



Warm, Warm, Warm Spring Mouths
Ed Atkins

*And you don't seem to be.
And how could you be?*

*And no provision has been made for the casual life
in casual, freshly-laundered bedclothes; trousers dropped to
excessively conceal the ankles.*

And pain exists in the concave.

And pain exists in the convex.

Allowing liquids to puddle, importantly.

Allowing the camera to pan back to the groin.

*(Certain skittering forms impressing the rainbow
meniscus.*

-- Lifespans of a few bleak seconds.)

*And there's a certain earthmover named 'Dispassion'.
Printed in an ersatz military typeface on the bright yellow
muzzle, right beside the curled exhaust flue:*

The 'Dispassion'.

*Named after an icebreaker that used to clear those
unnamed straits at the top of the world. To allow for the blood
to flow thickly*

RED one way and

BLUE the other.

Or to flatten – to medicate and temper the earth.

And I'm here in this trench.

The final trench, perhaps.

This one goes out to the damp clothes balled
up and forgotten in the washing machine.
Secreted inside: a still-foiled condom and the
pulp of a letter.

This one goes out the door and into the
squall. A HERO!, we shriek.
This one the last thing you hear on the radio:

**I don't want to hear any news on the radio
about the weather on the weekend.
Talk about that.**

**Once upon a time
a couple of people were alive
who were friends of mine.**

**The weathers, the weathers they lived in!
Christ, the sun on those Saturdays.**

And this whole thing a concession, really.

A compromised surrogate for a REAL fucking experience. All hobbled legs and gelatinous irresolution, hauling itself inexorably through the murk by the will of some unknown coronary motor.

I say 'coronary', but I have no idea whether it even has a heart.

Or a brain.

Or kidney-shaped kidneys.

And what would these things be for down here?

And what desires power it?

And where is it going?

And what will it bring back?

And where will we hide when it's back?

And what the fuck is it looking at?

And what will we watch while it's out?

But you know, it's often all I want:

The kind of sodden, sappy flights of fancy afforded by unworthy, conspicuously dumb slabs of culture. The kind that lolls on paper plates and reminds us all of a kind of cakey sex.

And malnutrition offering the kind of pathetic solace that news of a foreign suicide might bring. Or what post-masturbatory succor might actually be. Or the laboured sketch with the hard pencil of the videogame character, scanned and offered up and rejected.

Something about external legibility, etc.

The ability to find the right TACK, to grope out the syntax with toner'd digits.

The ability to apprehend the perimeter: to trace the shape of something before it's completed.

A particular kind of forecast – fate that deals in objects and their metabolic relations, possibilities. As in, PRE-DIGESTION – which would – if would – be properly understood as a kind of legibility or, elsewhere, as a sufficiency of aero- or hydro-dynamism.

And a bullet, for example, makes use of a VISCOUS context of ignorance.

Ignorance of how it works.

The shape of a bullet being DELIMITED by the rest of the world's inability to empathise constructively with it. A kind of INDIGESTION the realisation of this empathetic failure.

A description I remember of a Christopher Nolan film was that everything in it looked like a fucking gun. That the camera moved like a fucking gun. That the music sounded like a fucking gun. As if heard down the barrel of a fucking gun. That Leonardo Di Caprio looked like a fucking gun. That he would approach his reflection and apprehend himself – with WILD ignorance – as a kind of fucking gun.

And (what) I want(ed) to say is that none of us could make a fucking computer.

Beginning with what? – a fistful of sand? the where-withal to make ORANGE fire? Access to oil? A few rudimentary tools? A thousand glum years.

And there's down here.

-Down here everything is STRUCTURAL.

And ornate gods stalk the corridors, taking it all in via twelve-inch pupils and twelve-ton jaws and twelve-year metabolisms and twelve-month gestations.

And it's not too much to imagine their defining the tides AT WILL.

And it's something I can't come to terms with, however.

-Their existence: which would have to preclude the existence of the floor.

And it brings cold comfort.

-The irony being that neither temperature nor poise being possible, of course.

This one goes out and comes back:

I don't want to hear any news on the radio
about the weather on the weekend.
Talk about that.

Once upon a time
a couple of people were alive
who were friends of mine.

The weathers, the weathers they lived in!
Christ, the sun on those Saturdays.

And bullet-time, really, is a lifesaving bit of exegesis.

