

LAND ARK LIT MAG

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ISSUE NO. 13: *HOV LANE APOLOGISTS AND THE CURIOUS CASE OF THE NARCS* / OCTOBER 17, 2021

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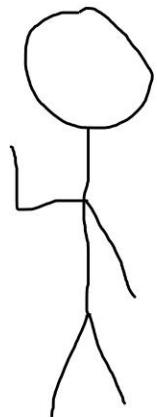
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A day late and a dollar short? Yeah, absolutely. I can't argue that at all. But I have some OK excuses. For one I came down with a nasty juniper allergy after a night of drinking Gin and Tonics with the once lambasted, now admired ex-Mayor of Juneau, which for those without geographical predilections is a cluster of islands just off Alaska's southern hanging arm, famous for almost nothing, the only event of note was the wild Salmon chase of 1969 when actor Paul Newman cut open his lower lip on a jealous Cojo, an incident that would badly mar the production of *Butch Cassidy And The Sundance Kid*, which also starred Katharine Ross, a woman not at all connected to Kodiak Island or its ex-Mayor but who was the lead actress in *The Graduate* which I watched as a young kid and was highly impressed upon due to the sexy nature of the elder Mrs. Robinson, wowie wowie, and then for years afterwards I would attempt to impress myself onto the other members of my mother's bridge club, a habit that would land me in the naughty zone for getting a little too handsy with Jene Howard, a real old bimbo with a heart of gold and huge, heaving honkers that I could've sworn were physically un-feasible until I attended Shmates College on scholarship, majoring in Physics for one heart-drum semester during which all I can remember is that yes, in fact, the breasts were feasible, and perhaps I would remember more if I didn't spend so much time out partying with the frisbee team and my pole vaulting lover, and maybe I would remember to turn my assignments in on time if I didn't. . . oh shit, I've gone on again. . . Lateness has crept up on me..

Either way, here's issue #13, perhaps a day late and a dollar short but still worthy of existing. We'll get this half-assed tardiness streak sorted out. But for now, enjoy Squid Boy and the narcs, and go easy on our ruthless critics.

– Ed.

narc



1



2



victorious narc

CRITICISM

A PERFORMANCE REVIEW OF
YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

Ginevri Sigrid-Skafold

As a critic with a long and winding path through the under and over bellies of contemporary and less contemporary “aesthetics”, I can say that while I understand American Art, I do not pretend to enjoy it. There is a grandiose tasteless tactlessness to most of those new age nitwits and I can’t stand it. But alas, I work on commission. And I’ve been asked to review the most lackluster fraudulent piece of creation to ever come out of our Free Sister’s backside: The ongoing atrocity that is Yellowstone National Park.

Let us break down the problems in terms of what many if not all art theoretical critics term to be the basic tenets of performance artifice: time, space, body, the observer, and the artist. Let us commence.

TIME

Performance Art frequently tests the wherewithal and commitment of the viewer in this arena. One might suggest that a piece of performance art is not even worthy of consideration if it lasts for under one hour. The time component often exacts the suffering and ire of the casual art consumer. Performance Art makes one painfully aware of the passing of life, critical of time’s use, and incredulous of analog clocks. For me, I begin to consider just what I’ve done with my nine and a half decades. Criticism? Was that really what I spent all these years on? Three failed marriages and now what have I?



How does Yellowstone integrate Time? Yellowstone profoundly and ungratefully spits on Time, kicks it to the curb, and knocks it with a good few horse kicks. One minute in Yellowstone is equal to three thousand flaps of a butterfly's wings. Thought you'd escape to the wilderness for some peace and quiet? Sorry--you're sitting in traffic now. I have to begrudgingly admit that this aspect of the performance is quite genius, as far as the tediously precious allotment of human life goes.

