

something for the table,  
something just between us.



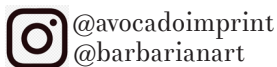
2019  
Independently constructed.

Pomona, Calif.

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first printing

AVOCADO IMPRINT

# The Forest Smolders Quietly

1½ oz wheated bourbon or California rye  
such as by SONOMA COUNTY DISTILLING CO.  
or LOST REPUBLIC DISTILLING CO.

¾ oz douglas fir eau-de-vie  
such as by CLEAR CREEK DISTILLERY

½ oz CAPPELLETTI Amaro Sfumato Rabarbaro

½ oz alpine herbal liqueur,  
preferably: DOLIN Génépy le Chamois

2 dashes eucalyptus bitters  
preferably: BITTER QUEEN NorCal Nancy

1 dash black walnut bitters

Add all to mixing glass with three or four large ice cubes.

Stir gently. Strain into short glass with extra-large ice cube.

Garnish with a thin round of winter apple  
and clipped rosemary + fennel frond.

# poetry, no. 6 {s.vii}

## (On Quietude)

Everything in the forest tells a story of  
how it came to be; its own autonomous  
mythos, which is simultaneously personal  
and universal, the stitch and the weave.

It is told in each blackened scar. By the distance travelled  
either rolling or falling. Of almost falling.  
Escaping death.  
Continuing on

and on.

How this particular and temporal arrangement  
came about; the incidental composition.

In one sense, it is happening very  
slowly. But in the greater context,  
each of these stories is a glimpse,  
an eyelash blowing away.

And yet they remain silent.

This, like origami unfolding unhurriedly,  
a deliberate exposure  
of forgotten crease-lines  
beneath & inside

&in/to in//tuition  
which imbues  
each shadow puppet  
with CHARACTER,  
by conviction  
of SOUL.

The way, perhaps, our contact  
speaks to silence.

Solitary, it is a vast pitch  
of darkness—  
fear is stoked brighter, but music  
sounds better too, so it kinda  
balances out.

Shared, it is the cosmos  
and the womb.

And happens  
just now,  
so we both understand

the Allure of Shadow  
and the inherent risk  
of solitary reflection

—the vulnerability  
of shared  
acknowledgment;

a way in which stillness  
shapes an acceptance  
of difficult truth:

we can love each other,

alone.

# Don Palomares'

## Oaxacan Remedy

2¼ oz *mildly smokey* single-estate mezcal joven  
such as by MAL BIEN;  
or, DEL MAGUEY Vida

1 oz lime juice

¾ oz honey syrup

3-4 dashes spiced chocolate bitters

preferably: MIRACLE MILE Chocolate Chili;  
or, FEE BROS. Aztec Chocolate

4 mint leaves

4 sage leaves

sal de gusano

Apply lip of sal de gusano to the outside rim of short glass.

In a tin, muddle well the herbs with lime juice and a pinch of sal de gusano. Add remaining ingredients; shake well.

Strain into salted glass, serve on the rocks.

Garnish with large mint crown and two long sage leaves.

# For My Grandmother

*“ strong, Mexican, bitter ”*

1½ oz tequila reposado  
1 oz GRANADA-VALLET  
¾ oz GREENBAR Grand Hops Amaro  
2-3 dashes grapefruit bitters  
NARDINI Grappa Mandorla

Add first four ingredients to mixing glass  
with three or four large ice cubes.

Stir gently. Strain into short glass with extra-large ice cube.

Spritz thoroughly with the Grappa Mandorla.

Garnish with a small grapefruit wheel set inside the glass,  
and pomegranate arils balanced on the ice cube.

# poetry, no. 10 {s.v}

## (vignettes of pomona)

### I. The Lincoln District

Where I am from. This seems  
as appropriate a place as any.

1. At center is the park: a large circle, mounds carpeted by long-blade grass; a playground and sandbox; interior scattered with acorns, but the edges are sporadically lined by Mexican palm; small courtyard with stone tables and a community fire-pit, grill caked in old soot and carbon.

Here there are birthdays with piñatas hung from oak arms, danger swaying atop a thin-legged helter skelter, forums of etched graffiti in the roost with signatures like painted masks. Tabletop checkerboards played only by invalid old men, ironwork lamps that shine reaching but just out of reach // of the midnight pot deal, the drunk muttering while he stumbles the winding gravel path terminating, to unexpected fear, in a rose garden, bronze plaque engraved and resting in the middle:

'for my wife.' I used to believe it was her grave.

