaleidoscopic aspect." "Where skirts never cease from trouble and the Old Adam never is at rest. On a windy day it is the bald-headed row in the vaudeville show of New York life." "There are horizons on these corners, and those who do business there have them in their eyes." "The fly-eye of New York; spin it on a pivot and you would see the whole world." Those freakish, Flatiron winds! A single gust, borne at the root of an island and the conception of an idea, funnels itself, pneumatically, along the verticular avenues of the grid, and two such tubes, two windpipes, gust lungs here collide with libidinous intent. Broadway's deviance lays the ground for a fish-eyeful. There are too many architectures to discuss, too many histories to shore up. Oh for a turtle. Oh for a shake. Madison Square Park is filled with so many sites of past and potential rest. Would that this pile of folded text become a bronze book, like the once hiding Hans Christian Andersen's hard-on near the Central Park boat pond. Could that you sit and rest in that book, as you did as a child. Would that that oversize hand of Lady Liberty still stand erect, torch blazing and all, in the center of this park, as New York scrambled to pay for the pedestal for France's gift. You'd wrap your legs around the wrist and shimmy your way up, making a bed at the curl where a finger nearly touches the flame.

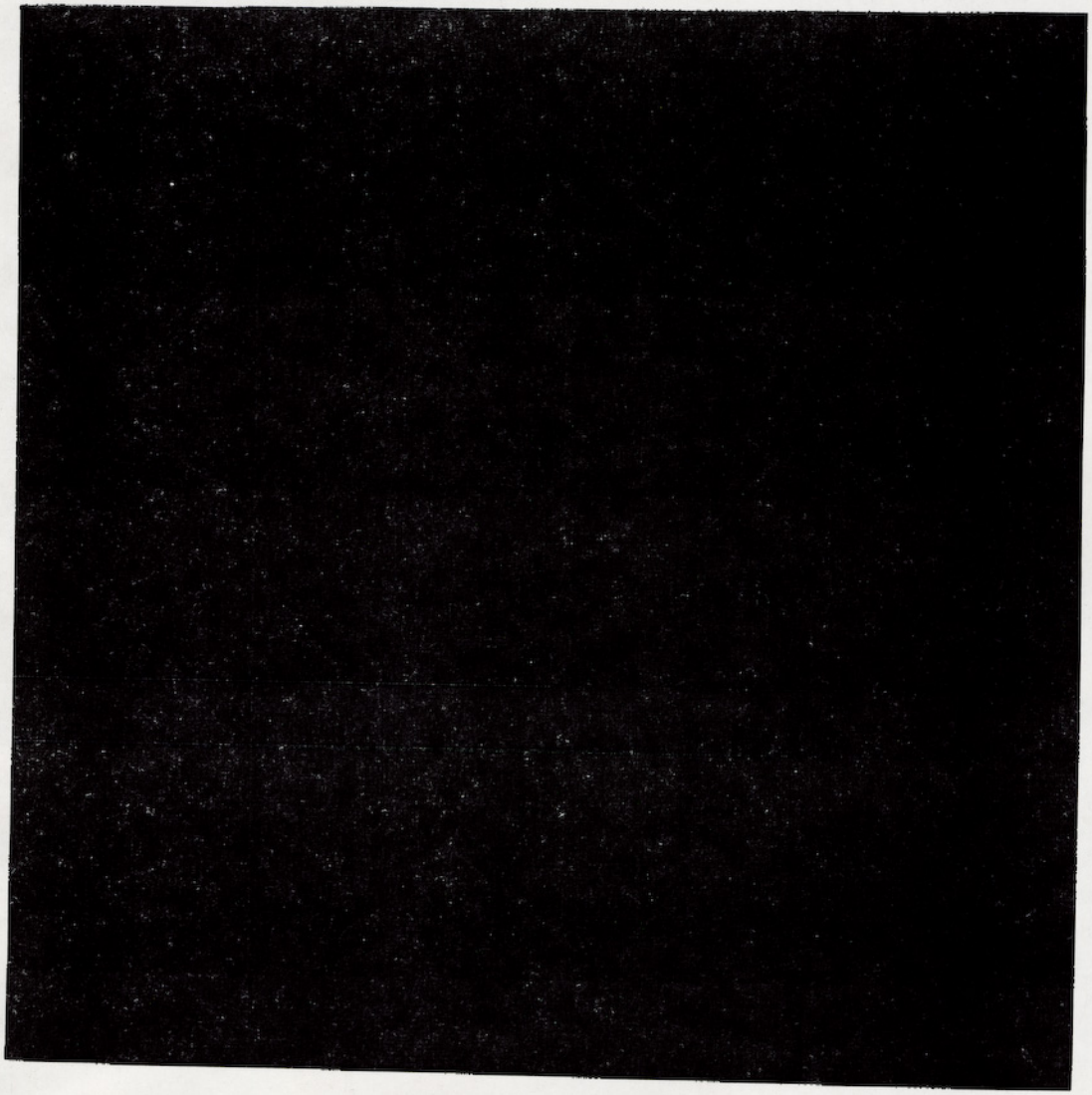


Ellen follows you downstairs. As she walks, she angles her shoulders further and further forwards until she is practically kneeling beside it. You watch her perform this strange, reverse-evolutionary ritual and remember a story she told you the evening before - about her recent departure from New York, and how over her first few months in L.A., she developed lower back pain of such crippling magnitude that she now goes to the gym a number of times a week just to walk on the treadmill. She also quickly forgot about this city's temperamental winter weather, which perhaps accounts for why you're now walking in the manner of, and why you restrain from talking about the 1913 Armory Show, the "Slaughter on Eighth Avenue," "Gentleman Joe"...

Tell me. You ready, Olivia asks. Ok. I wrote some of it down. So first, I was standing by the water for about ten minutes. I saw two helicopters land, and then what looked like this upside-down seat float by. This guy came over and he was like, "Is that yours?" and I said, No, but what do you think it is? Do you think it's a seat from the airplane that crashed? Just to get a little crack out of him I suggested we collect it and sell it on eBay, and he looked at me funny and walked away. That was the highlight. The tide was going out at that point. Let me see. I wrote it all down. I saw a lot of bearded men in boots - longshoremen or art handlers? Art handlers for sure. I stepped on ketchup packets. Ketchup was covering the whole sidewalk. How did you know the tide was going out, you ask Olivia. Oh, because I sail. I sail on the Hudson a lot. Do you sail from The Rockaways? Well, in the summers I commute by boat, but there's a ferry that takes me. After I tell you everything I saw until we met, I'll tell you a story. There was a semi-truck called "Bear" with painted flames on it. I saw two men on the same block with camouflage and I just witnessed a huge fight between three cops and a man. Did the camouflage people know one another? No, no, no, Olivia replies. It was within three minutes on the same block: two men in camo. Wow. Welcome to Chelsea. They were different kinds of camo: one was Desert Storm, and the other was Vietnam. You wish that she had sailed over today, you say. What a perfect way to begin the walk: "You meet Olivia at the river. She pulls up and moors her skiff." She laughs. So, tell that story. I learned to sail just two years ago, Olivia begins. I took classes at a marina in New Jersey, because it's cheaper there, and a guy came up during the class and was like, "I'm always looking for first mates if anyone's looking to sail," so I called him the next day and was like, "I want to sail." So we went out on his boat and we developed this relationship, and I was able to bring friends with me all the time. One October - October 2008 - I went out there with my creative director who's from France - she's in her forties - another guy from France who sails with us a lot, the Captain - Andrew - and this couple who were like Mr. and Mrs. Howell from Gilligan's Island. They pulled up to the marina with a giant suitcase of extra clothing just in case. How many days were you going out for? Just one day, Olivia replies. So it's a Sunday in October, and we somehow all get up enough courage to go swimming. We go all the way out to the Hudson, through the New York Harbor, into the Atlantic. And when we swam we could see nothing around us. It was beautiful. We had a good time, we were coming back, we were breaking open bottles of wine. The wind had picked up and we were full sail - we had three sails going - and they had me at the helm, which means that I'm controlling the tiller. So we're going by the Statue of Liberty, and the Captain sets my course and then goes down to open some wine. I'm up there and all of a sudden I feel this BOOMBOOM, like I had run over something, and I look at the depth of water and I'm in three feet of water. The Captain's like, "Holy shit. Tack! Everybody tack!" So we had to wait for three hands on deck to move the sails over, and I turn the boat and the next thing I know, we are just sitting on the bottom of the Hudson. The tide is going out, and all of a sudden the boat starts rocking violently. The boat is completely vertical. So we wedged ourselves between the railings. Rescue helicopters were coming. They offered to lift us out of the boat, and we decided to stick with it, because we knew when the next high tide was, and theoretically at the next high tide we would be able to float. We didn't want to leave the boat because of the salvage laws. We all stuck with it. Thank god Mr. and Mrs. Howell brought the suitcase of extra clothing, because we're all utilizing it by now. And thank god Mrs. Howell brought enough food to feed us for five years, because that came in handy. Anyways. The next morning we wake up at five when high tide was, and we all had to get into the rescue boats to get weight off the boat, two people stay in the boat, we put the anchor down and try to thrust ourselves out of there by pulling and using the anchor as leverage. Tension was really high at this point. Me and Mrs. Howell get in a blowout argument. She's only eight years older than me, but was treating me like a small child. Also she kind of was in panic mode for the entire ordeal. So when some rescuers came that afternoon, we got Mrs. Howell of the boat. We had to get rid of her. This is the Monday now, and of course tourists are flocking to the Statue of Liberty, and when we have to pee at low tide, we just have to pee off the boat. So somewhere, I'm sure that there are people who have pictures of me peeing off the side of the boat. Big in Japan, you speculate. You're sure you can get them at a vending machine. And they're probably selling used underwear that they claim was mine, Olivia adds. "Lady Liberty's illegitimate child!" you shout with your best showman voice. We wait it out for two high tides, and the third high tide the boat just starts spinning and we're able to get out. You hope it didn't traumatize her out of wanting to sail, you remark. Oh no. The next weekend I went out and bought my own boat. As she says this, you realize you're passing Madison Square Park. How close were you to the statue, you ask? Probably thirty feet. You want to know something funny, you say. When the French gave Lady Liberty to America, it was on the condition that America would fabricate the pedestal that the statue stands on, but America didn't have the money, so for a handful of years the hand of Lady Liberty and her torch just stood in this park without the rest of it. Just a hand holding a torch coming out of Madison Square Park. We're probably thirty feet from where it once stood.

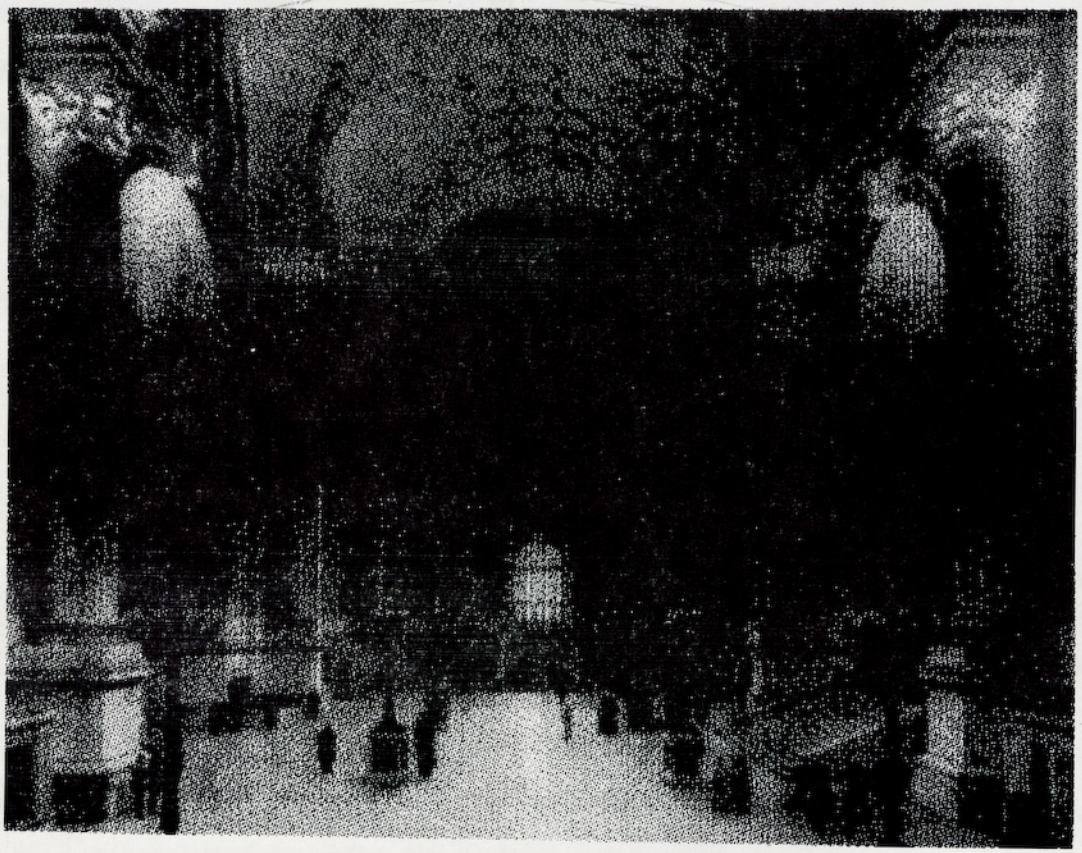
Paris's triumphal way cuts through the city and beyond, cuts through time, populated, along its path, by evolving ideas of empire. The axis began, in the 17th Century, when the Champs-Elysées extended from the Tuileries Gardens, from the palace that was since torn down; the axis continued with a temporary conclusion, at the end of the Champs-Elysées, in the guise of the Arc de Triomphe; the axis continued, in the opposite direction, to an equestrian statue of Louis XIV that I.M. Pei placed adjacent to his Pyramide du Louvre. This closed circuit of militaristic monument opens, still further west, at La Défense, a site technically beyond the boundaries of the city, originally named for a statue commemorating the defense of Paris in the Franco-Prussian War that has since become one of the larger business districts in the city and which now also houses La Grande Arche de la Fraternité, which came into being in 1990 under the purview of Mitterand. Indicative of a shifting conception of empire, it was a monument to nothing other than humanism. If you stand on the top of La Grande Arche, you can position yourself along this axis: a line of two arches and sundry sights and objects beyond. If you turn, there's an accidental axis aligning your body, atop the arch, with the Eiffel Tower and the lone, city-bound skyscraper, Montparnasse. If you stood between 1899 and 1901 along Fifth Avenue, you could find yourself along the axis of two very different arches: The Washington Square Arch, built in 1889 to resemble the Arc de Triomphe in celebration of the centennial of Washington's inauguration as president, originally built in wood and plaster but so beloved that architect Stanford White was commissioned to build a permanent marble replica; and the Dewey Arch, modeled after the Arch of Titus in Rome, which stood in Madison Square Park for just two years in honor of Admiral George Dewey, victorious in the battle of Manila Bay, 1898. That arch was made of staff, a voguish temporary material of the time, topped with sculptures, four horses drawing a ship, illuminated with electric light bulbs. After the parade for which the arch was built, some attempts were made to refashion it in more durable, permanent materials, but money could not be raised. For two years, if you stood in a certain position, along Fifth Avenue, you could find yourself on the axis of the Arch of Titus and the Arc de Triomphe, a singularly New York axis that, in a fashion that was characteristic of so much of the city's architecture and design of the time, comprised copies of the past, monuments of other empires appropriated in the name of its own cosmopolitan project. If you were to stand at 27th and Fifth, between 1899 and 1901 and look down towards Washington Square Park, you may very well have been able to see both arches. And if you were to now stand at 27th and Fifth, just as would occur on top of La Grande Arche, you could turn to one side and produce an incidental axis, able to be seen only in the mind's eye, or by walking the entire street, but definitively present. The first, the Starrett-Lehigh building, on Twelfth Avenue and 27th St, a landmark of modern architecture, built in 1931. Nine miles of strip windows, nineteen stories, former warehouse, factories, now lofts. A huge, imposing building facing gallery row. Halfway across 27th St is the squat, austere Fashion Institute of Technology: nine buildings, two of which conjoin, hanging over the street, in a big, bulky block. 27th St temporarily terminates at Eighth Avenue and the Penn South Houses, built in 1962 by the Ladies Garment Workers Union. If you were to look from east from the FIT building, you would also be deprived of a clear view to Waterside Plaza, a Brutalist Barbican for New York, cut off from the pulse of the city by its own architectural pretense, by the FDR, built atop piers in 1974 at a moment when this type of social design was falling out of fashion - at least in this city. 1,400 residential units built, per Muschamp, to recall the towers of San Gimignano: medieval structures allegedly built for fortification, but really intended as shows of opulence. There was a time when there were seventy-two towers in San Gimignano. Of course the entirety of Manhattan, the idea of the skyscraper (Mr. Koolhaas) can be viewed through the lens of these medieval fortifications, for what they share is an intent, an idea of valuation and structure. The towers of the Waterside Plaza, the right-angled lump of FIT, the Starrett-Lehigh building propose something else, certainly not beholden to Manhattan's generic idea of itself, but nonetheless caught, as much along the axis of the street as an axis of history.

