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Autobiography

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Autobiography

ARKAYE KIERULF

1.

You could say I grew up in a rough neighborhood: We owned boxing gloves. The red ones I loved, which represented fire and strength. I loved how they looked on me. It was rough because my uncle who lived next door was a blackbelter, and we were born with fists. My brother would wear black gloves and my uncle would be the referee of the two of us. When the fighting went on, we would hide love the best way we could. Everyday it was morning. The chickens my other uncle owned—he also lived next door—would flit and putter in their cage as they watched us step into and out of each other. The chickens had feathers so white you'd think heaven was caged with chicken wire. But they were delicious when cooked. Especially with butter, and with much care.

2.

The world is incomplete.

3.

I doubt goodness. For instance, I lost my virginity to a prostitute. My nature is to increase sin, to relegate/buy it with money. I am not capable of committing evil by myself: I need an agent. She was pretending to enjoy it, and I was pretending to enjoy it. We both lied about our age. She had hair down to her hips. I was once, you know, a child.

4.

I will make a list of things I know:

- 1) A leaf is green.
- 2) A leaf is black at night.

5.

According to its dual nature, light can also act as a particle. Seeing an object (a chair, table, or person) requires that we move it with the solid particles of light that make sight possible, much the same way that one billiard ball will push another. In other words, we move all objects to some unknown future so we can see their past. (I know this. I was a scientist in my past life.)

Conclusion: Nobody knows what's happening now. The present is a rumor, a story spread by eye.

Said Werner Heisenberg of the subatomic particle: "The more precisely the position is determined, the less precisely the momentum is known in this instant, and vice versa." To illustrate in bigger terms: if you know a white chicken is trapped in your bathroom exactly at the center of your bathtub, then you cannot know exactly how fast or in what direction the chicken is dodging your ax. The second case: if you know a certain girl is drawing away from you radially at a speed of 5 inches per day, then the universe won't allow you to know exactly how far away she already is, or how to find her. (I know this. I was a scientist in my past life.)

Conclusion: Separation can't be predicted. We cannot know, even by force. We cannot keep.

6.

The history of my body: this little nose I got from my mother, this daffy hair from my father, and my blue eyes I inherited from the sea. The earth bequeathed me brown skin. Look at my feet: tree roots. And my arms: branches. Twenty years ago there was only air where I am. Fifty years from now, air again.

7.

My family is crazy about white dogs. Our first one got ill and died. The second (named Petite) died giving birth. The third (Bingo) ran

away. What I really mean: my family is crazy. Mother said Petite couldn't give birth because her babies were too big for her. I think it was because we didn't call a veterinarian. In any case, it was sad. We ate ice cream afterwards. It was delicious. Then it was okay again.

You see, years before he ran away, Bingo was a puppy. Then he got older, and as was our nature, we tried to avoid his ugliness by ignoring him. There was less petting going on, less tail-wagging. And we locked him up in our backyard for three years.

When he ran away, the dogs from all over barked at him because they didn't know he existed until then. He was always there and nobody knew except us. Everywhere he was lost.

We scoured the streets calling his name. We asked strangers. It was a time when words lost their connections to their referents. I remember sitting at our door-sill, waiting for any shuffle of feet, any bark.

8.

I believe, sometimes, that I am a good man.

9.

I remember
looking at trees.

I remember
Not looking at trees.

10.

In this world there are two types of things that make people happy: the first type pleasures the self directly (e.g., food, sex), while the second pleasures the self only after directing pleasure to others (e.g., clothes, shoes). The first gives solitary joy, the second social. There are exceptions—items that belong to both lists (e.g., beauty) or to none. This is only my observation.

To illustrate beauty: the size of my sex, at rest, is x inches. In the presence of a beautiful woman, longer (beauty elongates matter to fullness). The woman, in turn, now conscious of her erotic effect, will surprise

herself with a sudden flush of happiness in the form of two hard nipples, pink like sunrise.

Another observation: a recluse is selfish with his joy, without care for clothes or shoes.

Another observation: dust collects itself out of nowhere.

11.

The history of my spirit: I don't have a spirit, and borrow only from the air.

12.

The earth accommodates 6,398,649,394 human beings on 148,380,000 square kilometers of land. If these people were spread equally, there'd be a distance of 152.279 meters between each of them, give or take some. This is the average amount of solitude the world allows by distance. When a person dies, everyone in the world is allowed more remove from everyone else. Thus, the resultant sadness. When a person is born, everybody is closer to everybody else.

"I am waiting only for death," said my grandmother one late afternoon in June.

I said to myself: "So this is the world."

Some people are born diabetic: my grandmother hid chocolates in her purse and ate them when nobody was looking. The church, in the person of the priest, visited her every week. And the TV was always on. Once she thought aliens were invading the earth. It was a movie. She was really scared.

I said to myself: "So this is the world."

13.

I will make a list of things I don't know:

- 1) God's first name
- 2) The color of a leaf

14.

In 1982 my mother was rivetingly beautiful. She had hair down to her hips. And red lips, too—a cunning innocence. But in the 1970s her pictures were black-and-whites only, and the sky was the color of a lie. I have asked myself many times: How many colors did she need to believe in the world? How many to reproduce beauty? How many so it can last?

15.

Said Gandhi: “If I had no sense of humor, I would long ago have committed suicide.”

I will be honest: I am a very funny person sometimes.

16.

In my uncle’s backyard where his chickens roamed free, I would search around for eggs. I loved newly laid eggs, especially the little brown ones with white spots. And if I was lucky—they are still warm.

Once I find one I would wrap my fingers around it and close my eyes. It was like holding life in your own hands—your own life. Then I would put the egg back where I found it, and it was over.

17.

I will be honest: I love the world and I am curiously happy. Nobody knows this because nobody knows. I would tell you about the time I grew my hair past the norm but I don’t remember much about it because it never happened. This is another story. The world is incomplete and in a game of poker I lost all of my body-hair to a monkey. I will be honest: the sun is a flashlight and some divine idiot is checking on us once in a while in this eternal blackout. Watch out for me, my brothers! Before the next war I will be smug in my coffin wearing formal attire. I have been known, you know, to dress up extravagantly for such grand occasions.