And things often came sellotaped to the covers of specialist magazines. Or conspicuously missing from the covers of specialist magazines, pocketed by specialists who determined to maintain their specialist status by denying access to other, non-specialist or pre-specialist plebs.

Beautifully written, ain't it? –That scene with the playing card and the bullet. Or the one with the balloon and the bullet. Or that one with the apple and the bullet. Beautifully scored, also.

And it's not for nothing we named the camera 'Phantom'.

All that excessive recourse to revenant forms as cultural analogues.

And there's plenty of that sort of stuff conjured down here: the pressure, the proximity to RED hell, the lack of ocular privilege – the lack of ANY sensory privilege – has harbored the idea of a haunted house thick with zombies, ghosts, ghouls and vampires. Ruled by the notorious, prehistoric Vampire Squid from Hell.

This one goes out [... --->>>] then ploughs hard into the shoulder at a grim, determined pace. A drill whining at the end of its charge.

And I mean to say that, I don't really know how to make a gun.

I could make a bullet, I think – and perhaps eventually come up with a way to propel the thing sufficiently enough to make a mark. Perhaps even kill something.

And I don't know.

And I can make educated guesses, though. Provisional education.

And I do, certainly, have a relationship with guns.

One of semi-intelligibility.

A little one-sided, I suspect.

And I do darkly suspect that guns know a frighteningly large amount about me.

–Their particular penetrative aspect, etc. Never constructive, of course.

As in: 'we'll never manage to put that playing card back together.'

And guns don't work down here.

And nothing works down here.

Nothing save for that NASA pen and the off-screen Bathysphere.

This one goes out along the long, oiled cock of a rifle. The ornate, occult rifle and its occult subject / object proposition.

Think of Pinocchio and Gepetto lodged in the fat colon of the whale: the mast of Gepetto's junk stuck, spanning the bowled diameter of the whale's large intestine. Mulched krill backing up. Insolubility is a decision, we should say.

Dispassion, also. Dispassion as a verb, as something I do to myself, to other things.

'I'm going to dispassion this.' Etc.

More often than not, this is the kind of violent placcative mode I plump for. A low-polygonal boulder presenting the easiest, most comfortably abject (mattressed) means to

*approach the great wall of my frustrations. Both the boulder
and the wall are, of course, hollow.*

*Moreover, me too! A hollow man: a bed sheet of
ferociously detailed skin tossed over chicken wire, sealed with a
gallon or so of PVA semen.*

*Dispassion also the name of an earthmover, an
icebreaker, a cloudbuster.*

This one goes out to an intricate foil helium
balloon, bobbing obediently at a safe distance
behind and above:

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about the weather on the weekend. Talk
about that.**

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a couple of people were alive
who were friends of mine.**

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Inexpensive. Which is part of it, too.

*And in your absence, your very possibility is pretty
much well and truly repealed by the terrifically oppressive
atmosphere.*

It's as if someone had died in here or something!

*No room, we whisper to the room
and no-one.*

No room, despite the space.

Like space there's no space.

As in

as it is in

Outer Space.

*Which is of course stuffed to the gills with unlivable
conditions; thick stories of our massive thickness.*

*Similarly, down here, there is no room for human
life. The ordering is wrong, for a start.*

The fantasy goes something like this:

*I am at the bottom of the sea and,
consequently, I die.*

A second attempt might be:

*I am at the bottom of the sea, my lungs, spine,
inner ear, spasm and collapse with a violent,
alien *CLICK!* under the enormous pressure
and, consequently, I die.*

Third, corrective attempt:

I am at the bottom of the sea, and every sense is so magnificently annihilated by every characteristic of this scene that there is nor is there ever to be no APPREHENSION. I am ain't at the bottom of the sea – I am ain't anywhere. I am INSIDE MY HEAD. Bogged in the licks of grey matter, licking grey matter, licking mists I inhale blown back shroud gag.

Most likely, however:

I am at the bottom of the sea, which is essentially purgatory which is essentially prison. A site of total DEPRIVATION.

In this sensory STRIKE, then, my imagination swerves and lunges and weaves to ascertain – based upon a kind of inward rummage with hang-nailed fingers – what the fuck is going on. Without recourse to empirical sensation, my mind swerves and lunges and weaves towards the infinite – maintaining as it does so – and indefinitely so – LIFE. If simply because there is no way of confirming the circumstances of my situation, let alone that of my DEATH, which must be conspicuous to be anything, surely; which must be fucking CONSPICUOUS, otherwise the retroactive repercussions would be too much to bear and suicide would determine to CROP in prepubescence.