Why was the sculpture shaped in the way that it was, Morgan asks. It had a quality, whether it was intentional or not - you may not like this. For me, it had a quality of Smithson's stuff that I liked and hadn't noticed before, which was this slightly goofy quality, just goofy popular sci-fi. That he was using the materials you might find in a '70s sci-fi series like mirrors, strange rocks and minerals. He's thinking about serious stuff, but it seems to be framed with a popular language I hadn't noticed before, because he was interested in sci-fi and he did use imagery from sci-fi in collages. If you read some of his writings, when he goes out along the Passaic - "Monuments of the Passaic" is intentionally sci-fi. It does feel very post-apocalyptic, you say. Though it's not overdone, Morgan continues. Just, we can drive to New Jersey and we can be on the last cusp of time. So I wondered whether you had set it up like that, because the way that slope is picked up by the ascending mirror, it's like the materials sloping down into something that will disappear into this virtuality. And also Smithson liked to have - it's a less interesting aspect of his work - to be pointing straight out of the gallery and to have objects just reference something else, as half-sculptures, and I wondered whether you were picking up that device. I mean, why make the sculpture in the way that it is? How does the form of the sculpture relate to the walks? That's the essential question now, isn't it, you say. Morgan laughs. I can pick up a mood off it, but you tend to finely calibrate. Have they reached the mirror yet? Oh yeah. What happens when you get to the park? An ellipsis. It's a funny idea. The Situationists did this sort of thing, but it's not really a derive. It's the opposite, if anything, you remark. The slogan of Situationists was "never work." The idea was that those drifts were opposed to labor - they were the antithesis of - and it was this idea of fusing art and life. But you can't drift in this city. The grid was built to maximize the exchange value of space, so the question of the walks become, what is the use value of this space, and how can these daily walks - as a social project, as a historical project - instigate a type of creative use value? So there's never this assumption that what you're doing is not aligned with capitalistic labor, because the mode of navigation, the faithful adherence to the grid is already instrumentalizing yourself along the lines of the urban architecture, as much as the technology of the fax instrumentalizes the content you're transmitting. You're drawing a question mark around the idea of the performer, as situated at the intersection of these two instrumentalizing forces. It's funny, Morgan remarks. You're right. It is very instrumentalized and it does feel like the opposite of the derive, but at the same time, the city has its promenades, and other areas of the same street are defunct in a way. One of my favorite walks is up Sixth Avenue between 42nd and the Park. I like the offices - they remind me of a period from the '50s to the '70s when those things went up. It reminds me of the idea of people coming in from the suburbs to work at Rockefeller Center, of the kind of social world that the man in the gray flannel suit came from. You get up to the Hilton Hotel - I think it's the Hilton. It's hideously ugly from the side, and there are so many rooms, and the surface of the building is so inarticulate. It's much more of the '60s mega-corporate architecture. It's just massively overgrown. Then it reminds me of the Watergate mentality: that America is full of all of these warrens that we can't penetrate; things happening in hotel rooms that we will never know about; that we've built a world that's going to eat us. It just doesn't look very friendly any more. You go down Sixth Avenue beyond that and it just becomes The Garment District. It's sort of formless, whereas that stretch of Sixth Avenue has its element of triumph about it. It's corporate triumph: the fountains, the Jim Dine sculpture. But it's a different axis.



Someone was supposed to join you tonight. Let's call him Frank, let's call him Larry, let's call him Gus, let's call him Moe. You're en route to meet Bishi. You try to imagine how she would take this walk with you. It's hard. All you can think of are her stock phrases, which really are many English people's stock phrases, but which have a life all their own in how she says them. Ever the one to be less fashionable in Bishi's presence, you always make an effort, and while she would never be so superficial as to hold this shortcoming over all of the good things about you, she nonetheless rewards you occasionally with a, "Now, that's a gorgy vest!" The conversation unrolls itself with punctuated pauses, little stop-starts, like the surface of a braille text. You will loop uh-huhs, and Bishi reallys, similarly to the way Shana loops them: impossibly charming and suspicious, when used so liberally. Suspicious as well, because their inherent suspicion of the real makes you wonder if you've grown too fat and overconfident on the reality you claim to inhabit. Leaving the gallery tonight, the owners made reference to the small hands of her boyfriend. His small hands, his ex-girlfriend's beehive, and the mallard wing Bishi wore, for a time, over her brow, as a reward from one Antony for her having passed an afternoon, in the window of his little avant-garde fashion shop, playing the ukelele in a pleated skirt, nipple tassles, and nothing else.

You cheat, if only because this building so commandingly rebuffs you from the Hudson. A sky-blue exterior, which might be said to possess a velocity: its countenance has been periodically blemished by graffiti, in turn censored by a family of similar shades: incidental abstract art in this most abstract of parts of Manhattan. What happens in the west 30s of Manhattan? You've walked these streets sometimes, venturing up from Chelsea, venturing down from wherever, venturing across from there, rising up upon it, crashing down atop it. A murky high-rise and a murky-pit. This is your first solo nighttime walk. A lone, beautifully cylindrical brick smokestack juts out just adjacent to a blue plywood construction site. You wish its future neighbor would be so kind as to bow politely, length-wise, around it. Dyer St. and 31st - the entrance to the Lincoln Tunnel. You cut your foot so bad on the side of your shoe that you stopped here this past summer and bled all over yourself. The Empire State Building glows German. A vast that opens left, opens future, opens upwards: a would-be-building trapped in a tangle of rail: the entrance to Penn Station. Let's disregard the practical reasons the elevated lines were given a cloak of asphalt and consider only the psychological. This street frightens because it both buries and reveals pits of urban infrastructure, the intestinal tracts, barely-there plywood, loose netting, dim orange, cool white. What is walking music? There were countless hours once passed listening to the life-support beat of an album that felt like walking in rainy, post-midnight London, an aided intoxication on the slow slip into the real. As the story should go, by the time you got to London, by the time you had that experience, in one fashion or another, the music couldn't fit. It was made from a distance. But what is walking music? You know what nighttime music is: a drugstore in the late hours, most of the taxi cabs in New York City, all of the nightclubs in New York City. It's the half-dead-again, tempting our post-human urges, daring to make automata of us. So you walk ear-to-ear to make of yourself an urban automaton. It begins quickly. Sound is a synesthesiac gateway, and you soon find your eyes filling with throb fog, those points of non-shadow glowing pixel, then half-tone, then strobe. Strange to feel resolve slacken, fall limp, and still you're compelled on. You, the protagonist of Richard Serra's "Boomerang," describe what you hear to the you hearing what you describe. Shackled to a closed circuit of technological relay. With every revolution, it draws itself tighter and tighter.

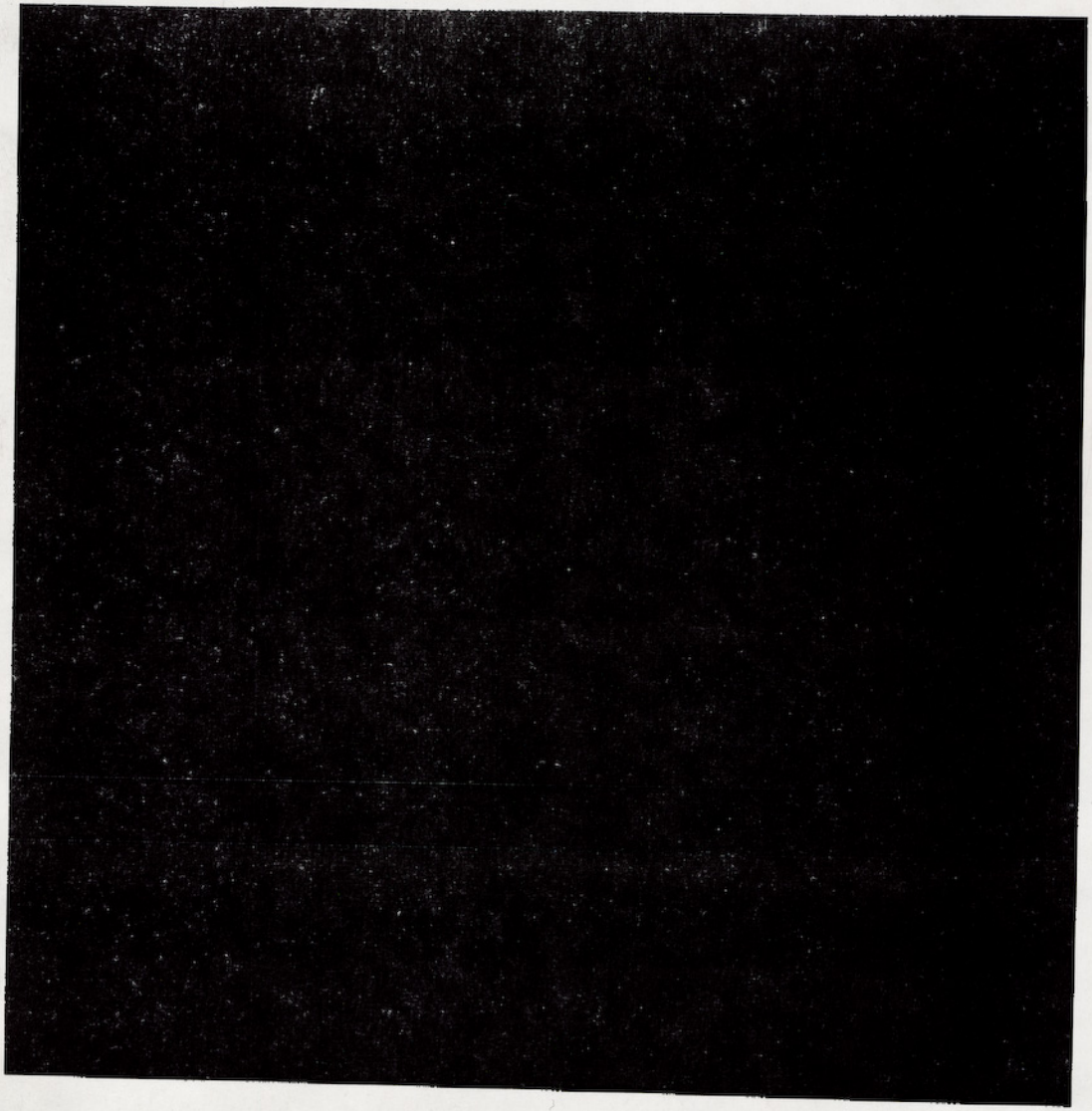


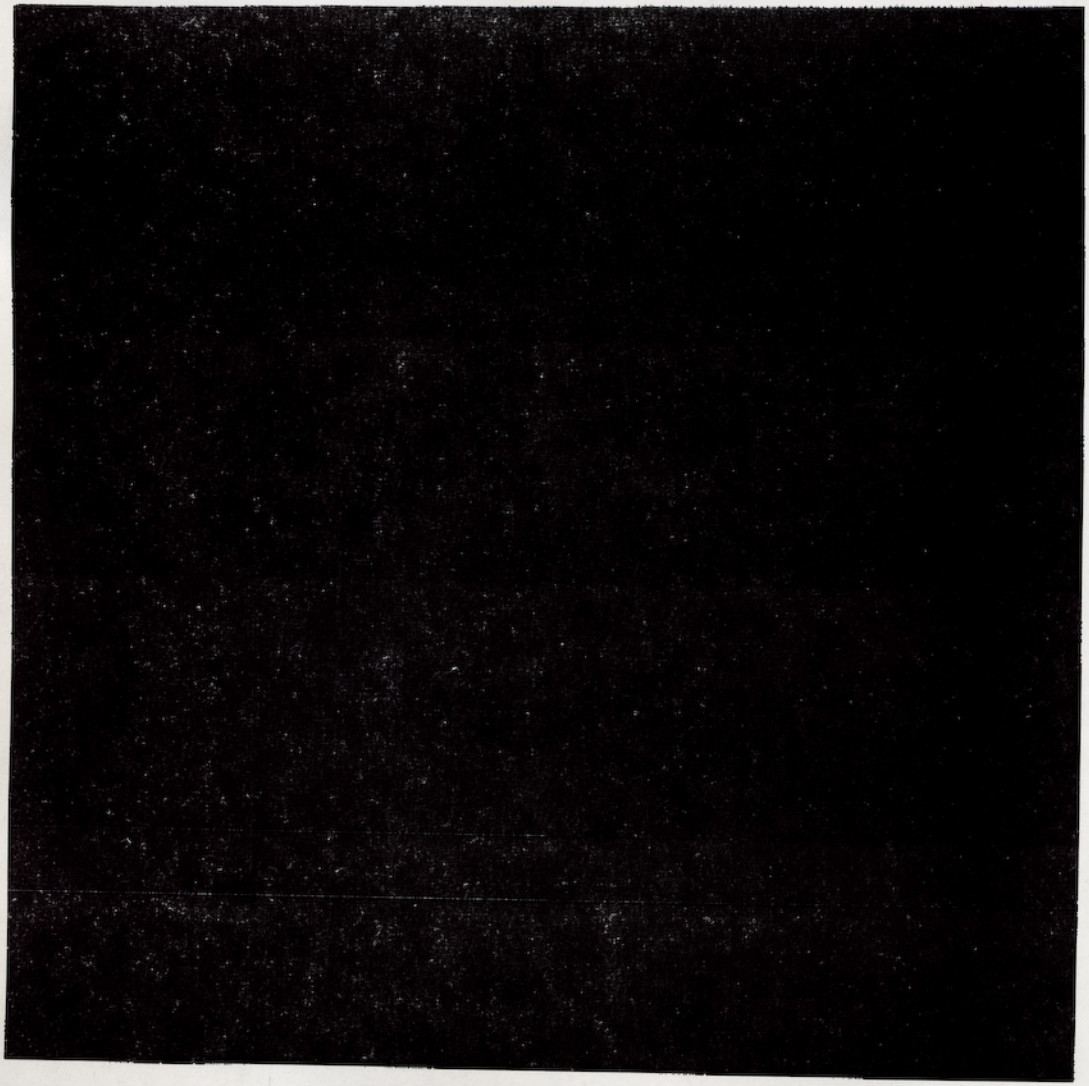
Soylent Green is people! He's screaming on the streets, Candace says. I saw the performance at the Guggenheim, and it didn't make any sense to me at all when I was there, and then I watched the film and I was a little disappointed at how directly she borrowed things. When they need electricity, they have to get on a bike and ride the bike and then the light bulb gets brighter. It keeps charging and charging. Have you ever seen Alphaville by Godard, you ask Candace and Jenny. You're always interested in how directors shoot contemporary cities as the future - particularly when they have no budget. That's why Alphaville's great. He shoots it mainly at night - Paris - and it's a sci-fi film set in the future. Paris would be a really tough city to shoot, Candace remarks. Really tough. But you think about it all the time when you're in New York, you say. The waste treatment plant near your studio in Greenpoint, for example: your sci-fi film would be set there, there and only there. We actually have the beginning of The High Line at 33rd St., Jenny says. It's right in that parking lot. That should be one of your walks. The whole walkway winds down, and you have to climb under a fence. You love how it begins with a curve. Just an unassuming slope. You can't believe that this is where 33rd St. begins. This is the creepiest beginning you've ever seen. Note: creepy beginning, graffiti, and sudden car alarm sound. You see NE in the distance. You see the negation. You're walking towards post-apocalyptic New York, you say. Candace has primed the walk. The Javits Center is a dematerialized form. It looks like the wall of a fetish club. It looks like saran wrap covered with lubricant. Saran wrap choking a building. Notice the lone cop car. He's monitoring The High Line. The lights here are yellow, Jenny notices, and lights in less-scary Midtown are the white-white-white-white-white. I actually prefer this lighting, though it's slightly creepy. It definitely supports the mood that 33rd St. established pretty early on, you remark. We've not even passed one person, Candace says. Except a car that may or may not be occupied by a murdered cop. You want to see what's over there. These are the intestines of Penn Station. You know what makes this so post-apocalyptic? It's not just that there are no people - it's that everything has been left open to us. How are there no trains? We're in a parallel 33rd St. universe. Even the FedEx sign: dEx. In the future, the company that rules the world will be a modified FedEx sign, always modified to correspond to that lighting. We've passed NE and dEx, Candace remarks. In the future, there will be two competing corporations: NE, the corporation about nothing; dEX, the corporation built on the powers of ten. Look at this. This squat building was a brothel at some point, with a billboard perched atop it. "What are you looking for?," he asks. "It's a bar." And what's in there? "It's a television studio." This is definitely a space station launching facility. It's actually just the Associated Press, Jenny replies. That's so boring. Can't it be something else? Can we just make it something else tonight? The world is spilling out of the building. Do you think in the future the Associated Press is part of the dEx or NE corporation? As far as strange beginnings: this is one of the official entrances to the Lincoln Tunnel. The tunnel receives the most vehicular traffic of any tunnel in the world: 12,000 cars a day. That's a fact. But what an unceremonious way of getting into a tunnel. I was walking in the West Village the other night, Candace begins. It was so strange. There was this restaurant that we had eaten in before, and it had this sign: "Closed, due to whatever." And it still had the plates and open wine bottles. It was like the tax authorities came and evicted them while they were in the middle of eating. And everybody got up and left. It's not every day that you see an empty lot. Right here. It's the lot without any evidence of construction beginning - that rare moment when you encounter it in a state of total decimation and raw potential. I like empty lots, Candace says. They have an appeal. It's true, except when there's no food in the city and you're eating other people's bodies and living on that. And if we were trying to grow crops, Jenny adds, that does not look like fertile land, even if every dead body were buried in it. You don't think worms like eating dead bodies that much. I wonder if there are worms in the ground in New York, Candace says. There must be. They must move as fast as subways: a worm infrastructure that corresponds to the lines of the subways. Animals must know. The rats get it. They've acclimated. Where B&H was, that used to be the New York Institute for the Blind, you comment. It took up the whole block. High-level optics sits on the former site. This ad is interesting: the hands are becoming the Great Wall. Did you ever hear about the last piece Abramović did with Ulay? They were going to walk the Great Wall from opposite directions and meet halfway and get married, but by the time they realized the piece their relationship was so frayed that they just met halfway, shook hands and never collaborated again. There's a small pyramid made of brownstone that sits at the center of One Penn Plaza. It just looks like a piece of junk, Candace remarks. Particularly the superimposition of brownstone on black marble. As Stargate and a bunch of other conspiracy theories tell you, the history of Ancient Egypt was obviously all about aliens. Obviously the aliens built the pyramids. So it's relevant that in your post-apocalyptic tour of New York, an alien pyramid has landed on this perfectly good black marble crop circle. At One Penn Plaza of all places. Convergence of frightening architectural form!