Fanning from this focal point is the neighborhood, irregular plots crowned by crafts of architecture, lingering in this lost refuge from depreciation, reminiscing over old Hollywood, roots set by orange grove emperors and agro-engineers; their hardwood has swelled and the brick toasted, but handblown windows still swirl rainbow light, white walls of the Spanish hacienda are as bleached as they were in 1924, guarded by a forest of cacti. Colonial and Edwardian manors age quietly alongside cottages and clay

adobes, all housing breadbasket tenants or intellectual burnouts, families of former prominence reduced to childless only-children filing for government checks, cross-pollinating those descended of the mestizo cowboys with those of the Californio dons, the ancestors of Tongva priests fucking the ancestors of New England expatriates.

2. Raccoons slip beneath parked cars, engineblocks already cold, sniffing out the boundaries of cat territory. The alleys are quietly active, sporadically crashing with hisses and growls, fights over neglected pans of dogfood or an unlucky garden pond koi. There are battles in the trees. But one must not confuse this with evidence of a violent nature—the struggle here is for resource, for nourishment of all the being's needs; the story of this neighborhood is one of survival, in spite of time crumbling all surrounding histories. That central conflict forms the entire narrative, characters revealed upon this neighborhood stage by the sounds forming their subtle impact on the dead of night.

Rummaging, rattle of our glass bottle binges, sorted and tossed into shopping carts long gone astray: the Street People making their rounds collecting in the hours before trash day, plastic sacks stuffed and piled in the cart or bound to its sides, cardboard boxes stacked flat underneath. They walk every block and pass every house, quiet but for their digging, hunched beneath heavy jackets with their eyes down. Leave nothing behind, only gathering along the way, so in the morning you would never know they'd been there, but for a certain absence.

So it goes on.

### 3. "A Dying Kingdom"

Firmly held, an absolution of *underneath*,  
buried in the basements and root cellars  
of homes not foreseen into this decade, but standing

still

to hold each generation, console them as they sleep with dogs  
or pour shots of tequila to appease the silence;  
gripping that burden to secure it more firmly to one's own back,  
trudging through layered oils of our daily gambles  
with quiet dignity and prideful sorrow, careful  
not to wet the bottom.

But there are many times when this weight  
is contrasted with celebration—birthdays, communions,



holidays, anniversaries—and the sounds of joy crackle far louder than those of gunshots and sirens. The pipehead across the street is content to watch his grandchildren play with their cousins; a distant memory lingers, warm in its presence, pinned to the sound of chickens complaining and the scent of homegrown chiles or citrus.

## II. Holt Avenue

Everyone knows Holt. It stretches for fifty miles through at least six cities. But its pinnacle is through Pomona. That's where they mean when they say, "down on Holt." And everyone knows what you can get on Holt.

Colors faded to pastel on storefronts: hardware and auto shops, sewing and small motorworks: vaccuums, lawnmowers, minibikes. Most are vacant now.

There is a printer, still, and plenty of Chinese take-out, taquerías, pawn shops, and liquor stores.

The market is saturated.

There is one tailor specializing in quinceañera dresses, and the school district office shares a complex with the indoor swap meet and parking lot carnival, which is always more crowded.

But, of course, it's the wynn.

Colors still run bright, running down their legs, while they walk the strip, past the dive called Grandma's Attic and the bus stops by the body shop; want to look, it's okay, because everyone does, feelin' like chrome and hi-def paintjobs and hotrods, that's what you wanna think when checkin' out that ass and those curves wrapped in neon tubes for just that reason: that distraction: which we all know

you pay to pretend isn't real.

Always just business. Speak it like it means something:  
*"just business."*

—where once it was fruit stands, and  
orchards flanked on either side of a thin dirt path  
cut through years of labor, through the generations raised  
from a rut in the soil, now is the route of commerce colliding  
with some “culture,” of a New Southwest, flairs of golden rain  
and the rein of golden Los Angeles, like solar flares  
cast out into cold reaches, where their warmth is artificially magnified,  
clutching it like the contour of her breast, because there is nowhere else  
to go.

This avenue is but a subscript.