This is no longer an experience, but more likely a concession for the impossibility of experience – of any more experiences to be had at this point.

And you're at the BOTTOM OF THE FUCKING SEA!

– Experience is both thrust into supersaturation and completely, coolly obsoleted.

CUT!

And meaning that us ponderous us's are frustrated by our own debt to some precarious lip of determined life.

Black curtain dropped. More an accident than stagecraft.

'Here',

And the semantics of presence are borne out as demonstrative bags of flour or sugar, one or two sagging cod loin, held aloft.

Or swollen, obsolete telephone directories.

Swollen with the same name over and over: the name of the ONLY PERSON THAT EVER REALLY MATTERED.

And these are redundant equivalents in this context: Presence is something we need convincing of via the complicated arrangement of wet polygons.

'The Sandbox', as we call it, is, in fact, a model for perceiving the outside of our brains while remaining rigorously inside them. Labyrinthine / moronic orientation.

And any appeal we might make for a modicum of space – for just a little breathing room – is spurned and punished with a WALLOP! to the solar plexus.

Folding, doubling over;

the springing open of all the sphincters to receive that HOT black lobe of voided

VARIOUS and SUNDRY.

The origins of which we are mutually ignorant of – save for some thought of an armour-plated mollusc, an inverted body lined with FILLED MOLARS, beaks, the breaks, the rub, the palm, the oil, the grease, etc.:

**I don't want to hear any news on the radio
about the weather on the weekend.
Talk about that.**

**Once upon a time
a couple of people were alive
who were friends of mine.**

**The weathers, the weathers they lived in!
Christ, the sun on those Saturdays.**

*A heavy mood that turned away from the light
millennia ago, riding down with the first wreckages of the first
gunboats on that first day, and the first light – all the way to
this frigid sound-stage.*

*In a few devastating ways, that first night never
ended.*

As in, here we are, aren't we.

*And dumbbells silently repped by eight long, purple
arms in advance of trammeling your HOT body with hugs.
A sincere attempt at contrition that can never disguise the
fundamentally TOKEN aspect that outlines the basis for their
inexcusability.*

As in: fucking tentacles!

As in: frankly, oxygen goes all toxic under pressure.

*–Alliances forged up there in the
RED fire among the
GREEN forest under the
BLUE sky –
are conspiracies down here.*

*A voice webbed at the back, fibrotic negotiating the
baleen, extruded slow, tight and surreptitious:*

*-A jellied, off-white speech bubble barely supporting
the weight of the dirge:*

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about the weather on the weekend.
Talk about that.**

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a couple of people were alive
who were friends of mine.**

**The weathers, the weathers they lived in!
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(Is this thing on?)

*And a trellis of smooth, thick cabling across the floor.
A confounding of muscled tentacles
and the thin, cheap speaker cabling dragged about by
coelenterate
and certain slow-waveform eels
and the stiff, glowing pricks emerging from certain
lophiiformal foreheads
and the too-straight lines of scientific investigation,
photic empiricism
and them pasty gymnastic ribbons of jism.*

-And all this fucking hair!

*-And me playing the role of the decrepit spider
who most certainly belongs on the landing and not
in the bathtub, at the terrible whim of your ghastly children.*

*This one goes out to you: slathered with
HIGHLY-factored sun cream, picking your
way across the beach, taking in the unwound,
undressed bodies scattered according to the
geometry of sunlight, two proud ellipses of
yellow sand stuck to your two tremendous
buttocks.*

*My name is (*unrepresentable*) - to rhyme with
some sort of rampant acne. Or the general state of our com-
bined adolescent skin. Though pronounced as you would your
own. Your own name, that is.*

This one goes out at a terrific velocity, flung
by a confident, comely arm, arcing across the
Summer sky to never, ever land. As if we can
believe that sort of thing anymore.

*A stone skimming the surface:
for a moment, there, joined by a flying fish
– the both of them, fish and stone, coins.*

This one goes out to the French Foreign Le-
gion, trudging their own silica seabed to the
beat of their uniform hearts.

This one goes out to the desert.
Being a ship of the desert, if you like.
All coarse hair and dry, mutable geologies.
Yellowing waves as half-turned pages, corners
perpetually folding like sugared egg whites in
a glorious gesture of inchoate demarcation.
–To summon such-and-such.
A recipe, a quote; those parts that chime with
your own inadmissible ideas. Supportive:
scooped bucket seats in the dunes. A world
whipped into representations of provisional
shelters moulded by deft hands of wind
and dismantled in an instant by the simple,
devastating absence of a single moist brain to
sustain them.