Borges wrote: "Taller than the rest, that distant / Man would walk among men, faintly / Calling out to angels, speaking / Their secret names. What earthly eyes / Cannot see he saw: the burning / Geometries, the crystalline / Labyrinth of God, the sordid / Whirling of infernal delights." And here you walk through a crystalline labyrinth of your own making. Visions of Tsars dancing in our heads, Sam says. Is this the tunnel? You were going to say that these two streets - 34th and 35th - cross both tunnels, totally carve it up. We're also going to pass the first Armenian Orthodox Church built in North America. Churches, man. Did you grow up religious, you ask Sam. No, did you grow up religious? Unitarian. Do you know what that means? Not really, Sam replies. Is that where everyone gets along? Pretty much. Look at that Armenian church! You realize that 35th St. is a mirror image of itself, because you passed the tunnel, and you're almost at the end, and you have construction on one side, and the high-rise condos on the other. These, to their time, to their era of construction, are what the Hudson Yards, what those other west side high-rises will be to ours. It's a symmetrical street. This is the only park in the east thirties. It's called the St Vartan Park, after an Armenian general. So this was where the Armenian neighborhood was? You suppose it was. This park was called St Gabriel's when it opened in 1904, but was renamed in 1978. "A Tribute to People with Disabilities," Sam reads. Again, going with the symmetries of the street, that looks like the Christmas tree from the beginning of the walk, right next to the Javits Center. But where is the East River's Crystal Palace? We need a giant New Yorker sign to complete it, Sam says. You're a giant New Yorker sign.

No longer two ruins. Two futures very much of the now and then. At eleven o'clock, the spire of the Empire State Building, originally intended as a mooring dock for dirigibles. An upward angle of a camera showed one such craft flailing, like a spoiled balloon, in the wind. At three o'clock, the cylindrical columns of bay windows on a mud-brick high-rise known as The Corinthian. Did The Jetsons inspire this architecture, or did this architecture inspire The Jetsons? This might be the same as asking if we build our future from the materials present to us. In your vision of the future, dirigibles do dock with the regularity of subway trains or taxi cabs, and men fly around on similarly turn-of-century contraptions, propellers made of the finest wood, custom-iron fittings, attaché cases, always three-piece suits. In your vision of the future, most things run on steam, the city is odorless. Your vision of the future may or may not contain women. You've dreamed it only as far as the three-piece suit. Perhaps the spire and The Jetsons high-rise don't present incompossible pictures of what could have been in the once-was, but actually are two elements of your vision, for part and parcel of that Jetsons era, as Morgan so fondly recalled just the other day, was the gray flannel-suited gentlemen, strolling confidently and briskly through a new public plaza to a new edifice on upper Sixth Avenue. The side of 35 Park Avenue lets a forth warm, laundry steam. This entire strip of Manhattan, Murray Hill - so-named for the woman who allowed the Revolutionary troops time to escape the city by power of temperature, by power of tea, by power of a steaming pot of tea served to a British general at just the right moment - this Murray Hill steams, steams from every crevice, steams to such a capacity that every street you cross is covered with small towers, in orange and white stripe, devoted to steaming - whether it steams in honor of its history; whether it could be said to be a biscuit dissolving slowly in the giant teacup of a hill; or whether it, as its two featured architectures suggest, may be a piece of the future, sitting upon multiple ideas of itself, that is slowly, with each successive outburst of hot, milky vapor, trying to take off and leave the shadowy island behind. In your vision of the future, the city organizes itself around the 1920s Greenwich Savings Bank, a building flanked by Corinthian columns. The column takes its name from the St. Tropez of Ancient Greece: the home of Aphrodite's sacred prostitutes. The Greenwich Savings Bank is a twofold fake: built to connote luxury, built to fit an image of the past, but presently and hopefully forevermore occupied by the Haier Group, China's leading refrigerator manufacturer. In your vision of the future, newfangled refrigeration units can only be housed by the most antiquarian of architectural aesthetics. A long, decal zipper unzips itself slowly down a purple sign. The city encounters its reflection, caught in the late-day sun of convention center glass, seen, as those American tourists in Playtime would have seen it, upon entry to a realm of tantalizing consumerism: pure future condensed into discreet commodities, into a mere 675,000 square-feet of space. The Javits Center provides a fitting conclusion to your many incompossible futures. The Crystal Palace, they have called it: certainly a crystal palace of our time.

Pigeons sit stoically on the Lincoln Tunnel overpass, too cold to fuck. Construction ballet: two cement mixing tanks rotate in unison, two loading docks close, and two lenses glint discerningly. Two buildings, concrete and orange guard, and two others made of blue, Hudson sky. Beyond that, vision falls off. Aural fields pulse blue, metal, wire, grey. For sake of those 3D renderings, milling about the lobbies and courtyards and apartments of what these tangles of partial concrete will surely become, the actual pedestrian has all but been excluded from this street. There's no place to walk. Consider the Gray's Papaya "Recession Special." "Save $1," it flashes yellow. Consider this building standing here. Who knew that one could localize the history of a neighborhood to a single structure? The Garment Center Capitol Buildings, $125 million in 1921 on the part of Russian immigrant Mack Kanner. Showrooms, sweatshops combined to give work to 22,000 people by 1932. Effectively moved the garment industry to this asphyxiating row of side streets. Halfway across Sixth Avenue, you're awoken by shouting, and turn around to see your notes tumbleweed their way across the street. Another man picks them up and looks them over, confused to find his own city staring back at him. He doesn't recognize you, when you face him across an impasse of red. He's handsome. This is the moment when cinematic romance could play itself out, starting with the chance encounter of two lonely souls in the city. But you don't make any indication that they're yours. He trashes them, and you find them hidden beneath a McDonald's bag.





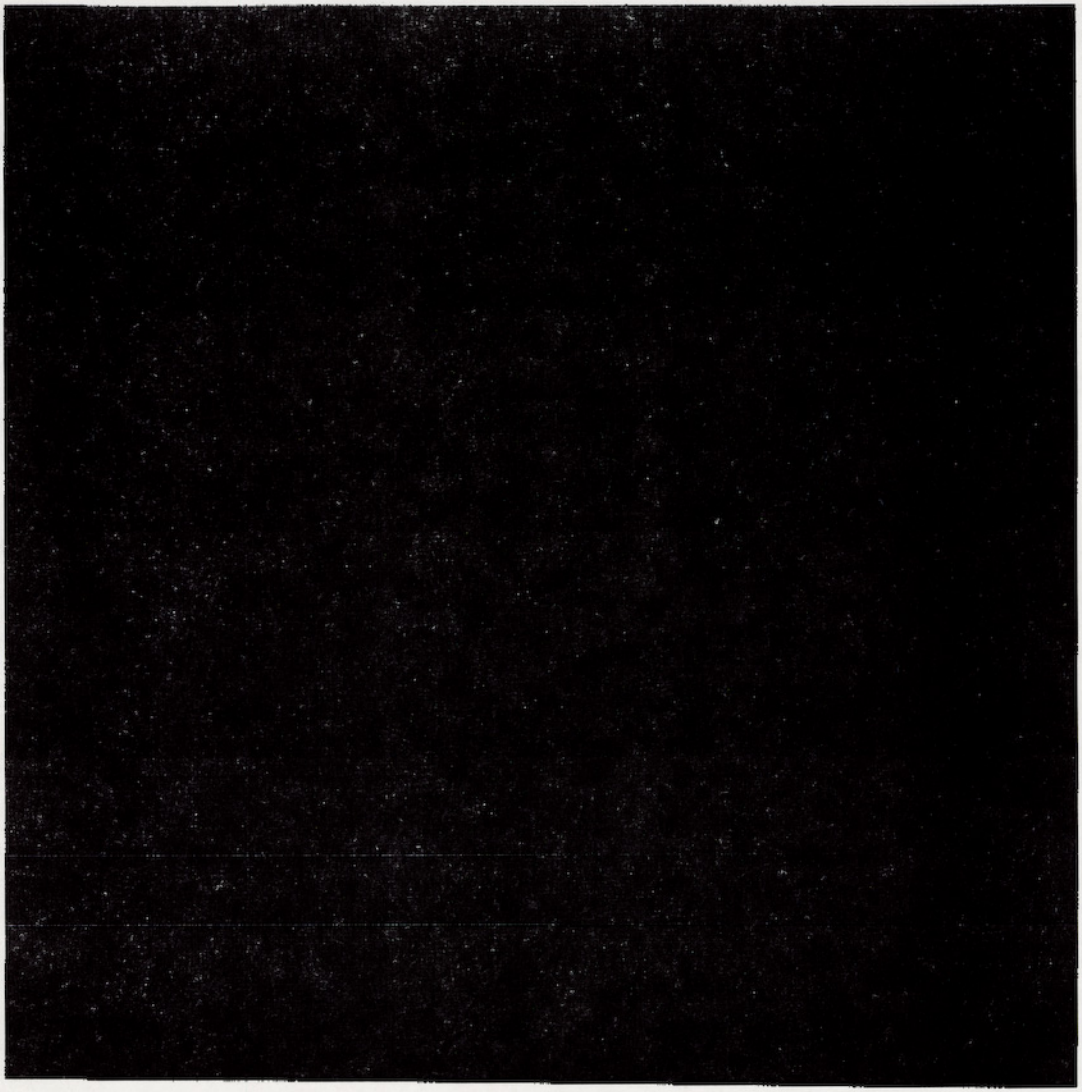
That black building is significant, but you can't explain why. You know the one: that hotel on the southern side of Bryant Park, next to Le Pain Quotidien, just before the Mid-Manhattan Library: tall, black, gold trim. The two stories that you have in your mind, neither of which may be correct in explaining the blackness of the brick: it was mined someplace exotic, remote, obscure; it was painted black during World War I or II to dampen its glitter. Such, at least, was the wartime fate of many a glittering dome in Western Europe and America. But you don't know. Last night a handsome black man read from his poetry at the last in a series of swansong events at Guild & Greyshkul. Blackness isn't really the connection here, but the way he carved up the city into carnal shapes reminded you of the way Colson Whitehead did in The Colossus of New York, a book he read aloud at the 92nd St. Y a few years back. The connection then is an oral one - apt, because this young poet's reading was part of a broader performance by Mariah Robertson. At the conclusion of his reading, Mariah delivered one of her characteristically awkward lectures: a vaguely studied, patently unauthoritative look at positrons, electrons, neurons, the basic theory being that speech is the oldest mode of sculpture: not for the actual shape that language might take; or in the genealogical or social structure a story might articulate, through transmission; or even in its mnemonic relationships to places and things; but actually in the structures a series of neurons assume, in registering and storing received speech. So that, you suppose, is the connection: that there's a sculptural impulse at the root of speech to make of an existing reserve one of a seemingly infinite number of durational articulations. You spoke at Mariah's performance as well. You were invited to interrupt her, present the worst qualities of a know-it-all-critic, eviscerate the tenuous body of ideas she was giving life. You accused poor Mariah of fashioning with her words the oral-sculptural equivalent of a mental dildo that she had strapped to our hypothalamuses to ram out brains full of theoretical nonsense. Of course, your screed itself was nonsense, but begged the question nonetheless of how to understand the relationship between speech and sculpture and where, exactly, to posit the site of the work, the shape of its enunciation, the design of its mental imprint, the account that might live on in transcript, in text, through borrowed voices, as landscape, as a room...

It's early morning, and crowds are shuffling into the UN. Tudor City provides the deceptive comfort of a historic enclave, the warm and reassuring embrace of pastness. Not of the Tudor past, nor of the period in the twenties when it was built: the vague reassurance that one can dip into the folds of the before. As if an echo, the street dips quite dramatically, between two canyon walls, only to rise with a swoop under an arch and run, Wile E. Coyote style, flat into the face of the New York Public Library. Now this is a building, this Mobil structure from 1955. Possessing, when built, the largest expanse of floor space, the largest air conditioning unit in the world. The building itself looks like a gigantic air conditioning unit perched atop a still larger skyscraper. A shallow relief of metallic silver, triangular patterning must have suggested something terribly contemporary in its time, but here, on a sunless day, beneath a choking sky, looks like a piece of ornamentation, the detailing of a Russian Orthodox Church made modular, made massive. Just a block east the 1929 Chanin building trades faux-religiosity for faux-naturalism, stringing animal, mineral and vegetable along horizontal bronze bands, up ponderous stones. This street might elucidate whatever it was Koolhaas said about folklore and the skyscraper, the extreme differences of these buildings not being understood merely by their eras of design - they're too peculiar for even that reduction - but by the myth that each, for its own reason, concocts. It is said that if you travel the landscape of Australia, guiding yourself solely by songs passed down in the Aboriginal tradition - songs that sing of the land so, in a way, are the land - you would actually need to know all of the various native dialects of all of the various regions of Australia to properly chart a course. The landscape is a singular song of fragments, sung in particular tongues in particular places. As each building builds its own myth, it also builds its own world. You can go up and down this street and position histories as you would plaques but cannot, by extension, sing in the language of every building. That you levitate shows how very little you do know.

You like how all buildings of the '50s and '60s meet on the same page for the first seven stories or so. They al play by the rules, then do what they want after. Only fair. After they get above the commoner's level, Brian remarks. Yes, you reply. After they get above the commoner's level. They are all Tudor Cities sitting on top of gashouses. This street has been throwing up all sorts of strange optical effects all day. Look at this light. Going along with the Pfizer allegory mural, this looks like the type of light that one would find in a religious painting. This orange light that just comes from around the corner. You didn't know that Tishman Speyer was based in the Chrysler Building. Remember them? The conglomerate who bought Stuy-Town and Peter Cooper Village in the largest real-estate transaction in American history: 5.4 billion dollars? That's what upsets most about these historic buildings. They leave you wanting to ask what gives these companies the right to have their offices here. Look at this detailing: it's like the Chrysler is covered in proto-microchips. This building was obviously constructed as a monument to the dawn of the age of assembly-line manufacturing and technological engineering, so in a way anticipated how far we would get. At some point in the future, all of these microchips will turn on, and who knows? If Archigram had its way, this building would become one of the many robots in its Walking City, with us all living in pods and modules within them. There's the source of the lights: on top of the Altria building. So they're not lighting the Hyatt. They're lighting Grand Central. The first iteration was built, by necessity, in 1854, when New York outlawed steam locomotives south of 42nd St. But at that time this whole area was just slums. Then Vanderbilt constructed Grand Central in 1871, and then this Beaux-Arts structure came in 1913, and trains slowly began going electric. So this whole area - like that Hyatt, for instance, which used to be another hotel - and a lot of hotels still or once around here, including the Waldorf-Astoria, the Biltmore, the Ambassador, the Commodore - they were all built to be part of this mega-complex called Terminal City, the idea being that there was no infrastructure for the demographic of people who would actually be using this facility, so it just had to be built. Let's stand here for a second and look at the illumination. Lights are angled at it from all sides. A structure like an arch can be lit from itself, like in Washington Square, but Grand Central's architecture is like a conspiracy that makes other buildings complicit in its illumination. By illuminating, these buildings acknowledge how they participate in the prevailing narrative of this part of the city. There are so many terrible things for sale in the windows on this street, Brian says. Did you notice the frogs in that one place next to Grand Central Station? No, you wish he had pointed it out. You see, you're busy looking up, Brian remarks, and I'm noticing the little people. Well, buildings always disappoint when one looks at them from the ground. Do you know why the buildings of the '50s and '60s do that, actually? In 1916 a step-back law that was instituted, where buildings could no longer just go straight up on their plots, because that blocked out sunlight - lack of sunlight being equated with lack of quality of life. Relative to your plot, then, there was a maximal space allotted for construction, and you could split that up however you wanted. Models of the time had buildings stepping back every couple of floors, like that Deco building over there, and as decades went on, other styles were introduced, one being this dramatic, blocky step-back, and another being a smaller, unqualified skyscraper that doesn't take up its entire plot, giving rise to many of the plazas you find on the big avenues. You bump into Debo and Jane...When that building is complete (it may already be complete) it will supplant the Chrysler as the second-tallest building in the city. It's appropriate that its spire makes it taller than the Chrysler, as the whole way the Chrysler bested a building going up at 40 Wall St. at exactly the same time was by means of a 185-foot long spire that was being manufactured in secret. That sounds like the story of the German and Soviet pavilions at the 1936 World Expo in Paris, Brian remarks. The Expo was right in front of the Eiffel Tower, and they were building the pavilions right next to one another. Here were the two rising world powers, so each was trying to outdo the other. So they built the German one up some, and then the Soviet one up some, and then they built the German one up some more, and then the Soviet one up some more, so in the end the German pavilion was this tall thing with an eagle on the top, and the Soviet pavilion was shorter and looked like it was done - it was a Neoclassical façade - and then the Soviets put that enormous Worker and Peasant Woman statue by Mukhina on top of theirs, and it towered over the eagle. Surprise! The square was renamed, you say, when then New York Times moved up from Newspaper Row in 1904, after the subway lines were extended. This area then entered the parlance of the city. Every giant edifice around here participates in this locus of illumination as much as the old hotels do around Grand Central. This is awesome, Brian says. I never come to this part of town when it's dark out. It's crippling, you remark. This street is all about wrapping around the grid: this street is filled with Christos of advertising. What do you think this is? This line? Let's ask someone, Brian says. What are you in line for? "The Jonas Brothers. They're gonna be at the wax museum tomorrow morning." Are they getting wax sculptures made? "Yeah." Oh, cool. Miley Cyrus already has a wax figure, Brian notes, looking at the display. Miley Cyrus already looks like a wax figure of someone else.

