

# I Do Not

I do not wake up alone here. There is a vital sign, the noon notes at the church, sediment to open the day. It won't be cold. A solution of red water and eroded shell. Lacking the screen to see, I place my shoulder against the beach. Praise the swollen bird and the devil's belly. Hungry for the scene, or in time for it. A cashbox. Does the apartment building above me wrinkle the ground to keep me company? It's tall for the sake of the beach. I'm letting myself crisp. I am not far from a bronze boy in a speedo who doesn't smile at me. We're both hoping a silver rubber band would cut through the water. Someone woke up at the same time as me and is still awake. My ears heat up when I'm embarrassed; I'm embarrassed now. Isn't it going to stop? Mustn't it not get worse? Certain of little sand cities, a kid is welcoming waves, saying (once under his breath, once aloud) that they are strong enough. Plane's banner ad, GIRLS GET IN FREE, velour in its reflection over the water. Certainly I stumble, am not married, am obsessed with haircuts. Shirtless disco. Have taken time to appear to be a Google image lawn mole. Painting of "surface" lies low. Beachgoers are a plain resource, iron-willed, cream-covered, ore veins. This beach's Newton is an umbrella.

It ignores the problem of bottles. There are several levels to self-doubt, but none of them are special. Sandcastle kid sets his thumb in a paper project, craft moons, that he is lining up in a thick row. He throws one up and hopes it sticks. I hate to say it, but I have trouble balancing how much I want to leave with how much I don't want to leave. Titles to waltzing edge. This thin line for the crab; this, that, and mine. And so, if you ask me if I feel calm, I do not. Cotton displays his discomfort. I want every inch of this to live. Sleepwalking, I leave the beach, find I've parked a hundred times in a circle. Send help to me and the museum. Send \$50, bottles of soap, wreaths, plantains, advertisements, extra headspace, and validated tickets to my family. Ignore birds. Think more on it and then get back to me. Lie under my tongue. I look back at the water and turn into an accidental jetty. Swollen overnights. Locked a red light in the face of holy Hummer throwing ice on my windshield. Need constantly to U-turn. Have noticed a drain where there wasn't one before; have noticed a second "No Left Turn." This way leads over and around the backside of US-1 and lets me out in a blender. Green apathy, watered by people we euphemistically call "the city." I am told by a gorgeous straight man that it is all about taxes. That we can make money differently. That gentrifiers are buying higher altitude property and pushing the poor to lower altitude neighborhoods where houses will be lost first. He tells me there are many pipelines towards central and that I deserve to bundle them as hair in my fist. He says, petting his dog, this

one and that one are friends, and that we all have septic tanks, which is true. They are softer than I think. He says here's to a pour. In lightning, I keep my glove compartment. He's safe from mangrove hunting. Flintstones on lime. Feeling dim. Family portrait of my brother gargling through his fingers. Irregular neutral lets the car roll back even on flat ground. Brings me back over the causeway, up a drawbridge, and falling into the bay. I'm the bath salts cannibal when I'm in my car. I've said it before. And so, if you ask me if I usually act this way, I do not. The cold ring on my neck is rising, and not as slow as once we thought. I have both hands on my shoulders, not on the wheel, and I am determined to hyphenate. Spread RPM across the university and into my home. A goldfish with me in the living room loses memory from one side to another. Blue buffoon. Pixelated opera in my DVR, asking in an aria why love is papery. Desperation formed out of the midday. Light and water. I live on Ancona Ave, not in a snow globe. And I believe certainly that things move fast. The cold ring rises over street signs, which are quite near the floor. It's moving up and down my forearms quickly, cooling me down and exciting me. I'll make this an allergic reaction. Toys on the shelf. Fruit hanging in a Jell-O mold. Squeeze out eye drops onto this book and pray for me. I never thought that my ruling planet would not be a planet. That water would come through a glove of plastic into my window. That people would spread their hands wide and narrow into the globe's raw portion and bring out a wound.

Never thought that and never thought I'd be at home for it. That minor gasp. Thinking of you constantly. I need the chance to explain myself, to say that I'm anxious and in love in my room. Slivers of grease spilled on the carpet. Streams in the desert. Hardly a bushel of ideas pronounced throughout the day. Making Memorial Day at home a dizzy family barbeque. Knuckles on Vaseline. Who we called "Key rats." Who we didn't. "Damp, which is the most insidious of all enemies...damp steals in while we sleep." This is all PR. They are putting up signs that say "the problem is being solved" and "please still visit" and asking you for a check. They are saying they are working. They are saying that they are reading the exclamation of pipelines. None of this is true. Permacrumble. I'm opening a hole in PR. Miami would like you to visit. Would like too to build new buildings. To propose overcrowding. This traffic here is the product of geese fighting. This traffic here is the product of a new road. This traffic here is the product of rain. This traffic here is the product of several flat tires. None of it has to do with the thousands of people on this very highway. None of it is my fault. In my CRV, I'm the king of clogged spitball straw. Rest your head on my shoulder as we wait it out. We wait out that growing white noise of leaks in drains below. White noise of septic tanks bursting. Of limestone cut into. Of shuffling beachgoers. Of construction. Of a pots and pans riot. Of the humble sound of a glass reed blown into for a clarinet. We wait it out and drive. And so, if you ask me if I feel at home, I do not. And

