

Excerpts from *The Year of My Birth*

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All those pictures of Creeley, staring out with one eye.

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A woman sentenced to 5-10 years for manslaughter after being convicted of injecting other women's buttocks with a mixture of cement and glue, which turned toxic and killed one of them.

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At the beach, a man starts running. There are infinite combinations of letters that spell the name of god. A woman tosses an ice cream wrapper onto the sand. The man, running, is a diminishing spot, receding towards the seawall. A pleasing juxtaposition of sounds. A waiter wearing an apron, carrying fruit cocktails on a tray, marches parallel to the sea. This is not that sound. That word-thought-image.

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Woman on the train blowing on pages of the tabloid to get them unstuck.

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"The Knight's Tale"

A couple of dirtbag protestors are swept up in a mass arrest and jailed, then placed in adjacent holding cells and left there long after everyone else is released, forgotten about. Desperate with hunger and thirst they hallucinate a beautiful woman both fall in love with, etc.

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In Ireland they don't call it "drunk driving" but "drink driving."

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"St. Stephen's Green"

"You think because you speak the same language you've had the same experiences, but really you haven't. It's a totally different way of dealing with things, let me tell you."

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The incredible, endless bad puns of
The Daily Sun:

"A Tale of Two Titties" (article about an 'obscene' production of Dickens); "Shame of Thrones," "Game of Moans" (after Ed Sheeran's cameo on the show); "Two-fingered Show of Hans" (above a picture of Prince William and Princess Kate among German school kids, one of them making an obscene gesture).

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The clerks in the Tom Taylor for Children store were dismantling the mannequins and wrapping them in clear plastic, one woman twisting a leg awkwardly to wind the plastic around, then cutting and taping it, then stacking limbs and torsos in the front corner behind the plate glass window, gleaming opaquely inside the wrap.

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At 8:24pm the setting sun had shot the sparse, static clouds through with light but only in spots, slowly and imperceptibly changing, parts of the clouds gray against the blue sky, others bright white and even orange along the bottom, the clouds slowly shifting and changing shape as well...

And then, over the next 15-20 minutes, the sun flared red in the long smear of clouds – an impossible red, or more precisely, possible only in the transition between light and dark, as a flash, a signal, a passage – then sun dramatically drained out of the clouds like cooling charcoal, leaving grayish embers against fading blue.

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Once upon a time there was a man surrounded by women, and a woman surrounded by men.

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A glass wobbled to the floor and shattered. The few patrons in the café turned in the direction of the sound, but seemed to catch themselves. A disabled man in a motorized cart stopped on his way across the floor and groaned loudly, his hand twisted up against his chest in a spasm. The patrons regarded this, too, but again quickly averted their gaze.

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I would like to have been surprised, would prefer to have been invisible.

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Everything happens over and over again. The pen traces its own shadow, never deviating from the long thin line. Virgil wonders if he remembered to let in the cat. The cat's name is Dante. The long line never turns, never questions itself. Dante endlessly crossing Virgil's path. The older poet follows the younger follows the older, down, down.

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The young woman hadn't expected this to become an interview.

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“The Start of the War in Italy”

E. The finger finds the string, the mouth finds the note. All of us listening wonder what just happened, how the air moved just that way – *pop*. Euryalus and Nisus moving through the Latian camp, singing as they slit throats, stepping in sticky blood. Already dead though they don't know it. Whistling – what were they whistling? Finding and losing themselves in the dark.