Now the gold is tarnished, kept in a crevice so secure, and warm,  
here safe: and dictated when and  
where  
it will be pawned. A false control, swept up  
in idyllic romances while the sun collapses on the world around,  
so that at least in the wake of oblivion, one might smile

at the gleam enameled over approaching darkness.

### III. Mission Boulevard

Dazzle me, lady, with glamorous grids of lightbulbs all burning bright, marquee  
and nightscene gathering, the palace theater so coyly called *the Fox*. Where the  
lowriders roam, though their numbers have diminished.

Along this road she takes you by the hand, to romantic times, getting high in  
the palms lining the salvation of street islands, in the eucalyptus cradling the  
Tiki drive-in still running double-features, the towers at the train station or the  
cathedral spire. This street will kiss you at the strip joint, nurse you at the old  
forties ranch homes near the *carnicería* and Korean bakery,

where once it was all glitz and glitter, the Pontiacs  
and Plymouths glistening in the summer, parades and premiers  
in the winter, festivals

to raze City Hall. Everything here is  
vintage promise,

cultivating the Californio citizen,  
impure and proud.

It's all that we've built, together, for better or worse;

murals and minor spaces painted, our humble galleries,

the road set wide & cracked open. When you drive through  
there is an invigoration, a buzz along

the nape of your neck: rhodes piano chords  
and strutting synthesizer beats—riding  
next to you and both of us tinted amber, sunblush  
hues through our sunglass lenses.

Our scope is concentrated

on the synapse, of the cholita—dark lips and black hair—  
and her tattooed gangster protector, sitting on his lap while he wheels across the  
street, paralyzed from the waist down. He is marked for life, the refuse of worn-  
out violence smeared across her young body, which writhes naked beneath his  
hand: by milk-smoke in the afternoon, rivers of liquor in the night.

Between them is shared misery. To each the other is both a nutrient and a vice.  
There are no qualms about love, because to them love is inherently an anger, a  
position

of violent intention.

On Mission Boulevard,  
the past is washed like the dirt from a potato, so that an echo always,  
inevitably, remains—to taint the oil but intensify the flavor, a shade  
which is always coating our brick,

our stone, and

our *grass*.

This is us looking into one another's eyes  
while completely blind.

Time has been lost, though aging remains. A very strict code  
of the stars is outlined

in white chalk blueprint lines, diagraphing our  
pillars of tragic history, our humble legends of little more than dust  
coating el llano, or the sullied rime across flailing nights descending  
from the pitch of lonesome quarters.  
We are now only such stories, playing make-believe for each  
individual mythos, each bitter saga

of torrid rage.

Because this here is what stings like nettles, or casts a vibrant astringency upon  
my neck & shoulders; while there is music, there must always be rhythm and  
pulse-beat waves to ride through different decades, all of them really one and the  
same, and sewn beneath the groove rest our tawdry indulgences, with the security  
implied by the comfort of the past.

We are nothing. And we know this together.

Regardless, I inject this memory, and the high is similar to bituminous fluid  
congealing on a horsehair brush. // Despite this overwhelming consumption  
upon our entrance, resolution eventually rises with the July air, the sweat of young  
bodies, bitter like the juice of a cactus, oversexed in sugared papaya purée, mango  
and chili running down a white girl's long sexy legs. Somebody catcalls the cholos  
on the corner. Carpeting the Boulevard is the smell of gasoline and pastrami-  
burgers, a hint of burning green just behind, and overlaid across all of it is the  
midsummer heat, the glow of towering streetlamps, and the uneven surface of  
human skin bemoaned by the wear of labor.

One can only feel it with music, and driving, and a daydream of unrequited love.

# To César!

1 oz VENTURA SPIRITS Strawberry Brandy  
½ oz GRAN CENTENARIO Rosangel Tequila Reposado  
¾ oz BROVO SPIRITS Sacramento Curaçao  
1 oz verjus  
½ oz blood orange juice  
2-3 dashes grapefruit bitters  
4-5 kumquats, split  
2-3 strawberries, diced  
4-5 mint leaves

In a tin, muddle well the fruit and mint.

Add remaining ingredients, shake.

Double-strain into tall glass, serve on the rocks.

Garnish with strawberry slice, cucumber wheel,  
basil crown, and skewered kumquat halves.