Are we supposed to stay on 43rd? Does that mean we get to go directly through Grand Central, Josh asks. You're going to levitate. Josh can do what he wants, you reply. Well, I need to go to the bathroom, so I think Grand Central is a good option, he says. I'm going subterranean. It was nice knowing you. Grand Central has blocked the UN. You now have to go on sheer belief that the UN still exists on the other side, and you're not as strong a man as Josh when it comes to belief. But this entrance to Grand Central is technically on the grid, so you can walk through it. What's interesting about the station dome, you tell Josh, is that its constellations are all backwards, so you're looking up as if you're a celestial body, above the stars, looking down on them. Isn't that incredibly strange? Certainly Cornelius Vanderbilt was above God - that's a given - but what right do commuters have to be above God? I think it was a gift that he was giving us, Josh says. A gift for a moment to believe that we were superior to God. Or it's this idea of God looking down at the stars and charting. It's the idea of this being a central point for travel and another type of charting. Josh pauses. Do you know that all of these slats, where there's glass, used to be open, so air would come in? There was a massive renovation of Grand Central - I don't know when - but when that took place, this dome was completely covered over with dust and soot. Everything was completely restored, but they left one square. Do you see that brownish, brick-like shape there? That's the one spot where they left the soot and dirt in place. Wow. That's crazy. And you know about the whispering archway, Josh asks. No. There's always one police officer that you can find in Grand Central Terminal, and if you can find that one special officer and say the secret word, he will whisper a secret back to you in the archway. In what archway? It's up to the police officer. It's up to him to tell you the secret. Have you done this? Um, no, Josh replies. Or...maybe. So you have to know that the police officer is a secret police officer, you observe. There's a lot more that's involved in it that I'm not really aware of, Josh says, which is why I haven't attempted it, because if you pick the wrong police officer, the consequences can be unpleasant. You wonder if there's a way to be granted passage to the old train lines and passageways to Cornelius Vanderbilt's hotel and the Waldorf-Astoria. There are passageways, Josh asks. Yeah. FDR, especially during his presidency, wanted to minimize how much he was seen in public in his wheelchair, so there were train tracks that went right to the Waldorf-Astoria. You're impressed that the design of Grand Central actually allows you to adhere to the logic of the grid, because otherwise anything that happens in here would be subject to the ellipsis. We make a left here, right? Or no, we go that way. I think we just walked an ellipsis in the narrative, Josh says. You laugh. It scares you to come to train stations when you're not going anywhere, because it reminds you that people do this on a daily basis. You're witnessing a series of routines, a series of elliptical forms. You are the ellipsis at the center of these elliptical forms. You are an exception to the rule, because your relationship to Grand Central is elliptical - not elliptical - but yet you are also here by virtue of a routine you have set for yourself.

I'm tired of technology, Vicky says. Well, that's why we're here. You've been here before. Have you never been here before, she asks. I've come to the blue bar a couple of times. I had drinks with an artist, oddly, in 2004. But we had an older friend come and stay here. Then I was totally into it, and went through my Harold Ross, Dorothy Parker phase. I don't read enough of them though. I have the Dorothy Parker anthology, but I'm more interested in her as a cultural character than her writing, except that I think she wrote that, "The answer is that there is no answer that's the answer," which I say all the time. Hi, how are you? A waiter arrives. I want a cocktail, but I'm not sure what I want, Vicky says. You have a Manhattan, right? A Rob Roy. I'm not sure if I want a Manhattan. You know what? I will have a Gimlet, but I want a gin Gimlet. Tanqueray? And ice. Otherwise I'll get drunk. Sorry, I keep sniffing. So you're more interested in Dorothy Parker's life than her writing, you ask Vicky. I don't know enough about her writing. Just the cheeky cocktail humor. I think I'm reincarnated from a Modernist. I love Martha Graham. I love Dorothy Parker. I'm obsessed with the silver age. Tell me about Dorothy Parker. Well, she sat at the roundtable at the Algonquin with the guys who started the New Yorker. Actually, I read something recently. I named one of my artist's paintings after a Dorothy Parker. She couldn't come up with a title, and I read some poetry of hers, which is a little pathetic but interesting, called "Cherry White." You know how Billie Holiday wrote "Strange Fruit" about black boys being hung from trees in the South. She was on a bus tour in the South and would see hangings. So Dorothy Parker, writing at the same time, wrote "Cherry White" about how beautiful cherry blossoms are, and she mentioned that it would be even more beautiful to see herself hanging there. I think she must have had "Strange Fruit" in her mind.



Look at that. "MILFO LAZA," the M Hotel, where Mom's I'd Like to Fuck - Laze, Eva offers. This is such a well-contained construction site that you almost feel it's intended as such. I think it's a community garden just waiting for springtime, Eva says. You think it's a historical community garden: this was what community gardens looked like in New York in 1973, when most of the properties around here had been turned into welfare hotels, and everything that wasn't something was a porn store. Can we pause for a minute and imagine that that's the time we're in, Eva asks. You're going to pause and look over at the one other remnant. The DVD Depot? There's also a DVD Palace across the street, Eva says. What an era! When you could rent rooms by the hour. Apparently some places still exist. There are a lot in Barcelona, Eva says, and it's a pretty popular thing to do. Really? What do people do? Just have lunch? Oh, man, that's a fire, Eva remarks. Do people have lunch? Yeah. I think they have erotic lunches in hotel rooms. What is erotic, you ask. Eva laughs. Your dryness is...dry, she says. Your dryness is too dry. Now, the fire almost saves the fact that one, that woman looks a little douche-y, and two, these columns look like they're made out of tin foil. They're rows of tin foil, Eva says. Do you think the people who work here are ever tempted to stick a marshmallow over there? This row of fire contained to glass and stone - this is the same thing as the fenced-in lot over there. They're taking the hell of out of the kitchen and they're putting it on display. You see what's going on here. You see. Does that hellfire scare you? It don't scare me. They've eliminated the threat. You can just enjoy thinking about how must better you have it on Restaurant Row than walking by burning trashcans near a welfare hotel.

There are a couple of good ones. You'll just read them out, and if you see them, you win points. Number 26: Kim's Jewelry served as a fence for a gang of jewel thieves robbing suburban malls. Doesn't that sound like the premise for a crazy caper? The owner of Roman Jewelers, number 74, was convicted of laundering drug money. Do they take it all off the windows, Logan asks. Do they? Are you sure that's not just because business is so good? You had no idea that they removed everything from the windows at night. Even Canal St., Debo says. Really? Well the Diamond District used to be on Canal St., then it moved to the Financial District in the 1930s. It moved up here in the 1940s. They lock everything up, Debo adds. It's like an artisinal craft to just install these displays on a daily basis. You want to develop that skill. Tomorrow you're going to make an inquiry at the Gemological Institute of America, which is on this street - as is the synagogue that services all of these dealers. When you say services, just exactly what are you implying, Loryn asks. Something sacrilegious, of course. Is that what you want to hear? There's gonna be another SOM-designed tower on this block, David says. There's gonna be four, you reply. You think you see one that's looking like a clone of Bear Stearns. Look at that big light box up ahead. What does the light box mean to you? I guess it's to see the skyline, David says. You know skyscraper was a term originally used to describe masts on a ship, so it's easy to give a maritime read to the lights on top of skyscrapers: they're lighthouses. Every building is a lone lighthouse awaiting a dirigible. Each building is like an island, and an island is a metaphor for humanity: you're all alone, on your own, waiting. That's not my reading of it, David says. We're all together. But no building is an island, because you're in a city of islands. But you're also on a big island. You see where this is going. Right, David says. That's why we started at the end. The logic - is it too much, you ask. So, buildings are islands...You called out number 76. Who was that, David asks. Colombian drug trade? I think we're coming up on it. God, that motogram is hurting my eyes! If you really want to maximize your Diamond District experience, you've got to go into one of the exchanges. Have you ever been into one before, David asks. No. Your mother is pretty good on this street, apparently. She comes back with stories of the hours spent bargaining. Wow. Did she do it at McDonald's, Logan asks. Of course. You think the Value Meal costs 99 cents? It doesn't have to cost 99 cents. I meant more her haggling, Logan says. That's where I sold my gold. I met the guy on the street, and he took me to the McDonald's around the corner, and he took out his loop and he looked at it and that's where I did the deal. Where did you meet the guy? James? At one of these. This was back in April. I had a bunch of gold. It was this one right here. Leon Diamond. He asked, well how much do you have, and we talked a little bit, and he said, there's a McDonald's around the corner, and I said, are you serious? And he said, yes. But this was a man who worked there. Yes, he stands outside. There's always a guy standing outside the store. Affiliated with the store? Absolutely. Actually, he was recommended to us by someone standing outside a door across the street. So he took you to the McDonald's. Yep. We went upstairs to the handicapped table. I pulled pieces out, not all at once. There are families looking at us. And he asks, where did you get this? Are you eighteen? Where did you get this? Are you sure you're eighteen? Eventually, he asks me to name a price, and we went back and forth, and he said he had to leave to get more money. He said he'd be back, and he left, and came back, and threw the money at me and took the gold. Threw the money at you and took the gold! Yeah. In a McDonald's, no less! Shook my hand, yep. You hope that didn't discourage Logan from wanting to come back and sell more product. No, no, it was amazing. I normally wouldn't do something like that. It was at the height of when the price of gold peaked. I had all this gold from my teenage years. Ugly shit. So David and I came down here, because I tried to come down on my own, but it was too intimidating. But then we came back. So was David at the McDonald's as well, you ask. I was there. Did you have some money thrown at you as well? No, David says. I didn't get any of that.

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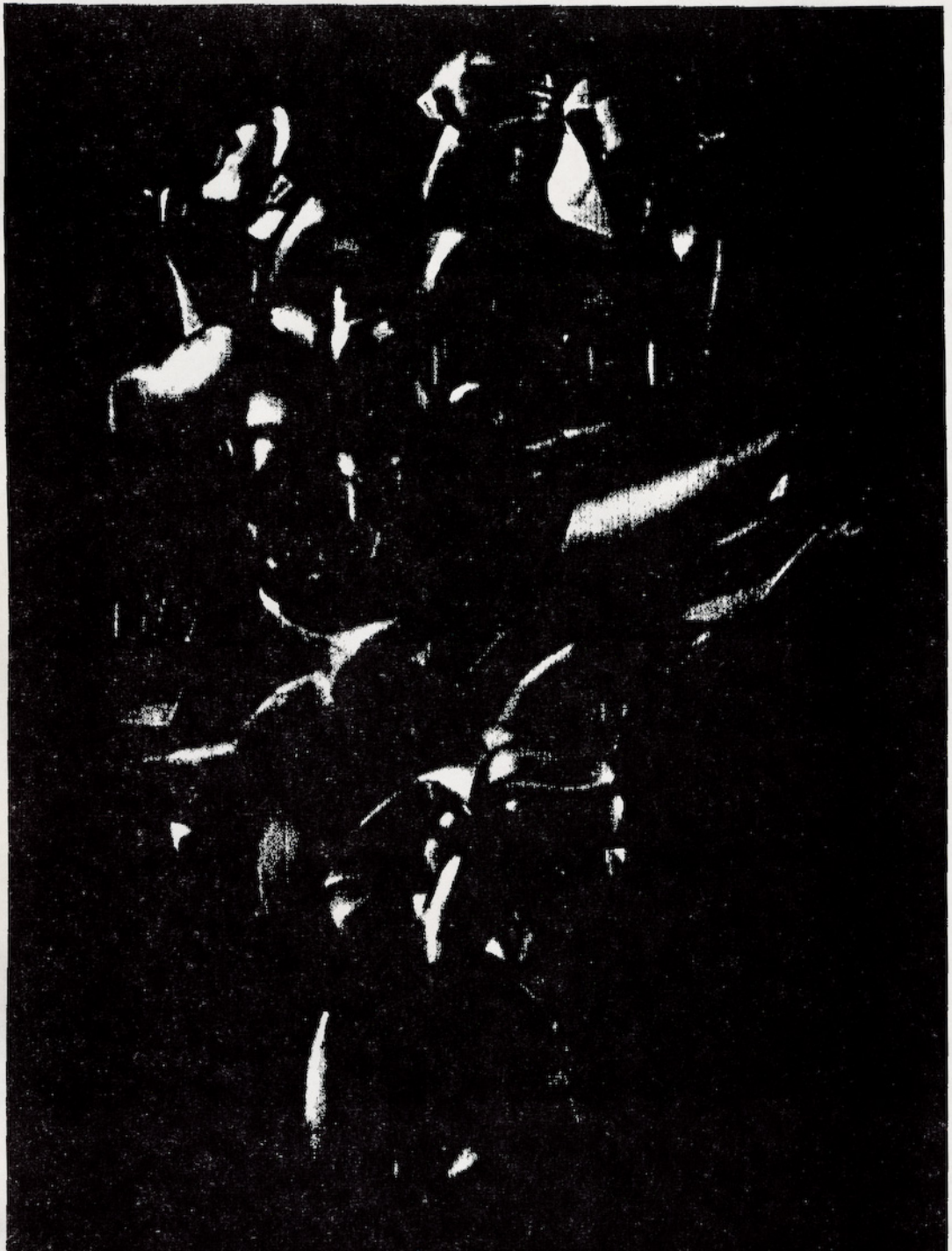

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This is fulfilling a lifelong dream to walk in the middle of the road in Manhattan, without any fear of getting run over by a car, because the street has been blocked off. In fact, I have my eyes shut right now. I just walked ten paces with my eyes completely shut, and it's straight in the middle of Manhattan.

You may as well tangle yourself up in the latticework of the scaffolding, for this will not be a pleasant walk. More tolerable, perhaps, for unfolding hours beyond its expected time, after the rains dissipated, and with the onset of cold - after a potentially awkward scenario with one of the walkers was avoided, and with the onset of anxiety about a pending, more awkward encounter. Even if you try to shut out those who have accompanied, those who would, have not, they crop up. She just cropped up. And with the big Jim Dine Venus de Milos, Morgan again crops up. With the big black Eero Saarinen rock, Ben crops up. And with the MoMA building, hiding on the left, Alex will someday crop up. Some months into its re-opening, Alex had asked you if you had yet visited. You hadn't. But he had. Several times. Less, it seemed, to contemplate the vast quantities of its collection that had reentered the exhibition space, and more to hear its own story, told in geometric passages, crisply punctuated. Was it Alex who had told you of the vertiginous drops some views afford, or was it you who put those words into his mouth? That strange paradox of being invited to walk onto overhanging perches and look down several stories into cuboid atria, or across and through deep, open corridors, with barely enough room for another body, let alone your own: that in a space built for circulation, one could be afforded such expansive views onto a cultured public, only through the condition of excising oneself from it? Of finding a private space already delincated? That observation could only come through the lack of participation? This, at least, sounds somewhat like what Lefebvre writes about reading a city, and how in inhabiting a position from which lived articulations become legible, one ceases to articulate. The reading and drawing of a line apparently aren't consonant. Do you believe this? You probably put those words in Alex's mouth, because you were thinking about how those strange perches would be prime locations for private acts of public suicide, that one could pass one's final moments secluded in an almost sacral place before leaping into the architectural, metaphysical void. Not the Golden Gate Bridge, nor the NYU Library: this struck you as the perfect place from which to depart, onto which to land, into which to be absorbed. The day Rothko's body was found, in 1970, the Tate received his shipment of works intended for the restaurant in the Seagram building. These works were fabricated ten years before. Rothko at that time conceived of himself as an aesthetic terrorist, relishing the opportunity - the largest public art commission of any painter of his generation - to install in the locus of the well-monied of New York, the prime venue of consumption, of deal-making and deal-breaking; to install, with painting - six-hundred square-feet of it, to be exact - an indictment of their practices: a space aimed to feel unpleasant - even claustrophobic. Slim, verticular canvases hanging over doors and proportioned like windows were to make obvious the confining nature of his washy, visual field. Rothko and his wife ate at the restaurant shortly after it opened. It seemed even his disgust got the better of him. The stories surrounding why he pulled out themselves remain awash, but perhaps Rothko knew that his patrons would win in the end: that however subtly or opaquely he provoked, even an artwork made with terroristic intent would flatten out. Can a building have terroristic intent? Can a building be suicidal? The Citigroup Center could very well answer these questions, considering its checkered past. Its steel columns jut not from its corner but from its medians to accommodate St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church, which while necessary to demolish in the skyscraper's construction in the late-seventies, insisted that the building be so designed to cantilever around the site of what would be its eventual replacement. So cantilever it did: an awkward dance that resolves nothing, worsened by structural engineer William LeMessurier's choice to employ bolted joints instead of welded ones, a seemingly innocuous and economical decision that when pointed out, by a Princeton architecture student, made LeMessurier realize that under winds of certain velocity, the building itself would fall flat over. And so, with Citicorp's approval, under cloak of night for a couple of months, LeMessurier's team switched out each of these joints, and in daytime hours, staff shuffled in, unknown victims of a probable disaster. As Hurricane Ella blew its way up the North Carolina coast, six weeks into the labor, it seemed that nature had deemed fit to strike a fatal blow to the building. And yet it veered off course, and enough time elapsed for proper repairs. It took fifteen years for this information to come out: fifteen years that could have seen other structural engineers, functioning under similarly faulty logic, make suicidal terrorists of whole city blocks. The Long Island City Citicorp Building, constructed ten years after its Manhattan sibling, on a 53rd St. axis that aspired to map the grid onto the very face of Queens - and here Thomas crops up - presumably wasn't built with the same manufacturing problems, and if it were, well, this may be the year when the world will finally learn, once and for all.