SPACE and BODY

Yellowstone occupies nearly 3,500 square feet of rugged Wyoming wilderness tended by 800 underpaid employees. You, the viewer/audience/visitor, share this space with bison, elk, wolves, bears, geysers, and one very overdue süpervolcano. Many of these things can and may kill you, given a misstep. Each year this space fills with 3.8 million human people who crowd around bubbling patches of earth, waiting for something transcendent.

The Space of Yellowstone is a testament to largess and the largess is a testament to America. Yellowstone is a danger riddled hellscape posing as an amusement park, rancid as the old cilantro in my fridge. I should really compost that.

OBSERVER

Of course, as I previously proposed, the observer really is presupposedly integrated into the artwork, as a member of the body and bearing of Yellowstone National Park. If a geyser erupts in glorious primordial climax and there's nary a tourist to video record the spectacle, does it make a difference in the natural ecosystem of northwestern Wyoming? Does it

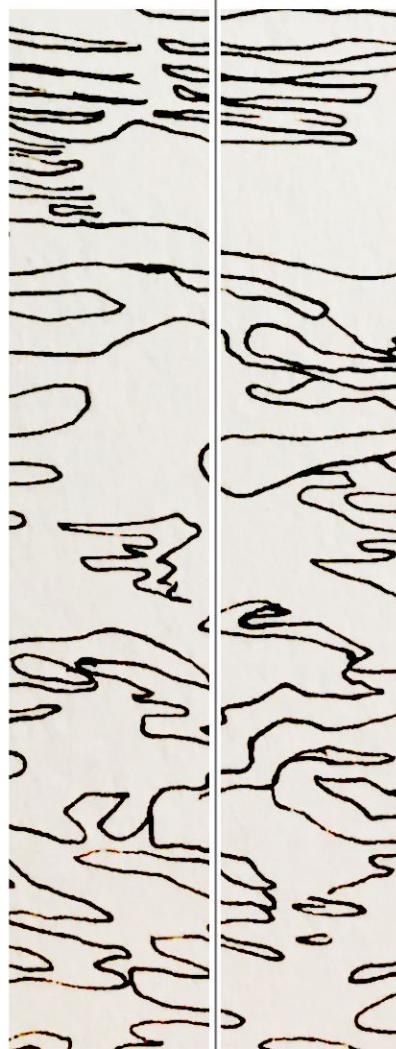


Fig. 1: Theodore Roosevelt

relieve any iota of astronomical pressure from that ever-threatening süpervolcano?

A performance piece done in isolation is nothing more than the waving limbs of a lunatic. A performance piece with an audience of 3.8 million is a national treasure.

Picture: A bubbling hole in the earth, stinking to the heavens of pickled eggs, blowing hot smoke into a clear blue sky. A bison munches on grass by the glacier fed river. Hundreds of slack jawed nature inebriants stand on the boardwalks surrounding the performer--Olde Faithful. They've driven hundreds or thousands of miles in Westfalias, Jaycos, Silverados, and Outbacks. Olde Faithful begins to sputter, froth. Something is happening. Each lustless lifeform raises their camera phones to the sky, and begins to film. Not a



spectator watching the boiling water streaming against gravity through their own eyes, each observing the massive feat of natural propulsion through the screen of the iPhone Android. Then--moments after the geyser reaches her roaring climax, each crossed-eye member of the audience hits a push button, and the viewership multiplies by the million, soaring out and over the plains and to the pockets of new audience members, watching from their couches or office desks or kitchen stools.

This, this is art.

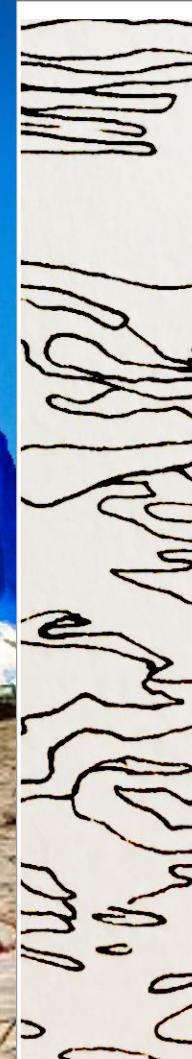
THE ARTIST

The moose humping motherfucker pictured in fig. 1 is responsible for Yellowstone in its entirety. Many will recognize him as the United States of America's twenty-sixth enlightened despot. I recognize him as an unsung evil genius of the performance art world, perhaps sealing the deal so far as Yellowstone's atrocious impact goes.

