

Major Grace

runner

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I visited Greenfield Village on December 26th. Fires burned in front of houses, it is holiday nights. I went up to the Webster House, and curiously, as I recall it, the house moves and grows and slips into the dark.

For some inexplicable reason, thighs against the thick, red-velvet rope, I slip into a dream state.

The Webster House contains huge shelves, the kind that make you want to own a library. I tour around the room, marveling over the pages and the project of definition. I can't imagine what they were thinking, that the whole world could fit under their scope.

Someone plays piano in the back of the Edison house, on the second floor, and the speaker talks about the myriad of inventions Edison came to, and I think we could hear his voice on an invention of his, a record of a presidential meeting pertaining to the lightbulb.

Street meets my feet, huge stones, outrageous remnants of empire. I am walking through Rome. This is the subject of Jhumpa Lahiri's *Roman Stories*. But more accurately, her language— it is milk and honey, the hands of someone you love. Warm, but also, completely separate: the absence of intimacy. Absence— it's what I am bringing to the work.

My mother splashes water onto her face in the large room of one of the Airbnbs that face each other. I don't know what you should do. No one knows what you should do.

I watch a film about desire. I listen to a talk with a woman who no longer cares to listen, and it's so exciting to me that I have to actually stand up, pace, reconstitute.

Meaning, I am in a different moment. I want to impress that upon you.

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I dream of this writing program. It's a small room, a seminar. Each person around the table is a soft entity, violet in color, and I sense a tall person to my right, tall, light hair, his face turned toward the front of the room.

In the dream I feel that I am in a period of...new life. I'm anchored. I've found home before in small rooms in buildings, at a seat in a transparent glass arch—

He is saying something to the front of the class. I do not make any audible sound, yet somehow he is aware I am unimpressed.

He turns to me suddenly, and I articulate

- Oh I was powerful the whole time (I never loved them).

We face each other:

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He knocks on a door and I open it. The room is very bright, white ceilings and floors, wood-style rugs, the remnants of something soft and floral on the walls and sheets. It is quiet but not still. He folds me onto the bed, pulls off every article of clothing and puts his face between my legs as if it were a memory, not ancient in a fixed way, not even primordial but kind of like how the mountains are when you are in them

Normally I would be offended but

There is no noise, nothing at all.

Then I'm running on the riverwalk. It's February. There are a handful of geese and I start listening to house music. More specifically, Barry Can't Swim. My brother and I were driving together, and he played it or it came on.

Barry Can't Swim, I am running towards the sun. The Detroit river hums. I love its depth, its body. The way it is a border. The way it is not a line and it isn't empty. Birds land and fly, ice formations float intensely, huge constructs, reminds me of time.

I took a class from a teacher who people were falling in love with, because of his rigor and his incredible way of thinking and also his style as a teacher— he exuded a kind of fuck it, this is what I'm doing.

A boy runs up to me on the Riverwalk, his face pleading and open, as if he is asking me for a favor.

I have felt, for most of my life, as if I contain a kind of cruelty. The fear was of disorder, and disorder brought most of the joy I've ever felt.

He says do you have a boyfriend. He's probably a teenager, or at least looks like one. I don't have a boyfriend. Why do you ask? I think I was raised to kind of be obfuscating— I don't assume interest. Probably it is a tactic, though, the way my brother looks at me when I am direct. Putting my finger in the warm pool of their confidence.

He asks, well can I have your number? And I kind of smile and say, I'm not really looking to— You're not that pretty anyway. I find this hilarious. He walks away.

My Uncle lights his house on fire. It is on the news.

There is a difference between the news commentators, and the viewers' interpretation of the events, and real life.

You wonder, is the sun good?