Yes? Has the project been affected by the inauguration, AJ asks. How do you mean? I would imagine that it would come up more than once over the course of this, she replies. It has. Not much of what has been discussed has come into the transcripts, though there has been much discussion. One thing my friend Candace brought up, when we were on a science-fiction-ish walk across 33rd St., was the question of what type of architecture Barack would be. Apparently there was a lot of discussion, argument - heated, otherwise - about Barack's building. There was a school of thought that had him as a sleek, glass-and-steel contemporary structure, and then there were others who said he would be a Beaux-Arts, Neoclassical edifice, in the style of Grand Central, because he's bringing back the rhetorical style of an older generation of politicians. I can see that, AJ says. Well, what do you think? What building do you imagine Barack being? Well, I would say not the Lipstick Building, although unfortunately his administration in his four years might - you might say that - I'm nervous to say that it might seem like the Lipstick Building. Why? Well, the Lipstick Building, as you know, housed the offices of Bernie Madoff, who I think will represent - if he hasn't come to already represent - the excesses of the Bush years, and the fraud we were all taken in by during this time. Now that the reality sets in, the quickly gutted 17th floor may come to seem like the old economy. Is that really how it went down? Oh yeah. How much of a view did you have onto that? Very little, AJ replies, because I had not come back to work yet after working on the campaign when that all went down, but apparently the day that the story broke, there were investigators all over the lobby of the building, and people were in and out of that elevator bank constantly. I don't know. I had occasion to use that elevator bank recently, and it happened to open on the 17th floor, and I was so tempted to dash out and run around just to see what it was really like. Did you see anything? No. Except I sort of expected the walls to be stripped of their fake-wood and stuff. They should've dug in for the copper wire, you remark. Yeah, but it looked like it was still intact. What a shame. I was hoping for something a little more dramatic.

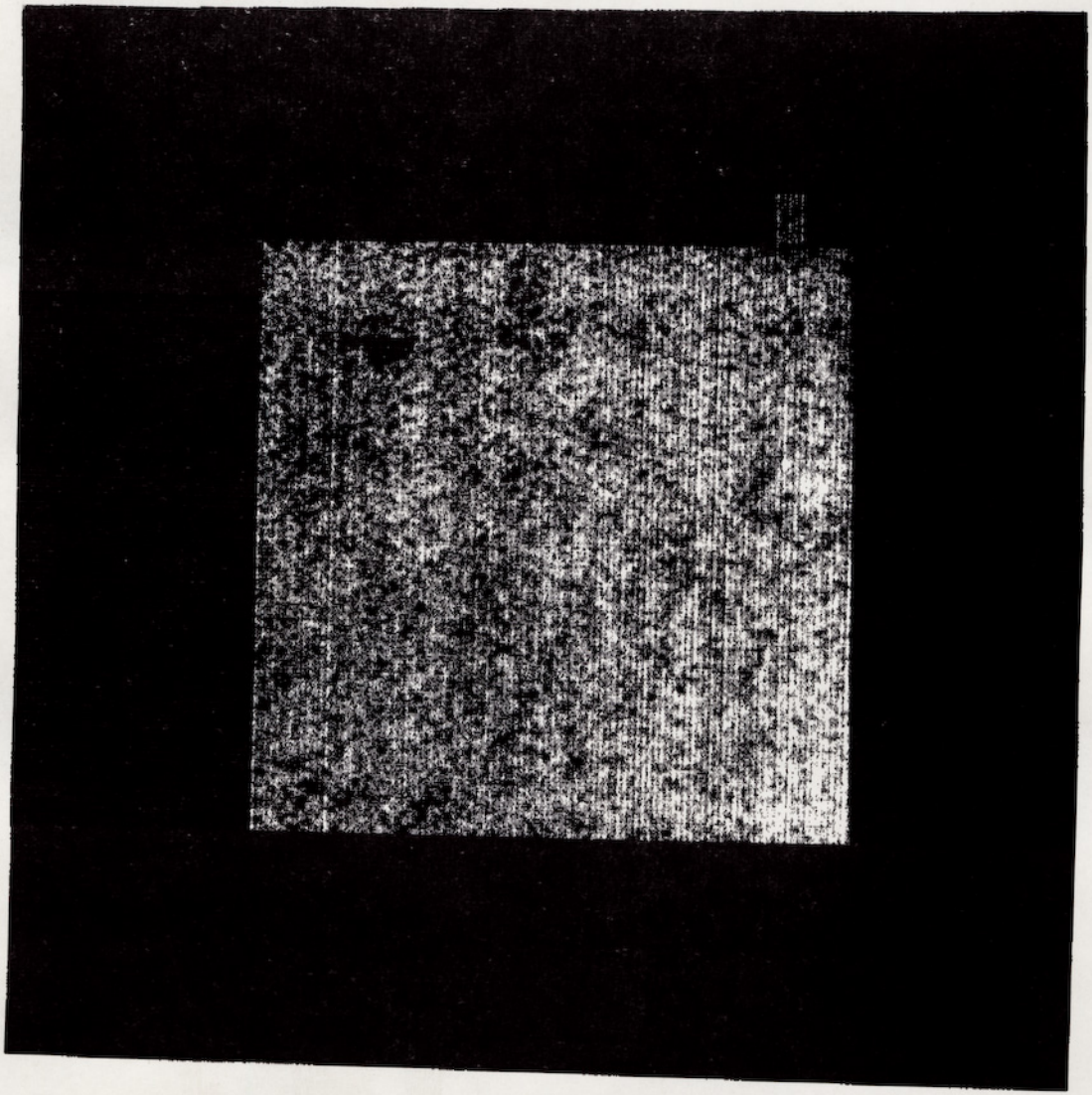
You step up onto a perfect tiled square, in line with the Citicorp building, in line with the East River, in line with Roosevelt Island, to meet Colin, whom you've never met. Together you will walk across 55th St. to his neighborhood, and if things go well, a kiss or four might be exchanged en route or at the walk's conclusion.

Some buildings expend all their energy telling a story on the surface. Maybe that's what this mosaic of blue film reels on 345 E. 56th - the Sutton East - does. But what does it tell, relative to its cream brick, '60s apartment slab? Certainly not that it has buried a building in the process of its making - that in that building, Piet Mondrian painted "Broadway Boogie Woogie." It's late afternoon. As you walk west, you chase the sun over the Palisades. What does Cathedral High School tell you? Not that it used to be the seedy Sutton Hotel; not that when it opened in 1929, its first manager, Nathanael West, spun stories of his dismal job into very lonely prose. West was as hard-up as his hotel and as the many writers, like Edmund Wilson, Lilian Hellman, and Dashiell Hammett, who stayed under his watch. When a new neighborhood pulls itself up on its bootstraps, it's all the easier to forget the hard times that proceed - to throw salt on fresh lots, just to ensure that what follows follows. It's easy to discuss "Broadway Boogie Woogie." You recently saw some graphite drawings of a young artist connecting twee little figures with lines that could be streets or hallways or vectors of intent. "Broadway Boogie Woogie" for the Pacman set for the Facebook set, you wrote. Any existing architecture, the drawing seems to suggest, will be filled with vectors of intent - will become, by necessity, a network of communication. That is the virtual level. What you do on it, of course, is the actual. Miss Lonelyhearts's communication with his letter-writers was wholly virtual, a packaging of platitudes, social conventions, emotional truisms, proving that all of this talk of communication and sociality, for all of your theoretical calisthenics, do not fall so easily along the actual/virtual. If anything, the loneliness of Miss Lonelyhearts is that telescoped loneliness between an urban architecture that dictates and a social architecture that dictates. Perhaps it's his shortcoming, perhaps it's an epistemic shortcoming to seek solace in other architectures, like those of the erotic, the religious, the academic, the institutional. For a time this plaza in the IBM building - now filled with the most amazing Dubuffets - housed the collection of the Dahesh Museum of Art. Self-nominated as Dahesh at the age of twenty-one, extolling the power of the Spiritual Fluids that texture the universe, aqueous substrates, reincarnation. For all of the seeming flux he introduced to dogmatic belief, here was a man who amassed over his lifetime 2,000 academic paintings - and not any academic paintings, but the academic paintings of the era of Impressionism: the most definitive architecture of the old, of the conventional set against the throes of a discursive shift. A different wound has been salted on Fifth Avenue. Besides its horizontal wood shutters, secured by plate-glass, Abercrombie & Fitch presents near-nudity as consumer fabric, with no mention made that it once sold sporting equipment to some of the more hardcore members of American history - Amelia Earhardt, Ernest Shackleton - and that Hemingway allegedly purchased the gun that he killed himself with from this flagship store. You pass the Corning Glass Building. Apparently it was the first glass-walled building on Fifth Avenue. It opened in 1959 having, as its ground floor store, Steuben glass. A glass building housing a store that sells glass: if that isn't transparency, you don't know what is. Imperfect items are destroyed. There are no seconds at Steuben's. Perfect displays are destroyed, which may account for why Dali hurled a bathtub through the plate-glass of Bonwitt Teller, after management altered his "Night" and "Day" displays. Black Persian lamb lining a tub filled with water, from which three wax arms arose holding mirrors. A wax mannequin cloaked in green feathers with long, bright red hair, while the walls were upholstered in purple, small mirrors fixed here and there, narcissuses floating in the tub. Such was "Day." "Night," the decapitated head and the savage hoofs of a great somnambulist buffalo extenuated by a thousand years of sleep. Magistrate Louis B. Brodsky, freeing the artist with a suspended sentence from night court, claimed, "These are some of the privileges that an artist with temperament seems to enjoy." Of the architecture you found pre-assembled, when you chose to walk this city, "Delirious New York" was a generous but annoyingly ubiquitous acquaintance. Though you quote the Time Magazine article from 1939, you may as well be quoting Koolhaas. Chances are he quoted it himself. You haven't fully come to terms with what a perfectly molded yet vastly inferior agent you are. You characterize the cartography of urban walking as ghostwriting, and then find that term smack at the end of his manifesto. You walk by the first building he will erect in the city and fail to mention it, as if to slight him. However much Dali succeeded in aggrieving the clientele of Fifth Avenue, he did so by breaking what strikes you as a fundamental tenet of the Surrealist architecture he invested so much to construct, namely that rather than unnerve on the plane of representation, he shattered the plate-glass, transgressed the display, opened new and other possibilities for engagement that weren't really his to explore - that you don't think he would have any interest in exploring. In a moment of anger, of the purely irrational, he betrayed himself, and the city looked on agape.

Overhead will stay very low. We're going to throw parties to make money. I've done a little bit of grant writing. But the idea is that startup costs will be nothing, because I want to pay artists a fee for their time and everything else I'll just wrangle as I need it. The concept is partly a functional critique of the way alternative spaces work in New York, because a lot of the alternative spaces came out of really high-flown ideology and evolved into something that kind of resembles a museum with really high overhead. I guess one example would be Artists Space, which is a great organization. They originated to fill a particular need, which was to collectively apply to grants that weren't available to artists individually but only to organizations, and then redistribute that money to artists. Artists Space still pays an artist's fee - it's one of the few venues in New York that still does - but I think that the inevitable product of a non-profit organization over time is that you have to build up staff and real estate and website and marketing, which is basically what your money is paying for. But this place isn't meant to be an artist service. It's just meant to be a low-overhead arts organization. I think a lot of the reason why arts organizations take up a lot of overhead is because there are certain assumptions about the way they are run. You have to have a new show at certain intervals, for example. I just want to see if it is possible to run an exhibition space on a different logic, partly for functional reasons and partly just because the possibilities of what you could do as a non-profit in New York should be a little wider. Part of the reason I'm doing this is a little bit of an unhappy thing, which is that I don't think all of New York's alternative art spaces will survive the next couple of years, partly because it's hard to shrink something once it has grown like that. They've all grown for the past three decades and probably face diminished economic forecasts. I also think part of it is that recessions produce alternative spaces, and this will be one of those alternative spaces. Michael pauses. That's the functional critique. Then there's the conceptual. The concept is an exhibition that achieves a large-scale form, through the accretion of elements over time. To use your phrase, I guess it's like the gallery is the engine that produces the exhibition. So it's not a matter of planning an exhibition in advance; instead, you plan a strategy or a process that produces the show, and then you allow a really long period of gestation, which could be nine months initially then grow to a year or a year-and-a-half, and during that time you're allowing the show to grow in the framework you've set up, which allows you to make adjustments and do things iteratively as you go and draw in input from a lot of different people instead of having a fixed vision. Part of the idea is that methodology produces results. What you think you're going to get is partly where your exhibition comes from, and partly from the methodology you use to get there. Does the method arise out of the character, you ask? No, she came later. I wanted to use a person's name to name the space, because institutions often present themselves as having too rigid of an identity, but an institution can have as strange a fickle a character as a human. There have been a few projects that have named themselves after fictional people, like Reena Spaulings and Anna Sanders, but I wanted to name it after a historical person. I don't know why. That's what I was looking for. And who is this character? Marian Spore was the wife of Irving T. Bush, founder of Bush Terminal, which was an industrial space built in Brooklyn near Sunset Park between about 1896 and 1908. Irving T. Bush himself was considered more of a dreamer than an industrialist, because he was always involved in new ventures and had big dreams. He was one of the first distributors of Edison's kinetoscope, although that was a very short-lived business venture. His vision for Bush Terminal was this industrial complex that was a city in its own right, that had its own power generation, that had its own railroad, and then docks; and then manufacturing, and then a railroad connection to the world. But it was unsuccessful at first because it was too far from New York, and also because people didn't understand it. And so to publicize it, Irving Bush started sending hay from Michigan to his own terminal. He would send huge shipments to himself, so that every producer of raw materials and other goods knew that he existed. He ordered bananas from Jamaica and sent them to himself, so that the banana makers knew that he existed. It finally became a booming business, and he was fabulously wealthy. His second wife was Marian Spore, who was born Flora May Spore. I can't remember if she came from Michigan of Florida, but she changed her name to Marian, and she began her adult life as a dentist. She was known as a pioneer in periodontic dentistry. Then she moved to New York and became a painter. Some time after the first World War she started gaining a following, and was known as someone who could paint the spirit world and the future. Harry Houdini, who was a noted skeptic about the spiritualist movement, believed that she was possibly for real. I haven't seen any of her work, but apparently there's one painting of planes crashing into skyscrapers and it's called, "New York City: When?" She also started a bread line in the late-twenties and was known as "Lady Bountiful of the Bowery." So your space aspires to be successful in as many different enterprises? Michael laughs. I guess so.

Were you living in New York before the Museum of Arts & Design was redesigned, you ask Michael. No, I don't think I was, but I remember it. The Lollipop Building. I don't like the new building, Michael says. No. It has inspired ire among the architectural critics. Ada Louise Huxtable was always a little ambivalent about the old one. She called it a "die-cut Venetian palazzo set atop lollipops." She was the one who gave it its name. I have some good quotations of critics expressing rage at the new structure. Nicholai Ouroussoff becomes practically conservative in his extreme dislike of this building. He's also talking about the plans to demolish the Palast der Republik in Berlin. "The pressure to remake or raze them is arguably a form of censorship, a drive to cleanse history of anything but a strictly prescribed view of the past." Censorship! Architectural cleansing! This is some strong language. The building is trying hand to appeal to you, because it says "Hi" on the front, and apparently they've preserved the lollipops, but they've encased them in glass, so they look like body parts in formaldehyde - so said one disgruntled viewer. What made the original building so provocative in its time was the fact that there were no windows until the top - that it was this gigantic slab. Edward Durell Stone had originally designed the MoMA with another architect, but the whole attempt with this was to not make something that was Modernist in the generic International style, but to dip back into history and have this Neoclassical referent, but also employ some of the tropes and materiality of the Modernist project. You don't know what this new version does to update it, but it doesn't do much. I don't understand how it was meant to be any signature architecture, Michael says. How do you mean? It doesn't seem there was any concept other than that they put a new skin on it - a skin that you'd find on an office building. What do you mean by skin? You know, an exterior cladding. The building in Melbourne where I'm working on this show is part of this complex called Federation Square, which has this visually arresting skin, but the problem is that it makes it look like the skin has an integral relation to the structure. What you get with a Liebskind building is that the structure would express the skin, but instead here it's just decorative. Is the idea that the building itself was made earlier, and this is the solution to update it? Well, normally that's why people use skins. Normally it's very postmodern to take a building and skin it. You pause. When you're given an opportunity to work through a historical structure, where there's a necessity to acknowledge it, as much as that can create a stranglehold, it can also be an opportunity for a very interesting way of looking back. In a way the idea of the postmodern architectural skin is fitting for a city like New York, because as Koolhaas has theorized, this is a city built around a Twentieth Century idea of façadism. An earlier notion of the façade was that it's supposed to be a site of honesty, in that the façade will tell you what's on the inside of a building, so then in a way the façade has a moral obligation, and by extension, the architect has a moral obligation to tell the authentic story of a building through its surface. And then the new idea, which is certainly not particular to Manhattan, is that the infrastructure of a building can house anything. There's no obligation to tell. Of course the timely quality of the theory becomes suspicious when you consider the prevalence of the Neoclassical throughout history. Can a building that's faking ever really tell the truth? But New York is such a city of fakes that the idea does somewhat suit. I think it was Kenneth Frampton who had this idea that the postmodern architect's job was to work with a world that's already built, Michael says. I feel like that idea of honesty is too limiting. I think that there's more room for playfulness in a world that's already built. You think Michael's right. Even presupposing that that which precedes a certain era was honest architecture is too simple. Here's the statement that this building says to me, Michael says. We decided to do a cosmetic overhaul of our building, because we didn't have any confidence in its previous design, and we really got nothing functional from the millions of dollars we spent on it. The one thing that it does, which the original also did, is curve itself. It accommodates the circle. Maybe they did get something functional out of it, Michael says. I'm sure they got new ventilation and climate-control. But there must have been another way.