* * *

What is the critic's position, then? The wine coolers on the requisite plane ride I suffered to the American West were expensive and watery. The bus ride caused motion sickness and I suspect I came into contact with eight different strains of American Flu. The art piece was big, smelly, and full of ingrates ignorant of any artifice beyond the Mona Lisa. And yet--the annoyance and trouble is what makes Yellowstone such a genius feat of Performance Art--Frustration of course being the final overlooked tenet of the genre. Curse you, Mr. Roosevelt, and curse your stupid national park.





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FICTION

SQUID BOY AND THE BIG FUSS: PART I

Irvin Perkins

Once, long ago in the Time of Kings, there was a far away Land. And in that Land there was a little town. And in that little town was a child, and that child was a young boy named Huhluhiehula. His name was a very old and traditional one, meaning "Little Boy" in the oldest language of the Deader Kings from the previous Times. But everybody called him Huh?

Huh? was a lonely child without any siblings at all. The other children couldn't pronounce his name.

Child: Come play ball with us, Hahooheeha!

Huh?: That's not my name.

Child: Okay, what should we call you?

Huh?: Huh?

Child: Huh?

Huh?: Yes

Child: You're weird.

And so the other children never played with Huh?.

Huh?'s best friend was his father, Huhbert, who always took him on his fishing trips in the Lakes Hunting and Angling Region of the Land. Huhbert was a brave man, and caught many fish of all kinds: Flecklings and Red Whirligogs, Smart Carps and the fabled Gold-ish Grab-fish. When he was a young man, he won many fishing badges for his finds. But one time, when Huhbert's wife and Huh?'s mother was pregnant, he caught and killed a large fish for which the town loudly praised him. However, when he cut into the fish, he found her full of eggs. From that day forward, Huhbert swore to never catch and

kill another fish. Huh? still fished every Sunday, but he threw every one of them back. So his reputation in the village shrank and without the bodies to bring back to the little town, he won no more fishing badges. Even so, Huh? loved fishing with his father and waited all week for Sundays, when Huhbert would go up to the Lakes.

On one of these Sundays, Huhbert and Huh? went up to the Lakes. The day was like any other in the Land in the Time of Kings. The big red sun hung up high in the summery sky and a wiley wind wriggled through the tree tops. Huh? and his father sat by the side of one of the more eminent Lakes and fished. For a long time they were quiet. Huh? liked this sort of quiet time with his father, where nobody needed to make small talk about the latest air quality or which King was going to win this year's volleyball tournament. Huhbert was a thoughtful man with a long, blue beard, and while he fished he often stroked this beard. Huh? was lost in thought about whether he would grow as magnificent a beard in a few years when his father began to yelp and howl with excitement.

Huhbert: Look! Huh?! I've got something! Something big!

Huh?: Huh? What is it?

Huhbert fought the beast at the end of his line until with a grand wrench, the large lake thing came free of the water and flew up into the sky, blocking the red sun's rays so that Huh? and his father fell into shadow. The large lake thing flopped down to the earth just as Huh? and Huhbert dove out of the way. They heard the fishing rod snap, and the large lake thing groan. With guarded care, Huh? and his father lifted themselves to gaze at the large lake thing and saw that it was a Giant Squid.

Huhbert: Holy Kings!



Giant Squid: Excuse me?

The Giant Squid rose onto her long sinewy tentacles and glared at Huhbert and Huh?. She had been deep in the throes of her favorite television program about average Lakes Region Giant Squid teenagers and their problems, Squids and Geeks. She was not pleased at having been brought up to the surface so violently. With a huff, she turned to dive back into the water. But Huhbert leapt to his feet.

