

from *VARIOUS EXTINCTIONS CARRIED THROUGHOUT
THE ROUND SKY*

3. THE DREAM AMPLIFIES AROUND THE WORLD

Hello, are you still there? How's retirement going? *A lifetime's work still haunts my dreams.* I change the topic.

The croaking of frogs in the Kansas summer, my dad says that he heard thunder earlier, still too early for the cicadas. Still too early for summer time swimming sessions. I lie on my living room floor, and imagine that I am stretched on the grass-

The sun uncovers the shrubs, firepit, and birdbath, and I can see the clock that I drew on the birdbath's bottom when I was in middle school. It all looks real, like if I reach out and touch it, then it will dissolve like little wafers of rice paper. Up until this time, I was the only person that knew about that clock, as some might say, I just revealed too much.

From the bushes near my hand, rustling like nesting frogs, I look and it is a rabbit burrowing - a rabbit that dodged the cat's prowess - through to the downstairs neighbor. My parents still on the screen, my mom tells me that she's seen more cardinals recently.

7. TUNNELING THROUGH THE WORLD TO EXTINCTION

A shift in the train's cabin pressure.

Tunneling through the Earth, I didn't know that dreams felt like this. Call the tunnel a pile of crushed aluminum cans, crude oil found contained within the cracked eggshells, that slipped and fell into the space between the tunnel's shale. I had a thing for squeaky and bent bicycle tires. A bunch of junk lines the tunnel walls, stuff lost in the daze. This is maple syrup or a finished bottle of turpentine. The train carries me to a world where all the field sparrows and ground larks were killed.

8. UNSEEN BIRDS OF PARADISE

Please don't hang up.

Remember the connection stabilized quickly last time.

连接不稳定 as unstable call connection, a hiccup in the telecoms satellite,
a solar flare unseeable, or interference from a birdwing as it flies north, a
return from a harsh. Yesterday, my mom said that she saw a cardinal, an
auspicious sign she's from St. Louis. *Where was the*
cardinal, mom? The cardinal as an auspicious sign, *bathed in the bath, water*
glistened on its wings or water flutter as it flew, my mom told me.

10. MY PARENTS ADD KITCHEN UPGRADE TO THEIR LAUNDRY LIST

There's been a mistake with the electric filament. Glow, internet, wire mesh, a sieve where water falls through. An unspoken intent to replace the filament every 1,000 hours.

1,000 hours of the television. So many stars, each their own constellation on their own television show. Someone once told me that I am made of dead stars,

And all the other astral bodies. Centrifugal force, channel surfing, and I make it back to channel 41 in time to see the People's Elbow. The match crescendos to a school-bell's ring.

With the stillness of standing ring-side, ah man, awesome, or aubade. I listen to a song about the electric filament. Electric range, the coil does not ignite, so breakfast cannot be made.

Ask me again next week about my favorite wrestler, and I might tell you it's a 400lb. alligator rolling over on a ground lark. The alligator is more apex predator than any wrestler. Ringside seats with the ropes that catch my eye. Now there is no silence, no stillness. Next week the People's Elbow is the apex predator, as an anvil crushing the ground larks. Repeats in the bathroom, courtside, media blackout, so I roll through the channels. Repeat the loop, watch the same astral story, a story of life and death.

My dad tells me about a Home Depot advertisement, free with every purchase, one taxidermized bird with every purchase of a gas range or solarium addition. Television not included.

12. DOUBLE EMAILS, DOUBLE DEBT

Do you remember that story, my mother asked, that I used to tell you when you were younger? The story would go, there lived two birds in a cage, and one preened itself, so it looked like a ceremonial robe, and the other coat looked borrowed from a family friend. One day when they were eating food together. *That story ends so sadly,* I said to my mom. *The story's ending depends on your life's outlook,* she reminded me.

I woke up one morning with two email notifications. The first email, subject title RE: Debtors, the email body, *you were the first to leave the party, sincerely, Debt.* I find kinship with my debt, that it followed me safely home from the party, even when I doubt it, I still gloat that this debt is a god.

What do I want to do with that god? What can I plant in their fields? Something that nobody else can claim, but something that everyone has. I can easily forget that email, so I archive it.

The second email begins, *Congratulations! Your 14-day free trial starts today.* As it is the first day of my new life, I look around and see mottled sheets and voiced palpitations, as I realize that death and debt have similar roots, that mortgage comes from death. After 14 days, I'll sign up for a new email account and claim that I lost the keys to my house.

Network, digital footprint same as carbon footprint. I woke up on a train. *Hello, the connection is not good. Can I call you back later after my coffee is finished?*

The tunnel throws me through the Earth, so that it looks like my home is frozen in the throes of a renovation.

On this basis, the train tracks, I'll make it home eventually, but never catch the car in front of me.

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