This one goes out to the French Foreign
Legion.
Over there and someways off.

This one goes out of the dock, slips out of
those handcuffs,
slips out of those wet things, (PLEASE)
slips into something more comfortable, (DO)
slips between the hands, the tongue, the hot,
tarred eyes, (turned)
slips out of sight.

Into the cool water.

This one goes out to the sand-blasted base-
ment, priorly encrusted with the obscene
graffiti of a listless troupe of AWOL Legion-
naires, chronicling, after the fashion, their
rise and fall from the sun's favour.

This one here, here, here is not a holiday
destination. Just to be clear.

Loud and clear:

This one goes out to the teetering heaps of
countless vitamins walking upright along the
beach toward the harbour, gingerly avoiding
rock-pools and the inbound tide. In flagrant
excess of your RDA.

*And barrels of salted meat and fish; great coils of
neck-thick rope; freshly laundered linen from the lover's cabins
down below and huge, plunging necklines of sail slung across
the rigging and the skeletal masting.*

Drying in the sun.

A den beneath.

*And I'd lie beneath this erased planetarium – the
only celestial body, the sun, appeased, buttered under there –
me buzzing from a fill of dry sherry, dry white wine.
Pickling in the HERE.*

*And shooting fiery, Martian scotch poured
from crystal decanters into crystal tumblers.*

*The scrape and fit of sanded glass stoppers; the facets
of the crystal throwing slivers of light, ventriloquising the sun's
baritone in an elegant soprano:*

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about the weather on the weekend.
Talk about that.**

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a couple of people were alive
who were friends of mine.**

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This one goes out to your singular hands that
once held firm.

This one goes out to your singular hands that
once held firm

to the point of callousing and crusting.

And the liberal application of Atrixo hand
cream (the choice of the blasted Norwegian
fishermen) – applied by one hand to the
other, though both hands, in this instance,
were mine and still are.

The sometime application of moisturiser by
sometime other hands or hand-singular on
my hand-singular or hands: the whole mess
of palms, digits, knuckles, diminishing wrists,
balling, fisting together beneath a slick bind
of artificial or sometime natural oils – humec-
tants, emollients, lubricants, etc.

Down here, I think of everything
according to the morphology of gastropods.

*Up there, the sculpting of the self assumes cellular
annihilation or apoptosis.*

*In order for fingers to form, a separation between the
fingers must also form.*

*It is apoptosis that produces the interstitial void that
enables fingers to detach themselves from one another.*

*Down here, it's the opposite
–or very nearly.*

*Down here it's all parthenogenetic convulsions and
metastatic stings.*

*And nothing is separate from anything else;
And everything shares a dermic fibrosity;
And everything is hollow.
And everything is a drum, now.
For what it's worth and for all the good it'll do you:*

I like to watch archive footage of fagged stand-up.

You like to watch pneumatic, hetero-stale, oat-meal-porn.

We like to watch state funeral coverage.

He likes to watch drastic, surgery-stooping make-overs.

She likes to watch parochial videography on shagged CRTs in the dim, sweet rooms of provincial museums.

It likes to watch the crude brush-strokes, made.

I like to watch catch-up TV.

You like to watch the info-graphics proving culpability.

We like to watch for the change on departure boards.

He likes to watch the scene unfurl through the fat GRID of a portcullis.

She likes to watch the decline.

fade. *It likes to watch the blue ECG and the blue light*

Acrylic plastic porthole of the hushed wet bell.

COMING UP

through the moon pool:

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about the weather on the weekend.
Talk about that.**

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a couple of people were alive
who were friends of mine.**

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Christ, the sun on those Saturdays.**

Featuring the 1971 poem 'The Morning Roundup', by Gilbert Sorrentino (1929–2006), used with permission from and enormous thanks to Christopher Sorrentino.

Originally written for 'Tomorrow Never Knows', Film and Video Umbrella/Jerwood Visual Arts, January 2013

*Reproduced on the occasion of the exhibition
Ed Atkins
'Warm, Warm, Warm Spring Mouths'
Isabella Bortolozzi Galerie
Schöneberger Ufer 61
10785 Berlin, Germany
in an unlimited edition*

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