Huhbert: Wait! Don't go!

Giant Squid: If you think for a second you're going to catch me for a meal, you're absolutely mistaken sir. I've got business to attend to, really important things are happening down there and I'll be missed.

(Squid Lindsey was trying to throw a party while her Squid parents were gone).

Huhbert: Of course--it is against my personal code of ethics to kill any living thing. But, if I could explain, I'd like some memento to show the people of my little town that I've caught you. Although I catch many fish, I rarely can prove to the people of the little town that I've caught them. If there was some way I could introduce you to the townspeople, I might regain some of my reputation and my family could be respected again.

The Giant Squid tapped a tentacle to her beak Huh? couldn't even bring himself to speak, he was aghast. He'd never met a Giant Squid before. Though Huh? was young, he knew well enough that his father managed to get some proof he'd caught this Squid, their family's social standing in the little town would be through the roof.

Giant Squid: Alright. You can borrow my polaroid.

Just give me a second.

Without a further word she propelled her slimy self into the air and splashed back into the water. Huhbert and Huh? looked at each other in despair, sure they would never see her again.

Huhbert: It's alright son. It would be wrong to force her to come with us. Even if this is a huge, gigantic loss for our family, we'll know we've done--

There was an ear bending gargling noise and the Giant Squid flopped herself back onto the shores of the Lake. In one of her tentacles she held a polaroid camera.

Huhbert: Good Kings!

Giant Squid: Here. Take a picture of me and your father.

She handed Huh? the polaroid camera. Huhbert and the Giant Squid huddled together and Huh? snapped the camera lens. In seconds, the photo had printed and Huh? held the key to his family's happiness in his hands. The Giant Squid told Huhbert that it was nice to meet him, took her polaroid camera from Huh?, and leapt back into the Lake. Huhbert hollered with joy and swept Huh? up into his arms.

Huhbert: This is it, son! Just wait and see what the people of the little town think of this!

Huhbert and Huh? were good and upstanding people, with much respect for others. The rest of the people in the little town could not be consistently counted on for this sort of behavior, however. In this little town as in all small communities, public approval was its greatest currency and also its most spare resource. Groupthink had overtaken the little town, and it would take more than a photo to convince the



townspeople that Huhbert was worth taking seriously.

The week that followed was a sad one. Though Huhbert and Huh? skipped joyfully down from the Lakes Hunting and Angling Region through the craggy crooks of the yellow sheep hills and the drifting lights of the loosest woods, they were not met with the same sentiment. Most people in the little town took Huhbert for a hack and the photo for a hoax. At best, folks pitied him for his sad attempt to restore honor and prestige to his family's name. At worst, folks thought him a conspiracist and phony who'd roped his sad unpopular son into his game. Even Huhbert's wife and Huh?'s mother, Huhleena, doubted him. She never said it aloud, but Huhbert and Huh? both detected the nonbelief in her tone when she saw the photo.

Huhleena: Wow, this is really, very, interesting.

Huhbert did not leave the house all week. At school the children leered and jeered at Huh?, calling him the son of a liar. Huh? knew his father was not a liar, and he told the children so. But they only cackled more at him, fluttering their hands around their heads in the cultural jeering gesticulation of the Land.

On Sunday, Huh? went to his father's study and knocked on the open door. He could see the old fishing badges on the walls, the photos of old catches, and one image of Huhbert shaking hands with the previous Eighth King.