Jeff told you last week that Chris and Meggy asked him to read from the Symposium at their wedding. Your knee jerked. Surely this was to the literati what Pachelbel's was to your parents - a ceremonial cliché. Tear-duct antagonizer, this effluvium that would risk betraying a maudlin Plato to his critics. You, the sentimentalist, can draw two longitudinal creases on the face of the world and so fold yourself bi-ways and sideways, collapsing onto a man in London who may or may not be your second-half; and merging with another, in Los Angeles: a text unfurling in parallel to your own. If you were to lapse, you would hover just above this fellow in a cloud of we: we who wear Blenheim Bouquet; we who drink Jameson on the rocks; we tall, hairy and Continental; we of aesthetic pursuits, of lonely dispositions. We would walk down 3rd St., heads shaved, hands armpit-stuck, and marvel at the casual beauty of a crease that brings time and place into singular accord.



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To the people who will never walk: Irene, as she pantomimes humus pulled from Lisa's hair; Evan, as he fails to be introduced; Jess, a protagonist of curls; Alex, whose inquisitive look may or may not hide ineptitude; John, killer of one-hundred Angeleno rats; Shana, pointy-shoes East-West; Justin/Rudolph/Halston, beating a path to follow, his coat-tails to ride as he, in his words, would yours; Jen, all hips and dance; Colleen, of the nth-feminist-wave; Andrew, fit to the proportion of Modernist habitat; Dushko, low-talesman, tall-talker; Drew, a surly surfer torch-bearing for Ed, for Paul, for Raymond, for John; Caitlin, a brainy dripper Ab-Ex-ing for Amy, for Mari, for Mary, for Larry; Michelle, deservedly wizened; Spencer, with eyes on fashionable collar; Ellen, of surprising empathy for a man, stumbling his way up the off-ramp, dirt-smeared, drunk...

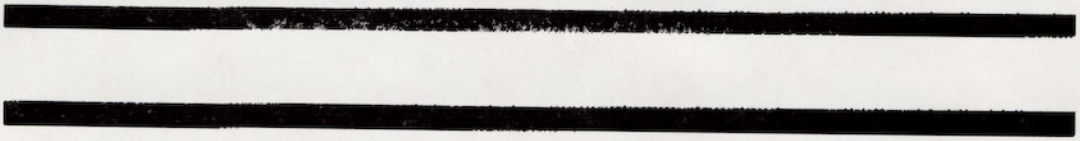
On your first day as a booth babe, you billow forth, corset-bust, boobs spilling all over the suction-carpet-floor. Such insipid behavior for fleshy brethren! Exactly a year ago, as you stand - where you stand - you caught a metaphor in the reflection of what should be the grand glass entrance to the Armory Show, and in that metaphor was another reflection, by Jacques Tati, on the waxing of postmodern space, a reflective door of a newfangled glass convention center, itself reflected by identical twins, all overgrown, linguistically French, but otherwise of context unknown until, until some American tourists enter one such door and in its reflection catch the historical marvels of Paris: the Eiffel Tower, the Arc de Triomphe. This door reflects, Tati reflects, the invocation of a dead place. Tati's ironical indictment was not just of architecture but of commodity culture, the cult of the convention center, the implication of its function. Not so far a distance over which to draw a route; not so far a distance between it and an art fair. Brian O'Doherty - decades ago - traced the white cube's myth of self-actualization, auto-miraculation, as if it was both the beginning and outcome of a long chain of discursive shifts in the exhibition of art. Its pristine quality, the story goes, provides just enough void to be filled by just enough object-aura. Yet art fairs remind you that the white cube also resembles the architecture of a trade-show: a roadmap to grandiosity laid out in the cheapest of means. Perhaps it's this deceit, situated in the first lines of our present aesthetic contract, that pains the most. For now, it seems, the very condition for the viewing for art is the excision of place, and the resurrection of as equally problematic a dialectical pole as life seems inevitable.

What is this private grassy property that greets you at the end of 65th St - that blocks your passage onto the river? Is it the property of the geese standing in it? Is it the property of Trump, who owns the building just behind it? Is it the property of Robert Moses, who can take credit for the highway sloping up beyond it? Of Henry Hudson? Of the river? Of this fence? As you contemplate this question, you'll sit on a rain-slicked bench, which faces a mesh fence, which faces this park - set so close that your eyes can concentrate on nothing but the mesh. A view through a sieve shows largely the sieve. A friend of yours working for the landscape design firm responsible for the Brooklyn Bridge park extension noted that to secure the necessary funds to extend the park up from DUMBO, an arrangement was struck with developers, whereby condos built on the river would have private access to certain parts of the park. How this mix of public and private would exactly be delineated was never made clear. Your friend left the firm before she could explain, by cause of poor sportsmanship. The owner of the firm instituted regular intra-office volleyball competitions, and finding her to be a below-average team player, banished her to the opposing team. She, finding such regulation to not make for good office morale - and for other reasons unbeknownst to you - ended up leaving the firm soon after. As you turn to begin your walk eastwards on 65th St., you soon encounter another fence; and below that fence a lot; beyond that lot a fence; elevated above that fence, what must be the continuation of 65th St. In the lot itself, nature could be said to be festering or germinating. Small plantings, medium-sized evergreens, plots of shrubbery tied to identical, crusty, white wood structures, plotted onto mobile palettes, stuffed into blue dumpsters: the provisional makings of a park, or the last relics of one. When you climb up the steps of Bibliothèque Francois Mitterrand, you're initially overcome by a strange sound - the sound of your shoe soles hitting a hard, dark wood; then, as you ascend, by a strange sight: four book-like buildings, set at right-angles, closing in upon you. Never has a book seemed less inviting; never has a book-like building been more steely and alluring - not even the British Library, and certainly not the Random House building. As you step, strange-sole-sounds-in-succession, you smell, as if from a depth, a pungent odor, and looking down behold three stories of trees sprouting from contained recesses: a promiscuous sampling of the world's most endangered foliage here forming one of the library's collections. So it would seem, by extension, that these curated shrubs, lying about the lot of W 65th St., are destined for a private collection - laid out on a wall of green for the delectation of Trump Place residents.

You may as well. So many angles, so many curves, so much brick, so many turrets. You build words like castles but your true wealth lies within. The ABC empire builds a block of castles, yet its true wealth dissipates into the ether - cathode ray turned digital tube. Broadcast vibrato by power of which a chocolate bar may flicker and pulse till being snatched, five to a hand - or four - or three - or two. When City Hall was built, its backside wasn't finished like its front - in plaster, or marble, or whatever it was made out of. Instead it presented a brick face, with a suggestion that surely nothing of interest could ever lie further north - no anyone, for that matter, worthy of as polished a back as a front. Interesting trend these buildings that announce themselves as finished, or at least appear in the press as such: the Standard - that auto-ruin - being one of them (you can't conclusively say that in the streets since the 13th day of your walks, it has completed itself); and Alice Tully Hall being another. You've read countless reviews in which critics wax metaphoric: buildings become bodies, eviscerated of unwanted tumors; buildings become countenances, blushing; buildings become dancers, stepping this way and that, along and across historical fault-lines. But none of these reviews, to your recollection, told of how unceremoniously the 66th St side of Alice Tully Hall would greet you. What for its elegant pas de deux with its ungainly older brother - that 1969 hunk of travertine - it seems, in fact, to have undergone a rather dated procedure: not Restylane, nor Botox, but snipped at both sides, tucked, filled in with glass. Its travertine folds hold taut along its 66th corridor, shackled with construction - for the moment. If Diller Scofidio + Renfro have truly made this theater blush, as they claim, perhaps it's not the blush of false modesty, but of embarrassment.

From way up high, this view might look as it does when laid flat-face-up, cordoned off at four sides, luminous in virtual haze. The New York Public Library online image archive has plans for most of the residences on the Upper West Side - from the twenties, thirties, forties. So many to talk about. So many as to become blasé to discuss. So many quirks and particularities of design as to feel generic. One on 67th St. is Chatham Court - a square plan organized around a square court, divided into three apartment units, facing 67th and Central Park West, tinted in orange, pink and yellow to differentiate whether a 13x10x15 parlor faces 67th; whether it faces Central Park West; whether a 16x8x18 dining room hugs the corner, or slots into a conventionally rectangular allotment. Besides these facts, this plan tells you nothing. The story, the characters, the conflicts are wanting, or the suggestion, at least, that this is an image upon which lives - like lines - can be marked. A similar plan opens Robbe-Grillet's novel Jealousy, and in this case the plan proves instrumental to traversing the language thicket that follows. Each word may as well be a brick, slotting into a space rendered so dense that time, characters and action around it obligingly turn, pivot, spin. A similar plan informed Blake Rayne's 1996 show at Greene Naftali. An overhead of four interlocking rooms, drawn onto the gallery wall, provided a legend for four paintings - each a view onto a different room. A catalog that accompanied the exhibition found yet four other hypothetical models for exhibitions in these rooms, and an empty Styrofoam cube, at the gallery's exit, potentiated a space for still more. This is a story twice removed, twice told - secondarily by Barry Schwabsky in the pages of Artforum. It's a story to meet its plan. Of course your walking makes its own plan upon the city. Yet who's to say that it will produce a story of any interest? Who is to say what it will produce? Auster's protagonist in City of Glass, certainly, initially couldn't devise the strange amblings of the man he pursued, regimented to the order of the grid, in seeming deliberation, yet clearly made for an overhead entity, a non-human, a reader, an augur. His walks fell in the context of a gridded city, where each corner can be treated as a point in a dot matrix, around which forms, shapes, letters, characters may be devised. His walks were both functional and functionless, though their function wasn't known - to any fellow pedestrian, at least, so naïve as to believe that we each only live out lateral lives - that we don't also walk to fix constellations on asphalt sky.

Now there are two options here. You could walk exactly straight or...Let's walk straight, Liz says. That's part of the policy. If parks and buildings don't follow the order of the grid, then you can't acknowledge them in the walks, so they become ellipses in the transcripts. It wasn't that I wasn't noticing things earlier, Liz says. It's that I was looking for you. I thought that we were about to pass one another. Well, did you have any cases of mistaken identity? No. No one looked like you. Whenever you're looking for someone, all of a sudden everyone that walks by takes on some form of resemblance. Although you don't know if Liz has seen you since you cut your hair. You could have also been a stranger to her. You were having a conversation with your therapist this morning about how you had an affair with a man in L.A. last week, while you were there for some other things, and how it was quite uncanny how similarly you and he looked, even though he's German-Polish-Jewish and you're Irish-Scottish-Unitarian. There was really a striking resemblance? In body type and height and body hair. All sorts of things. Shaved head. It was strange because visibly you've changed a lot in the past year. You've lost thirty-five pounds and cut your hair. Some people who have known you for a long time talk as if you've become a stranger to them. That you've transformed into a different person, Liz says. Yeah. You look different. And you feel really different, Liz asks. Yeah. Sort of. Some things didn't go away. You still sweat like crazy, unfortunately, and you definitely recognize yourself in yourself, but it was strange all the same. You readily accept that one of the many types of men that you're interested in is men who look like you, but prior to your body transformation you were more interested in men who looked like you then, and this was probably the first instance when you were seeing a man who looks like you in the now, and because you still feel so strange to yourself, it was almost like an education about yourself in the form of another person. It was a strange process of personal discovery, projected narcissism, and surprise when he ended up being different than you. Oh! He likes to bottom and you don't. Oh! He runs his house and organizes his clothes like they're relics in a museum, whereas you are a total slob. Do you think there's a correlation, Liz asks. Between sexual positions and characteristics? Messiness and order? I would usually associate it the other way, Liz says. That - that? Well, maybe not. That a controlling person who is a little more orderly would want to be on top, but as I started to say it I realized it was all wrong, because the orderly person wants the sense of loss of control. Oftentimes. Oftentimes playing the bottom is the more, how do you say, hygienically tenuous position? Oftentimes you encounter bottoms who are incredibly cleanly, where that idea of self-manicuring and self-maintenance extends into other parts of their lives. You also think it just might have to do with the fact that you're messy. In any case. Why did that come up? Oh, I got you off-track in talking about the attraction to someone who resembles you, Liz recalls. Right. But correction: you're very much on track. This is the first time you've walked through the park where you've done it correctly. I like the climbing and the jumping, Liz says. You're so pleased that she is so totally and unquestioningly going into this. Are we gonna do this, you ask, looking at a fence. Yes. Have you ever seen improv anywhere - on Youtube, Liz asks. Their best one is in Grand Central. They enlist hundreds of people, and everyone walking into Grand Central suddenly froze in one person's gesture for five minutes, and everyone else was having a fit. It sounds like a much more interesting flash mob than the ones you hear about. Everyone showing up and mooing is funny, but this has something of the existentially profound to it. I've tried this thing called Five Rhythms a few times, Liz says, which is basically a sober rave, but it's officiated by someone. The DJ also gives a sort of sermon in the middle of it and provides direction. You're not allowed to speak. And eighty people show up, and you're encouraged to dance with strangers and you're encouraged to pick a partner. It goes through different movements - staccato and more flowing kinds of rhythms. You'd be into that. Really? Yeah. You used to go to silent parties in New York. The directive element is so strange. Well, it's fairly free form, but you're given some guidance. But people break down crying. The two music things that I've tried over the past years were this and authentic movement, which is improvisation with your eyes closed. Both interest me because they're shutting down standard modes of communication. Wow. You're up for both. You can turn upside-down and hands-first walk through Central Park. Who says you want to escape the grid, you ask Liz. Why not adhere faithfully? There's freedom in order, she replies.



Alright. Your identity. You ready for it? You don't know how to introduce. You feel like you should tell a story with it. Well, you'll pull things out. You sit. You sit wherever you want. I'll sit in the director's chair, Beverly says. Well, you used to buy a lot of ill-fitting thrift-store ware. Way-too-tight polo shirts. I went through that phrase also, Beverly says. Well, you started in late high-school and did it into college, and in college you took on a faux-you-went-to-boarding-school vibe for a little bit, where people thought that you had worn a uniform and were modulating it and making it your own, though you had never worn a uniform. But it meant a lot of ill-fitting blazers, and you just understood nothing about proportions. And then it got a little costume-y. There are costume-y variants that you've had no success integrating into your wardrobe, some of which you like, but which you don't know how to use. A possible example of which is - Beverly begins to laugh. You have to be totally candid. This could work or not, but who knows? You think that you'd rather buy less but more interesting items, but then it becomes a question of what. Maybe you should just pull out things you really like; that you want to be wearing more of, Beverly recommends. Well, that's the thing. You have garments that you like, but you also have weaknesses. Like, now you have a lot of really nice shirts, so you don't think you need more nice shirts. This is a garment that you've worn for many years. You like these types of angles, but you think you have too many garments that do this now. So by this you mean deep-V, Beverly says. Yeah. What's your inseam? How long are your legs? You generally wear 32 or 30. Really? Your legs look so long. What's your waist measurement? Between 32 and 33. You have pretty broad shoulders. Do you know the measurement? No, but we can figure it out. You have measuring tape. We don't need to measure your shoulders, Beverly says. It's fine. So, you own a lot of monochromatic, deep-V things. And another thing that you wear sometimes that you feel ambivalently about is this vest, which operates more in a U than in a V. The only issue with it - the only issue with all of these things - is that some of your friends feel like there should be cleavage. You've developed this strange relationship to this vest, because at least Frank harps on the absent cleavage thing. But it's a comfort. You generally find you like deep-Vs and buttons that go all the way up. You've found yourself recently drawn to American old-timey. You also have some tuxedo shirts that you like, but you don't know how to wear them. Basically your problem is that you don't wear anything but skinny jeans, and they work with most things, but there are some shirts where they feel a bit forced. I think with jeans we should go a little bit looser, Beverly says. You think you're afraid of loose, but you need to embrace. You need to embrace other fucking materials.