this is really the worst time of the year, when it rains every day for five minutes. Telemarketer's paradise. Kind of tranquil. I'm foamy and repentant. This packet and package. Turning oil over. As if to be well read was to move inland. That's a joke. Here's another: mail to Cuba. Knowing the same thing every day is the rash along both arms. Remembering the same thing every day. The rash along both arms. "Spelling the death of." This, that, and that one "spell the death of." I am writing this and the president has just said he will pull out of the Paris Agreement. What a job. I hate to admit it, but I'm not trying to make a change, I'm trying to grieve. Is this house occupied or stoned? In pictures, spelled out, a message between two imagined people. Will the Senator take the floor? View of the water from the advertising plane, the stoop to absent wind-chill. Driving back again to the beach, a diorama of pinched skin in the passenger seat. Island means dying today, coast tomorrow. Somewhat overdrawn. For the sake of going on, I build property. I make money as I build and so I build more. I'm both the ghosts that live in the Biltmore and the shell of veterans too. The gorgeous straight man says we need to make money differently, that I should be subsidized for connecting to the sewage system, that all productive change is a billboard, and that Rick Scott is a Nazi. I pet his dog as we wait out the white noise. He admits that I'm the only one between us that can say I've had many enemies in a small, religious space. Glorious yearbook. Head of the lizard. What I feel at thinking of holding nothing.

When I won't be. My friend says she won't ever have children because of what is happening in the world. On the other hand, I can do nothing but rear. Maps of a mirror. After we're done with this, give me a long book to skim. Certain of where to go. Betting on temporary, from the balcony of a rich girl. Hoping it will storm to see a yarn ball held low above dark blue. Tormenting. Hoping I'll find myself a rut and explode. Push peanuts out of my hand. Cause friends to swell. Don't tell me that it's literally all my actions causing this, even if it is. I can't figure that one. Instead, be honest and tell me it is ones with larger influence. Ribcages of corporations. Day to day in a government. Hands with lacking. This nasty segment. Piece of a pill. Cutting into the cake. Graphics of a motorboat. Cutting green into a manatee back. This ear of mine, full of sand, is not telling time. I do not wake up alone here, alone in thinking I am losing everything. And so, if you ask me if I think things will improve, I do not. Fingers on the forceps of a fence. Being vodka for my St. Bernard. These hollow blinking holes in my foot, stinging from salt coming in, going out. I'm the red wolf turned gray at 1AM, spinning hectically towards my tail. At night, losing one or more of my senses comes as no surprise.

## Relieve Himself

If a man is seen fighting with another one over parking  
and another man curses in Spanish over everyone yelling  
and another man is hiding in the corner not involved  
and another man is covering his kid's ears  
and another man punches another man, repeatedly  
and another man is eating a medianoche, watching  
and another man is drunk, watching  
and another man is waiting to pass  
and another man is allowing this to happen, as the rest  
and another man is a security guard  
and another man is another security guard  
and another man is asked if he needs help  
and another man who is a security guard is cruel  
and another man who is a security guard has a short temper  
and another man who is a security guard beats a man  
and another man is arrested for violence  
and another man is put in the back of a car  
and another man is cursing “¡ño!” or “hijo'e puta”

and another man is not invested  
and another man is taking his kid for ice cream  
and another man is drunk, watching  
and another man is not sure where he is going in that car  
and another man is sure where he is going in that car  
and another man is feeling betrayed  
and another man is feeling victorious  
and another man is feeling agonized  
and another man is feeling anxious  
and another man is inhumane  
and another man is taking sharp turns  
and another man is bleeding from his head  
and another man is sitting on a curb with a security guard  
and another man is offering another man first aid  
and another man is saying “pendejo”  
and another man is saying “maricón”  
and another man is saying “cabrón”  
then the parking lot is relieved  
because it has done its job

## Fire Ants

what a weak theory I have built for myself  
the daily hurricane in the refrigerator  
not yet condensed  
the ziploc of fire ants  
my tendency to trill  
warmth against the door  
I built such a life out of life, its doctored complications  
I made this  
these shapes of thin cheeks  
I made the tropics into a thin circular theorem  
but with a hand in their pincers  
I'm starting to connect allergens  
to form a pyramid

# The Thousands

reflected or drowning, thousands are moving along a barbed line

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life is thicker here in the cock state

fireworks in the dreams of thousands

I have not made this up

vertebrae tercet

after electricity, there is food, golden-spiced

slow moving hands

they have told me and I have seen

that thousands don't leave

that everywhere is different and unimaginable

that everywhere is somewhere else unimaginable

thousands pray to stay, to live here again

this cannot go

flat

absent

state

I say doldrums as if it were not my liver's curse

pushing sky into sky  
to not see sky is to rotate a plane  
so I rotate a plane  
the war occurred here in the homes of thousands  
it was fought in jowls  
thousands are playing dominoes  
bloom touching  
absolute value  
negative rehearsal  
search a symphony for the absence of everything  
to find spittle on the floors  
it makes small triangles, brilliantly coral  
that I pinch into my abdomen  
and warm between my ribs  
bloom touching  
absolute organ  
I'd rather dry up the entire world  
than see one drop in the mouth of thousands