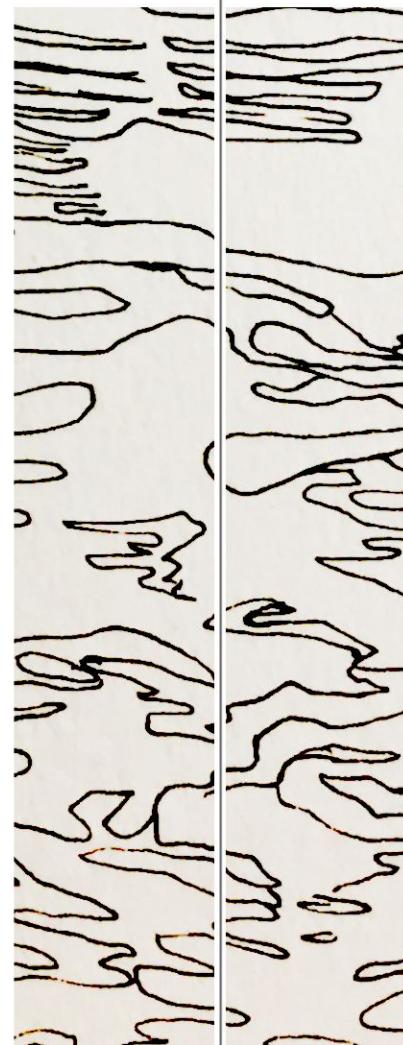
Huhbert: Oh, hello, Huh?.

Huh?: Do you want to go fishing today?

Huhbert hung his head. He shook it from side to side, and his long, blue beard wagged back and forth.

Huhbert: Oh, son, I think those days are over for me.

Huh? nodded and left the room. He was so upset and angry at the people in the town that he began to cry. He sat



down in the hall and put his head in his hands.

And then he had an idea. . . .

TO BE CONTINUED!



FICTION

PHEEEPHEEE FINGERS MY HAND

Tina Edgar

Pheephee fingers my hand. Just outside her sitting room window, her pet psychedelic giraffe growls at the sky before resuming to eat marshmallows.

"I think if I made it when I was young," says Pheephee, "it would have been a lot better."

The psychedelic giraffe cleans its edges and bites a passing child on her way home from school. The child stays completely still and quiet and then sticks her finger up the giraffe's nose and eats the booger.

"Truer, at least."

"I think you're right," I say while I watch the giraffe laugh at the child eating its booger. "Maybe I should go now."

Pheephee stares out the window, too, but she doesn't seem to see the scene. "OK," she sighs, "I'll let you out."

When the child arrives home, her mother is waiting at the door. The mother smiles and waves and the daughter walks in.

"How was your day?" asks the mother.

"Weird," says the daughter.



CRITICISM

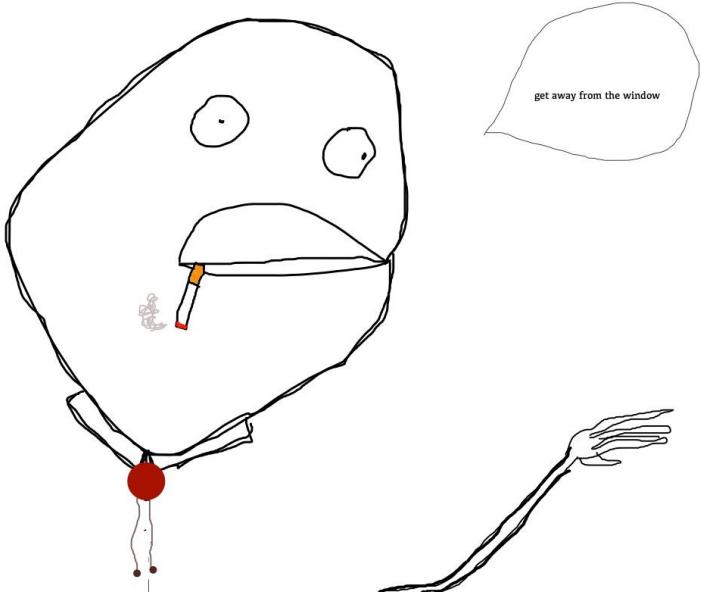
RONALD BALLWATER'S REVIEW OF THE HOV LANE

Ronald Ballwater

I am grateful for speed. Speed of implementation and speed of transaction. I also am partial to speed of effectiveness. I like going fast and I like when my things work fast around me. I like getting to the hospital as fast as possible while the black vein grows up my arm, and I like getting to Ryan's house before he passes out. I like the speed at which I age, and the speed at which tomorrow becomes today.