Why is the Bethesda Angel significant, you ask Bart. Well, it wasn't the Bethesda originally. It was just south of the Bethesda. This area where people roller-skate. What is rotoscope? No, roller-skate. Oh. You know that spot very well. I guess I've always loved that spot because it's sort of - I don't know. I went there with my aunt who's deaf from Ireland, and she almost couldn't leave. She loved it so much. You have all of these people - young and old, from all different walks of life - just roller-skating to disco music. It speaks to a very particular spirit of New York, which might be a little cliché and might not really exist in the way it used to. But it sort of points to - look! Oh my god, Bart says. What the hell are they? Raccoons. I've never seen them this close. You haven't either. You're just used to finding the annoying remnants of the shit they do. They're pretty fearless, aren't they? Do they bite? You wouldn't get close. I can't believe it - oh whatever. I'm a real sap. Clearly. You're talking about your fucking aunt being touched by roller-skates, and then raccoons. What's next? Now it's gonna get much worse, Bart warns, because now I'm gonna talk about the last line in Angels in America, because you know the Angel Bethesda is this recurring theme in the plays. People are sitting out and what's-his-name says, "You are beautiful creatures. Each and every one. And I something you. And I love you? I forgive you? The great work begins" is the last line. And I've always thought that that was a special way to end, because what is the great work? You don't like that sappy crap, do you, Bart asks. Well, what is the relation to the fountain? Because they say it at the Angel Bethesda, he replies. The Angel Bethesda is a metaphor that goes throughout the whole play, and I'd have to know what the hell the Angel Bethesda was to tell you what that was, but I forget things very quickly. As do you. I'll Google it later. Please, let's leave it in the Park. And then in the series of movies they really highlight it. I don't know. It's just funny because that's such a special moment, and just this way I keep getting pulled back to this disco area with roller-skate and roller-blade. These two things. And then Sheep's Meadow is just so special in certain ways. So you and Bart are walking the right section of Central Park then. Yeah. I'm gonna start crying now. I didn't think this would happen at all. Your family loves going to watch the roller-skaters, but you play this game when you go, which is maybe a little less sappy and a little more cynical. You play the "Guess their Day Job" game. The game is very much predicated upon the same idea of why your aunt likes it and why you like it. That is the wonderful thing about those types of social gatherings in New York, where you really can be confronted by an unpredictable community, brought together by recreation. That's what makes it so delicious: to see the man who wears big headphones, looks like he's pushing sixty, is balancing two Nalgene bottles on his head, skating with himself as if he is Astaire and Rogers at the same time, doing things on roller-skates that nobody should be able to do with his body. And obviously that man is a corporate lawyer. How could he not be a corporate lawyer? The game gets boring fast, because there's a lot of wish-fulfillment in how you judge people. Of course you want everybody to have the most boring jobs imaginable, both because it's easy pop-psychology and because you want to believe that corporate lawyers have fun too. I always sort of imagined that they're beyond or outside of any commercial concern, Bart says. That all they do is roller-skate. Oh, that they do nothing else? Right. Because the only time I see them is there. But then you can sort of see these telltale signs. Men in their sixties have these AZT scars that people got early. Not scars, but you know that thing that happened to people who had AIDS - who had HIV - that early on in the treatment, when people take AZT, it would sort of collapse their cheeks, so there's this line. And, of course, my tendency is to ready victim into everyone, no matter how successful or whatever they ultimately become. They're tragic figures. I always filter them in that way. It's a really nice way to go through life. Bart laughs.

What it does, Robert says, is allow the stupid photographer to correct what they don't know about architecture and perspective and other things...It's also the problem of...there's the same grid all the time. It's not just the lack of knowledge of the photographer, you add: it's also the impossibility of using convex lenses to produce perfectly straight lines. But with the exhibition documentation you do, there's always the slight curve of the lens, and you have to use the warp function to align it. I know what you mean, Robert replies, but I might be in possession of some information you don't have. It's true...that anything - and it won't be the lens, it will be anything that reflects light, for which it has to pass through something, may or may not have aberration. So the question would then be whether it can be corrected to a flat field, and my answer would be that it can. It's called rectilinear...so there are special lenses...that project out of their rear-end a rectilinear flat image. And they were used for the one-to-one representation of objects. Are still used? Yeah. In fact, in Rochester they had a...but also apochromatic lenses that don't have distortion of color. These are all specialty lenses...lay a piece of paper flat, so now it's sucked flat, and now you have something on a monorail - normally a big Litho camera - so that they're absolutely perpendicular to the field you're looking at, and you have a flat-field lens, which has a very short depth of focus but is super-fucking-sharp, and you can get a flat-field image: grid-to-grid; snap-to-lock.

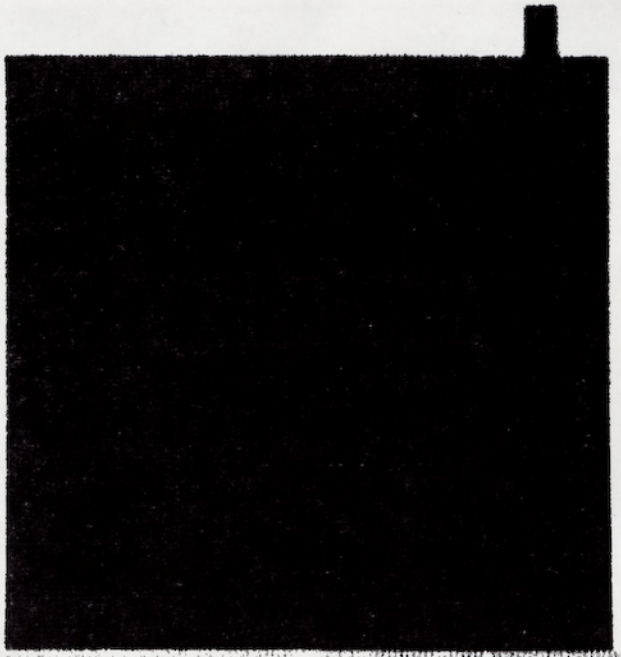
Let's do it this way, Dad says. You eat. Just be careful. What's in there? The three framed works - another edition of them. Think of it as an expensive handbag. Tyler, what do you think is going there - on that site, Mom asks. Another apartment building? You don't know. Well, that building beyond it is ConEd, Dad says. Dollars to donuts ConEd owns that site. Now John Rosselli, Tyler - that shop on the right - is a really famous interior design company. Is it? What type of work has he done? Bonnie Williams, who's his wife - a very famous decorator who's always in Architectural Digest - they have a really big shop in the D&D building. If you look in any design magazine, you always see him referenced, or his wife Bonnie Williams. They also had a shop on 72nd St. across from the muffin place we just left, but they moved because all of those shops are being sold because of the Second Avenue subway, so they all have to move out. If you notice, Falk Surgical Company is the last one that's hanging in there for some reason. Which one is, Dad asks. Falk. Yeah, but Trish, that store has actually been there for a while, because I used to practice my motorcycle turns there before I failed my test. You practiced your turns, you ask Dad. You've got to do real tight, small circles, and then you've got to do figure-8s, so I would come down these streets on Sundays and practice. But then a truck foiled me anyway. The way I didn't pass my test was the guy told me I had to do figure-8s and be responsible to traffic in front and behind me. It wasn't where they normally do it - they normally do it on a side-street. It was a street with double-yellow lines, so I'm coming around here, coming back in that direction, and a truck's coming. So the truck cuts around me, so I keep going. The guy at the end pulls me over and told me I failed. I said, why? He said, well, when that truck came, you were supposed to stop. That's the rule. But when does a motorcycle do figure-8s legally in traffic, you ask. Well, of course. Well, this is the thing. You've got one guy: this is what he does, and he's got a monopoly. He's got the power, and he can say yes and no: yes you passed, no you didn't. The problem is that what they want to see is how you can maneuver in tight spaces on a motorcycle, Mom says, and you can't put your feet down. That wasn't the problem, Dad says. He wrote me up that I endangered lives.

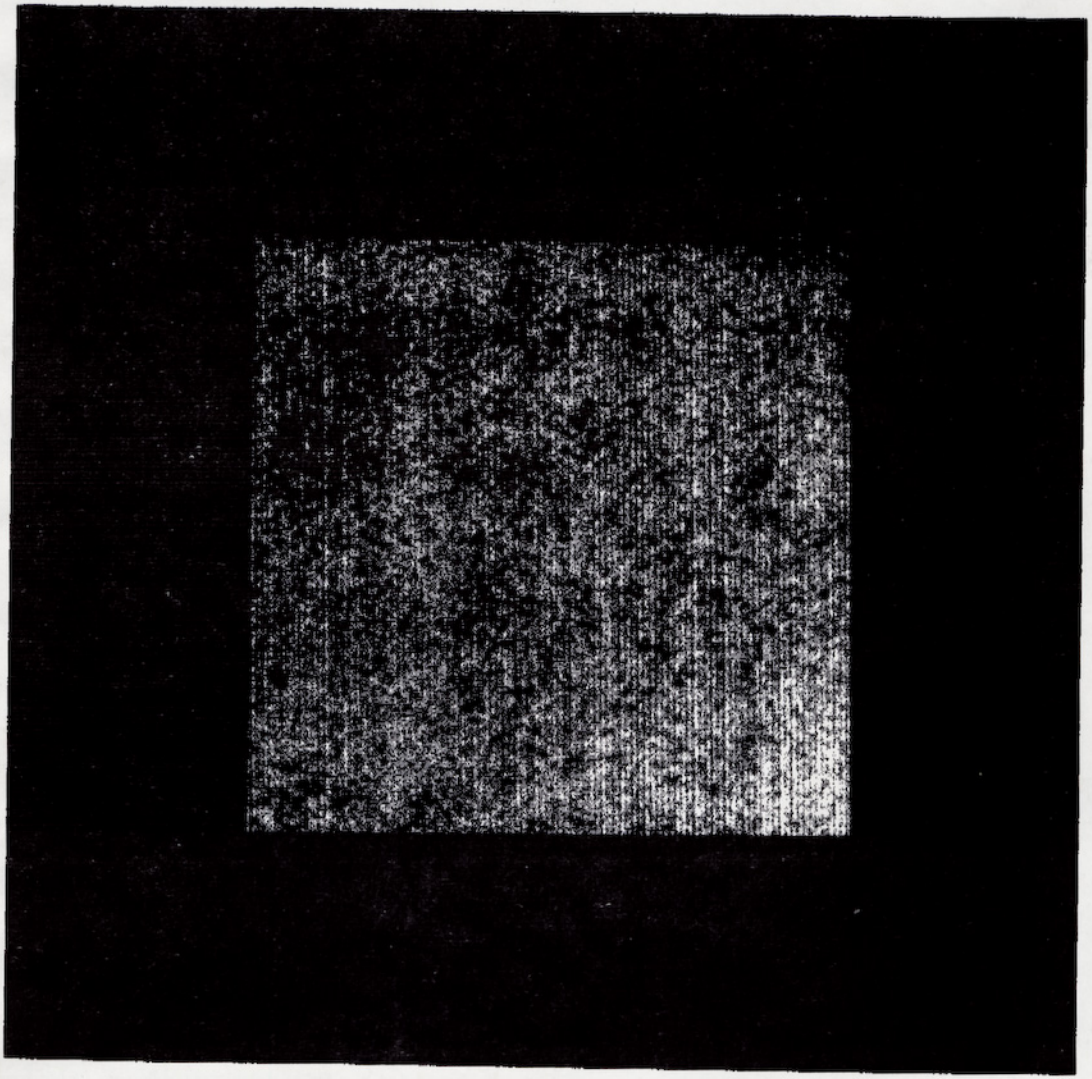
...it's something what you are talking about, more or less, Yulia says: how New York thinks about itself as a public space, a space for sculptures, for art, and how much space is devoted to that public art or to embellishing its own architecture. But again, it's amazing how despite the appearance of that devotion, there are so many examples of somebody willing to - that it is a city like you had said, citing the Commissioner's Proposal that made the grid, founded on maximizing property value. It's amazing how many people would be willing to raze it, just to build a high-rise and maximize profit value. This building is significant, for instance. This is the Langham. You think Yulia has a photo of it. It was built in the early 1900s, and the people who owned this plot of land - the Clarks - also owned the plot of land of the Dakota, which is that building right back there, which is where Yoko Ono still lives, which is where she and John Lennon lived, which is considered to be the most famous residential building on the Upper West Side. But before the Langham was built, the Clarks were going to sell the property to someone, and the condition of the sale was that this building couldn't be as tall as the Dakota. So it didn't matter who bought it; it was just important that for them maximizing the status of their adjacent property, any developer had to build a lesser building. Let me come back to your practices, Yulia says. I think I had asked you what is it for you to write criticism, and I know you have a literary background, but it's still that not every artist writes criticism of others, you know, so it's something interesting for me. I still wonder maybe it's a way to articulate your own way of looking, or get your name out there. What is it for you? Well, it's definitely fraught. But for you, the first thing is that it comes practically. When you first started writing, like when most people first start writing, you were writing for free just to develop a body of clips, with the hope that someday you would able to make some money off of it, but with the knowledge that you would never make very much. But for the time being, it's one of a couple of good sources of income, so it's nice to feel that you can get a return on it. On your intellectual work, Yulia says. Yeah. You laugh. Intellect for pay. Beyond that practical issue, it is very much research, and it is very much about being able to participate in the discussion and the questions that are being asked in a different way. And perhaps it's another way for your practice, she offers. Sometimes. Sometimes it very much feels like it is, but most times it doesn't, but you've always recognized that your challenge with art-making is trying to reconcile the part of you that wanted to engage critically in this way, and then the part of you that wanted to participate as a practitioner, as a creator. So you think that in a way your criticism has gotten closer to your art, and your art has gotten closer to your criticism.

Hey Jeanne! How are you doing? You're wearing your walking shoes. I know. They're my most comfortable shoes. Well, you hope she's wearing her bathing suit as well. You know, there are two options for walking through the park. Because it deviates from the grid, if you walk through it on its distinct paths, then whatever is said in the context of the park isn't transcribed. You enter the zone of the ellipsis. So you can say bad things, Jeanne asks. It's true. You always hope people will get scatological, but no one does. Because some people, when they walk, get very presentational. You had one walker who said, "Well, as a novelist and librarian, I really feel I should say, for the benefit of our readership," and you thought, all right. OK. You're going to have to find her some space for deviation - or deviance. But the other way you could walk through the park is by walking straight through, which you've done a couple of times, and which requires some climbing, jumping, some trudging up hills and down. Actually, I have a friend, Caleb Smith, Jeanne says. A few years ago - maybe 2003 - he walked every street in Manhattan, kind of like what you're doing. I don't know if he did it every day, but within a year he had done every street. When he went through the park he did exactly where the street was, so it did involve some jumping over bushes. He made a video of one walk that goes through the park. It's pretty funny to watch. You'd like to see it. You bet it is a little like the film of Bas Jan Ader bicycling into an Amsterdam canal. You feel like it would have that humor. It does, Jeanne says. And Caleb is actually getting his Masters in American History, so his whole purpose in doing the walks was to explore different things about the streets. There are actually markers that show where streets should have been made through the park, that come up - you can see them in a couple of places. I don't know. It's secret, and he had to do all this research to find it. What do you mean, where they were supposed to be laid, you ask Jeanne. Where the grid was supposed to be laid? That's interesting. You wish you knew about this guy two months ago. Who is he? When I was at Columbia, he worked in the Visual Media Lab. It was kind of this obsession that he had - this walking. It sounds much more rigorous than your project - every street in the city! You prepare a certain amount of research for the walks, based on what you can find, but it sounds like he is very well versed. Yeah, he's become pretty obsessed with it, Jeanne says. He's one of those people who just loves Manhattan. Is he from here? No, he's from New Mexico, but he's lived here for a long time. Hmm. You're going to have to contact this guy. Yeah, you should, Jeanne says. When I did this exhibition at the Brooklyn Arts Council, it was all work related to maps and cartography, and he did a talk for us that was really good. So far you've done two walks with walkers who wanted to walk straight across. Do you know Liz Magic Laser? I know who she is, Jeanne says. I know her work. So, she showed up wearing hiking boots, so you knew she was really hot for it. And you didn't tell her in advance. It was broad daylight, and you walked across, orienting yourselves by the gap in the buildings on the far side of the park. What was great about it was that you were sustaining a conversation that had nothing to do with what you were doing, walking-wise, and you were doing it so unthinkingly and deliberately that you must not have looked that strange. It seemed very purposeful. Then when you listen to the recording, it's a seemingly continuous conversation with all of these scuffling sounds. But very fittingly, you end up at this playground, and on the other side is this stone wall leading to Central Park West. And the fencing is super-high with spikes on the top. You don't know. Maybe you've seen too many videos of people being impaled on those types of things, but you get on top of it, and you had a vision of your entrails. So in that walk you actually decided that Liz would go over the fence, because she wanted to, and you would deviate and go to the other side and be her spotter. In the second walk, you walked with a friend from CCS, and in that walk you walked late at night and were south of the Rambles, which was a shame, because he really wanted to see some gay cruisers. That was an interesting walk, because you tried to do it perfectly straight, but by force of narrative, by force of storytelling, of course you had to go by the Bethesda Fountain, of course he had to tell me some story about Angels in America. Anyways, when you got to the far side, it was another scenario where the wall was so high that only one of you would be able to get over. So you lent him your hands. So you're an enabler, Jeanne. You help others realize the perfection of the grid. So if I want to scale any walls, you'll be there, Jeanne asks. Absolutely. Though you and she will definitely go through two bodies of water on this walk. Hence the bathing suit issue.