What I do not like is the god damn HOV lane, with all it's holier-than-thou friendship requirements for speed. Should not the recluses, the misanthropes, the nonconformists and the introverts have the same access to speed as the outgoing loverboys who work in big towers? And I do not buy the notion that the HOV lane makes the highway faster for the losers who could not convince anyone else to get in their car. If the Transportation Department loves speed as much as I do, why not cut the country down and open it up into a border to border highway? That way commuting lunatics can drive six-ways-to-Sunday, using up all the lanes they want with zig-zags and sudden right turns. Everyone could drive their own unfortunate car; who gives a shit about the environment when it is an interstate? The guilt of littering and public urination would be assuaged. Better yet, why not build one massive vehicle for everyone to take to work. You perverts could save nature and get to know each other at the same time. I hate the HOV lane! I hate it!

But I love speed. I am alone in my room, sweating
the mattress, dying for a little speed.



POETRY
BIG BRIEFS

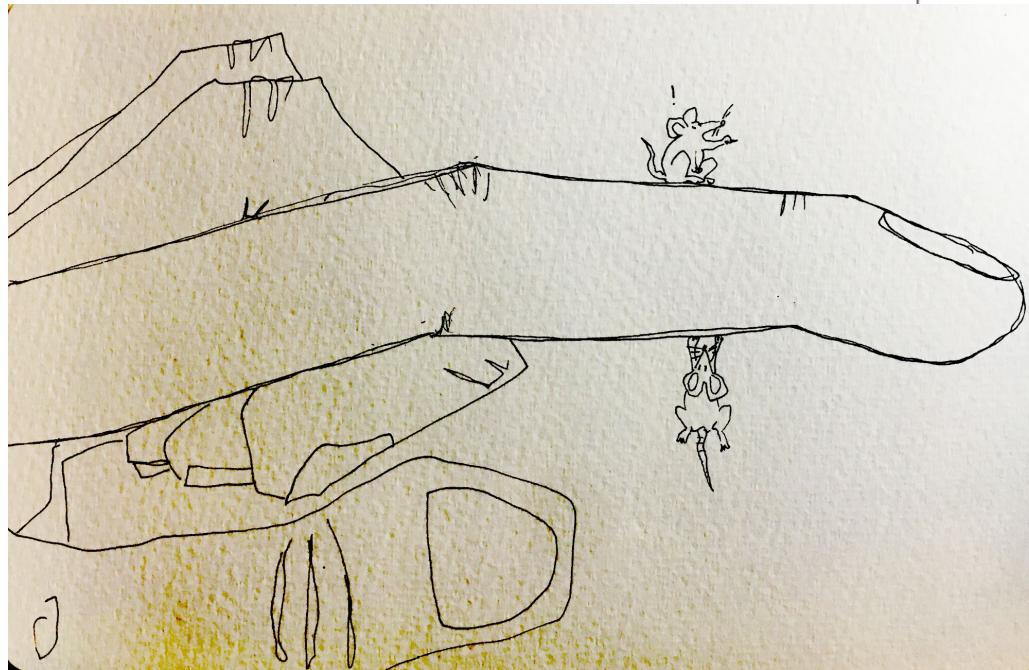
Andy Quicksand

There is some wedge salad in my shoe.
There is a small shard of glass in my underwear.
For a while now I've been flirting with mirrors
And eating wedge salad.

There are bees in my yard.
There are bees in my bathroom.
So I have a lot of honey,
But not that much patience for bees.

There are smiles in the foreheads of frowning people
That I hang on to in my own way, because getting out of bed
in the morning is hard,
But someone has to do it in their big boy pants.

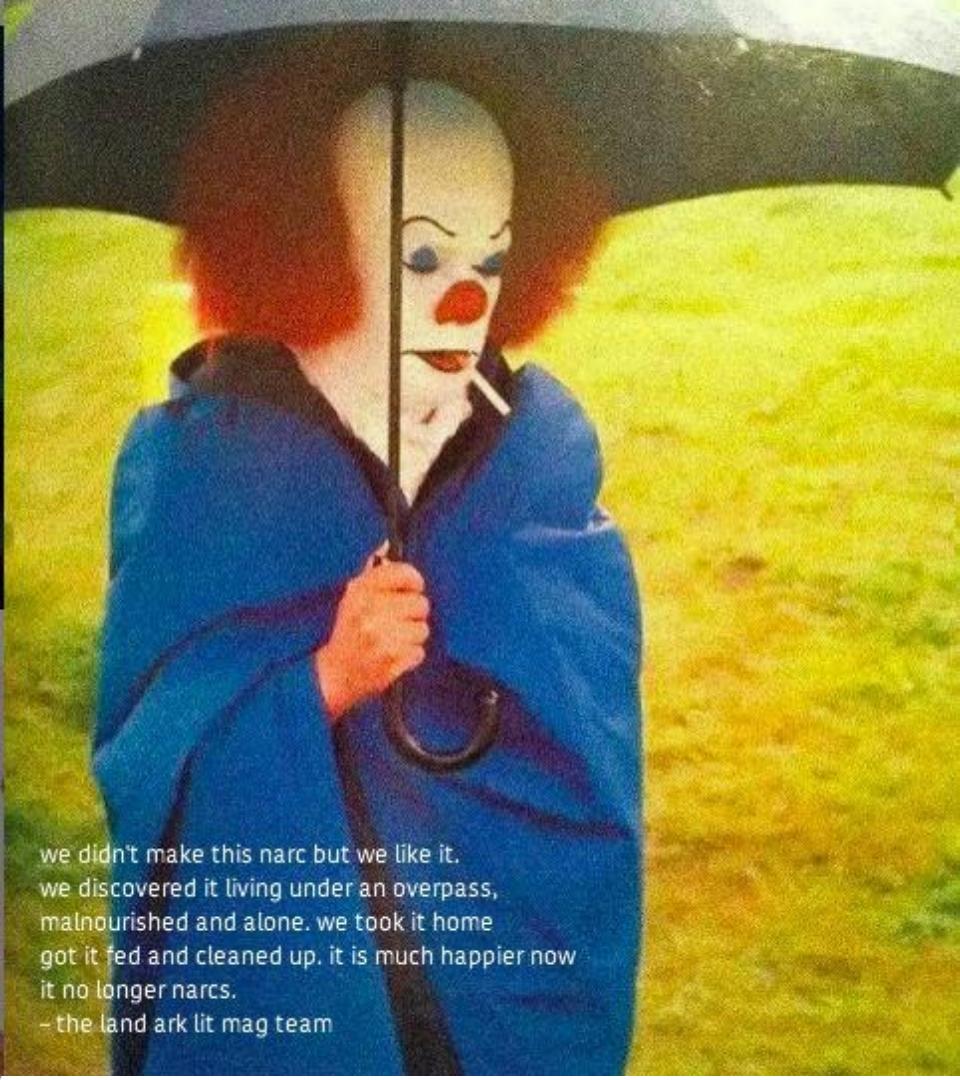
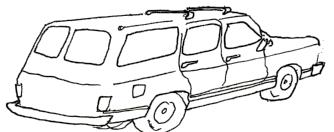




Land Ark Lit Mag accepts submissions of “anything literary” and “anything visual.”

Please email The Editor with your work at:
landarklit@gmail.com

Thank You.



we didn't make this narc but we like it.
we discovered it living under an overpass,
malnourished and alone. we took it home
got it fed and cleaned up. it is much happier now
it no longer narcotics.
- the land ark lit mag team