Tell me about the walk you did today, you ask Luke...Across what street? This street. 35th? 34th, he replies. Did you make stops on the walk? Hmm, I had to stop at a photo store, I had to get a couple of things, but I've spent a lot of time on 34th St. in this neighborhood - not so much this far west. The east side has a lot of - I have a lot of personal connections to this street. What are the connections? (Do you do a lot of studio art, Kate asks Tova) Well, my therapist is located on 36th St, and I've been going there since I was sixteen. (Do you? No, I haven't been.) She's on 36th St. between Third and Lex. (I was in sculpture, and then I switched) And I also worked for the Historic Districts Council for about two years, photographing every historic district. Murray Hill is two districts, so I photographed Murray Hill. (He said he didn't want to learn certain things that would hold him back) Recently I was hired for a job at a development company for a building that's going up on 33rd and Second. (How do you feel about a massage, Tova asks Kate) And I had surgery at NYU Medical Center on 34th St when I was thirteen, and the surgeon's office is across the street. (We can trade. I can do one for you, Kate says). And my father passed away at NYU Medical Center on 34th St. And then of course the Empire State Building I've been to many times. (Whatever you want to start with, Kate says. Tell me about furniture. Tova laughs). What was it like working for the Historic Districts? It was amazing, Luke replies. It was right after I moved back to New York that I got the job. I grew up in New Jersey, but my father lived in Manhattan, so I'd spend the weekends here, so I was somewhat familiar with the lower part of Manhattan, and my mother lived on the Upper East Side, but outside of those two areas I really didn't know the city at all. (A lot of the people in that program were just in love with materials, Kate says) I'm sure these walks for you have been incredibly educational, Luke says, but also showing you how much diversity there is between two neighborhoods, and how fine the line is between neighborhoods. (So now are you painting, Kate asks Tova. Do you have shows?) Uh. It was all five boroughs, so I did a lot of walking, and I took over 6,000 photographs, and I had to research every neighborhood thoroughly to determine what was worth photographing in each neighborhood, what was significant, because I ended up being the one to decide. It's a very small - actually private, not city-funded - group who runs the council, and it's in the Rectory at St. Mark's Church on 9th St. (A studio. I have a studio) That's also where the Greenwich Village Historical Society is. And Jeremy Blake lived on the third floor of the Rectory. Kind of a weird mix of people living and working. (I haven't shown anyone my work. I just had my first studio visit in, like, three years) And then there's also a library in the Rectory, where you can research. It's kind of like the Library of Congress, but more detailed in terms of the survey of photographs, and in terms of all information related to every single building that's ever been erected in New York City: previous tenants, who they were, what they did for a living, when the building was built, when the renovations were. (What facilities do you need for that?)

I am a steam-pump. Borderline, Graham says. Is everyone familiar with steam-pump culture? Yeah, Logan says. No, Andrea says. No, Logan's friend says. Can you elucidate - one of you two? Or both? It's like old-timey punk, goth-y, Graham's sister begins. They're emulating some romantic notion of what the 19th Century was like, but applying notions of 19th Century technology to modern day things, Graham says. Like living your life entirely by gaslight, or where you have a car, but it's powered with a wood-burning stove. It's like wearing a leather trench and huge combat boots and listening to industrial music, but having old steam goggles. It sounds like a contradiction, no matter what, Andrea says. No! It's Victorian futurology. It's like goth, but - it doesn't have to be goth, Logan interrupts. It doesn't have to be, Graham says, but it's similarly emulative of a previous era's aesthetic, but it's more roll-up-your-sleeves and get things done. In your steam-pump, everyone wears fancy tailored suits, but flies around and fights with biotechnology. The aesthetics are early Manhattan, with the ideas of the early skyscraper, and the ideas that a lot of these skyscraper builders had, with cars on every level! And zeppelins flying around! Smartly dressed men whizzing by on their personalized helicopter-umbrellas! This is your new thing. This is the thing that's going to replace steam-pump. It's gonna be called steam-puff. It sounds delicious, Andrea says. And healthy! It's mainly made for boys like you. Why not steam-buns, Graham asks. Because puff has a thing with the gay stuff. Oh, Graham says. And buns doesn't? Everyone laughs. Which is more gay? Puff or bun, Andrea asks. Can we get a tally? Hey, we're right on cue here, Graham says. We're right on 77th St. You can't believe it. Hooray, Andrea says. Don't play, you unenthusiastic park participant, you tell her. And another movie set, Logan says. Another movie! It's the symmetrical walk of spectacle, you say - and light! It's all about light. Does everyone know about Alexander von Humboldt, whose statue was back there, Graham asks. He was the epitome of a 17th Century adventurer-naturalist. He was a German guy, really inspired by the Enlightenment to travel the world and learn as much as he possibly could. He was a walking Natural History Museum. He spent a huge amount of time in South America exploring the jungles, and the Andes, and went around the South Pacific. A totally amazing guy. "Can we stand by for hair and makeup?" "Sure. And they got the 10am?" "They got the 10am." Listen to the lingo. You think it's a 10am wakeup call for the actors. Oh, so they're getting ready for it now, Graham says. They get ready all night and the actors (yawn) roll in when they're ready. Maybe. Meryl's got a twelve-hour clause. She can only work twelve hours. Can't shoot anything after. Do you see him guarding the doorway to the dressing room, Graham asks. He laughs. As if we would just walk in! You love how the concept of earshot has disappeared on this walk. Everyone has made comments about people in your vicinity while they're still in earshot, as if you're in some sort of nonexistent, trans-historical bubble. Well, it's just that we're doing something so much more important than anyone else, Graham says. We're allowed to talk freely. Of course. You have the power of authorship, you tell him. You're fixing everyone in time and history. You could point at that and describe it, and it would be remembered: Lightin Production Rental Group. These are kind of elaborate trailers, Logan says. Look at this extension. Once you get married in Hollywood, you get that addition, you explain. She laughs. You never want this street to end: it just gives so much. We've done really well by this street, Graham says. Alright. Get reading there. What's your name, star, Andrea asks. M. Pitt. Mr. Pitt, Logan asks. Michael Pitt, Michael Pitt, Andrea chants. Who's Michael Pitt, Graham asks. He was in The Dreamers - that Bertolucci film - and he played Cobain in Gus van Sant's Cobain movie. Bodily functions, light, Andrea says. Tyler, did you know that Logan NEEDS to use that bathroom. The one that happens to be next to his trailer. You've seen his cock. You're not impressed. I hate Michael Pitt, Andrea says. He's a boy-child, she replies. Oooh. Shake Shack! You can go to the bathroom in Shake Shack, you tell Logan, and everyone else can get milkshakes. I'd love a milkshake, Andrea says. It's on the grid, you shout. It's on the grid, Andrea repeats. I don't know, Graham says. This feels unorthodox. Says the man who has pussied out for the first two months of your project. Besides, most of your walks at night in the cold involve stopping for a whiskey every block. Oh, Graham replies. Why didn't we do that? Why didn't we do that in the park? Well, if The Mark Hotel had been open. It's more like stopping for a BJ in the park. You know that's why Graham wanted to go into the dark area. I don't know if I want a burger or a shake, Logan says. Oh. This will be a nice reward, you tell Andrea. Totally. And we're not even finished. It's been epic, she says. Are most of your walks this eventful? No. This is not par for the course. There's been light; there's been death, she begins. There's been spectacle; there's been near-death - the threat-of. And throughout it all I've had fear.





Walking through the park probably triggers a lot of memories for people, Lance says. Yeah. Well, it certainly did for Bart. Does it trigger memories for you? This arch does. Grey Wack. Where does the name come from? I don't know. Anyways, I came here with my sister when she was in town. We sort of sat here for a little while. Because it's so close to the Met, there were a lot of people with cameras, and everyone was taking photos in front of it. It's one of those places, you know? What do you think of it, you ask. Did you ever take a photo in front of it? No, Lance replies. Not even when your sister was visiting? I don't think so. I think I took a note. A note? Yeah. I'm a note-taker. Really? What does that mean? How, when do you take notes? With what frequency? I don't know. It depends. Anywhere between zero and ten a day. Never any more? Sometimes. I don't know. It depends. It depends on whether I'm by a computer as well, because they're walking notebooks. It's when you're out and away from another place to write. If I'm at my desk, I usually take a note some other way. Do you consolidate them? Yeah. See they're in these notebooks, and they've got holes for the months, and then every note is numbered, so I think I'm up to about 2036 right now. You start at one? I started at one, and then I did ten notebooks, and someone else told me, she said, "Why don't you just keep going? Instead of stopping and starting every time?" What was number one, you ask Lance. Well, there are ten number ones. But what was the number one that began 2036? Something about shoelaces, he responds. When was that? Probably 2002. Do you find yourself rereading your notes? No, but I transcribe them - or I have been putting them together. I've been preoccupied with this question of what does it mean to write for a database, or write a longer piece in a spreadsheet. It's this question that plagues me. I don't know if this is the answer, but it's something that I keep doing. I think I know what you mean, but what do you mean? I mean, writing that takes as its medium the database, Lance says. So writing that can be reorganized. Writing that can be non-linear: that's in-flux; that's encapsulated; but overcoming this problem of unreadability. How do you overcome it? I don't know yet, he says. The notes I look at as this long-term thing. I don't know. I shouldn't be talking about it, because I don't like it when they're self-conscious. Those are the worst ones. Can a note be long? Oh yeah. Yeah. But I don't generally write long pieces in the notebook, because you're on-the-go and just want to remember something, or maybe you think of some turn-of-phrase that you think is good at the time, and you want to look back and remember that it's not. You laugh. You like that Lance puts it that way. You have a friend who was telling you - this was several years ago, when you were freshmen in college - she reread something she had written a couple of years earlier in her diary and was so embarrassed by it, really just didn't want her biographer to think that she grew up to continue to be the sap that she was when she wrote it. So she wrote "Ugh," U-G-H, in the margin of the diary in a different pen to indicate, "Well. At some point I came back and I set this one right. I proved to whomever - to whatever reader might exist out there - that I'm no sap." But then of course what ended up happening was that she returned to it again, several months later, and thought to herself, "'Ugh?' Of all of the ways I could have responded to this, I wrote 'Ugh?' U-G-H? That's so, so infantile! I am a sophisticated woman, yet I write Ugh?" Then she was overcome by the urge to write, in the margin of the margin, "Ugh," in another color pen. You can imagine this rainbow of infinite Ughs. Each margin cuts itself in half, into infinitesimally small proportions. You can imagine this going on for the rest of her life. But really it gives you the freedom to write bad stuff, Lance says. If you can just go back and write "Ugh," then you can keep writing those bad things.

Those are so strange, Saskia says. What are they - limestones? Are they a rock garden? When you walked on 21st St with a man who had lived there for about thirty years - he lived on Tenth Avenue and 21st and had really seen the full scope of change to the neighborhood - he said that when his neighbors' small animals die, they are buried in the sidewalk tree plots. So you wonder whether those are gravestones. He said that there was this one bird, and there was this controversy about its burial, because its gravesite kept getting dug up. Gross, Madeline says. Well, we don't know what lies underneath Manhattan, Saskia says. There's probably plenty of burial sites and remains. Of course. There are bodies everywhere. Washington Square Park used to be a mass burial site for victims of yellow fever, and those bodies were relocated to Bryant Park after Washington Square was developed. Now sitting under Bryant Park are millions and millions of books - the New York Public Library stacks. You don't know where the bodies were relocated, or whether they were just pressed further under the earth. It's funny when a city history presents a metaphor like that: dead bodies becoming books; books as stand-ins for bodily histories. You also found it funny to read that before Central Park came into being, people spent outdoor leisure time in cemeteries. There's this association with the 19th Century - and particularly Victorian England - with death, melancholy, and the aesthetics of the funerary, but it's surprising that there was also a practical reason for that: people had no place else to sit outdoors. Part of the influence that Olmstead and Vaux drew in their aesthetics, besides English garden design, was from cemeteries like the Green-Wood in Brooklyn. This was a massive, landscaped plot, and something about the integration of the illusion of the raw, untamed and the naturalistic with these composed vistas and views - apparently the art of cemetery design had reached a pinnacle. This is another layer to it - slightly unrelated. Do you know the artist Tom Burr? He's very good. You think he's found a very interesting way of mixing the history of queer studies with minimalism. Your favorite project was one where he took a section of The Ramble and recreated it in a park in Sonsbeek. The section of The Ramble he took was not a current section, but a section with the exact plantings as specified by Olmstead in the original planting of Central Park. So he's taking a site that's notorious for gay cruising and relocating it to the specifications of its original plan and so creating a gravestone for the Central Park that no longer exists. The way we encounter it now - it's very different than the way Olmstead intended it. As much as he lay the undergirding, it was really Robert Moses replanting it, starting in the thirties, that accounts for what it now is. There was no interest in recreation when Olmstead was originally designing Central Park. It was intended as a space of promenading and driving and picnicking, and by the thirties it had fallen into disrepair, partly because, in the Depression, Hoovervilles were set up. Prior to the park being constructed, the area was predominantly poor African-American and German and Irish - just clusters of these small, depressed villages - and in the thirties, that history superimposed itself when displaced and then-homeless people set up shop in the park. You don't think that's going to happen this time around, but who knows? So the Park was in total disrepair by the mid-thirties, and went back into disrepair in the seventies, but it was largely Moses who cleaned it up and instituted new types of playing-field areas and did a lot of the replantings. It's interesting how Central Park is so huge, Saskia says: that a major part of the most expensive real estate in the world is not residential or commercial. Well, when you read the 1811 Commissioner's Plan, which set up the grid, it's amazing how much this urban architecture derives not from some Cartesian ideal of space, but from the wish to maximize property value. As much as this architecture is built to facilitate ease of bodily flow, which also has associations with capital, it was really built for property. So it does seem antithetical to take this much property and create a park.

There's no time to slow, no time to stop, no time to think, no time to look at a flag, at a rock, at a flower bud. Talking without thinking: that's velocity. On your walk yesterday, you passed a massive, plaster foot, set atop a crate of the same size, outside a gilded home on east 81st St., and remarked with surprise, causing Saskia, in turn, to remark with surprise that this foot was so surprising to you. You then were surprised to learn that she had assumed you were walking 81st St. eighty-two times over eighty-two days, and that this foot would therefore be a surprise - that there would be any surprises left on this street. Now that would be a very different project, you recall having remarked, to fit the temperament of a very different artist. And indulging Saskia just a little more, you speculated as to the cumulative effect of such walks, mentioning "The Sight of Death," T.J. Clark's recent book on slow-looking, as one reference-point. Clark, of course, is interested in acts of stopping and staring at two Poussins in the Getty, and in how the concept of duration may provide a precondition for a deeper type of engagement. The body stops, you could say, but the eyes and the mind inquire, wandering forth along the tonal, aesthetic, symbolical and associative paths of the work. You think of "Standing Still and Walking in New York," the title of a collection of Frank O'Hara essays - Frank, who should have made an appearance far earlier in these walks. The title describes the two poles of urban experience, or suggests a riddle, a puzzle: how can one stand still and walk at the same time? So you speculate that to walk across a single street, river-to-river, for eighty-two days may come close to approximating a solution. Walking in suspended animation and temporal iteration, moving ever closer to a state of identicality with a street. Yet with every still more myopic gaze and insight, this deep-looking, this slow-looking makes you increasingly blind to the textures and shifts and patterns of the street. This was not your project. The Diana Ross Playground, just to your left, reminds you of another story of inception - that on the night of your birth, in 1983, the Diana Ross concert in Central Park was rained out, and your father, finding himself locked out of his apartment, slept in this area of Central Park West on a bench, in a miserable state. Perhaps the playground now commemorates the site of that weighted sleep, as much as it does the diva. To walk a single street eighty-two times is to become so familiar as to become bored, blind: a fascinating and boring proposition at one and the same time. But to walk one street a day, each in succession, is to lose a city as fast as you may rediscover it, to feel whole neighborhoods slip away, with the passing of each day, relinquished with a worry, with the question of whether everything that should have been said - every story told, every character wrought, every account relayed - was told, wrought, portrayed, relayed; whether you did succeed, in fact, in providing an image, in text: a shape to a walk. What's left out, what's left behind. Such melancholic, elegiac thoughts should accompany your last walk, you suppose. Around you, the park musters up the first signs of the coming season. You've carved a shape that began at the start of the year, the bottom of the grid, the dead of winter and ends with the death of winter and a period of renewal. But what does text do to a walk, you again think. And what is it to walk with a reader in mind? To talk to a reader and for a reader? On behalf of a reader? For you to talk to you? What is it to commit these walks to text? To draw a community of friends, acquaintances, colleagues into fiction? And what is it for those people to become characters? Certainly you've seen a gamut of performances, some speaking as if broadcasting, and others with the fear of accountability, with the knowledge that each word, each phrase is being committed to some account. That is worry enough. Walking as a process of writing oneself into an archive and into a history, of being held accountable. You walked with Lance, and he brought up Chris Burden's "TV Hijack" and threatened to carry his own audio-recording device, to hold you accountable, to hold you at point of death, to commandeer the means of recording. His implication was not that media could cease to flow - that representation could cease to circulate - but that the only power you can attempt to have, however futilely you attempt it, is controlling your means of representation. This lesson was learned when Bart joined you on his walk, wearing the cap of journalist, and generated his own recording and transcript. You eviscerated the conversational tics and spoken punctuation that lengthen speech out to the time of a thought - all of those tics that make for such tough going on the page, without which a transcript becomes something slightly other and folds into a literary space. You eviscerated with the authority of an artist, and Bart preserved with the authority of a journalist. The article he wrote, the exact transcript he preserved had the effect of making you seem somewhat uninformed, pretty inarticulate, a bit funny, not self-serious. The transcript he preserved found you speaking in first-person, where you have scrubbed clean your accounts of any instance of I. To speak on your behalf: how's that for accountability? As you near the close, with First Avenue, York, East End, the FDR beckoning, your body slows to a halt. And yet you look down and your legs continue to work. And yet the city gradually begins to pass you by: first cars and pedestrians, then the asphalts, the gravels, the bricks and the stones, sliding forward into the future. Come five, ten years, you may return to these streets to see just how far forward they slip.