*note: striped paper straw*

REMIX //  
On The Sunny Side

# That's One Way To Get Your Vegetables

2 oz savory-forward gin infused with blanched (shocked) beets  
preferably: RUTTE Celery

$\frac{3}{4}$  oz carrot eau-de-vie  
such as by REISETBAUER

$\frac{1}{2}$  oz VICARIO Dragoncello

Add all ingredients to mixing glass  
with three or four large ice cubes.

Stir well. Strain into chilled nick & nora glass or coupe.

Expel oil from two lemon twists over top of drink and rim,  
discard one, combine the other  
with cocktail onion on a skewer for garnish.

# poetry, no. 1 {s.viii}

## (Onion Dinner)

You affect me

like the sugar  
in juice—

myself, entrenched  
by this viscosity,  
some fuzzy  
liquid  
texture  
*pour / ing /*  
slowly.

{ *Like when you lie there,*  
*I can feel myself moving;* }

here,

@ the speed of stones  
in the desert,  
yet bewildering  
as an avalanche  
on a mountain.

Thousands of times  
I've smeared graphite  
like the shadows  
which trace  
your figure,

& your hair  
much longer  
now  
since you refuse  
to cut it.

Only  
a handful

of times per year,

you tell me.

But every time  
you save the bottom inch  
—kept in an  
envelope  
beside the bible—  
because  
you say,  
that  
is the  
oldest bit.

I don't know how,  
but you assure me this practice  
will keep me loyal;  
because now  
I can only dream  
in the morning  
along the shore

of tepid affection  
& the depths of yearning.

Between these instances  
of repose,  
surrendered  
wakefulness,  
I sense your many arms  
reach and twist in  
six directions;  
so I am left  
wondering if one of them  
is toward me.

This is especially difficult  
when your skin is paint, and mine is fiber,  
and both our eyes are closed.



Of course,  
my impulse  
is to touch you,  
though my palms  
are iron  
with treebark fingers.

( *You speak to me  
in a language resembling water.* )

Our projection  
continues unabated; to tangle *in*,  
to slip through tongues  
of websilk  
& venusian light.

The sugar lingers on my lips, sticky

and agonizingly slow

to crystalize.

*You tell me later  
that was your  
favorite flavor.*

This convinces me  
your skin smells  
like the leaves of old books,

and your sex  
like salt  
& guava.

From your laughter,  
I surmise that the ocean  
must dwell in your throat.

This is fantasy

composite,

of wand'ring minds,  
of treasured contact  
& a fear of love

—which itself  
is an anchor  
suspended by  
dental floss.

This, too, is how I fall asleep  
to you,

and likewise,

how I wake up.

# Toucan Play At That Game

1 oz dark rum

such as by KŌLOA KAUAʻI

1 oz banana liqueur

preferably: TEMPUS FUGIT Crème de Banane  
or, GIFFARD Banane du Bresil

$\frac{3}{4}$  oz AMARO DI ANGOSTURA

$\frac{1}{2}$  oz *mild* bitter red aperitivo

preferably: DON CICCIO & FIGLI Luna Amara  
or, CAPPELLETTI Americano Rosso

$\frac{1}{4}$  oz freshly squeezed, unfiltered pineapple juice  
juice of half a lime

2-3 dashes coffee tincture

2-3 dashes Peychaud's bitters

Add all ingredients except rum to tin.

Shake vigorously, then strain into large tulip  
or hurricane glass, on the rocks.

Carefully float dark rum.

Garnish with frozen pineapple slice, blade of lemon verbana,  
and brightly-colored edible flowers.

# poetry, no. 4 {s.vi}

## (A Farside Burst)

“ So the swooze, you want to know? So it  
is, the thirsty curse for poetry booze—like white noise  
the roar crashing rolls in against salt,  
cut rhythmically by

sudden

silence;

each wave  
is a fit of laughter shared  
beneath the wrap of banana leaves  
& corn husks, slimed kelp—silt  
and dancing fleas.

Looking golden

leaping <sup>dr</sup> o  
ps

*of oil.*

A flutter on your skin, like windsails' *bellow*.

”

lyrics

*mixed*

*sala d greens*

&surprise !! //beat/ ahead  
off the edge

on&on, and on anon,  
twisting

out from some slop, to approach— **ABRUPT;LY**

as it has (in the shade) all  
these hats (throwing wear)  
worn on. Speaks to me quietly

in the flavor

of yr favorite: of sweet popsicle dreams  
and fantastic lives  
on the backs / of butterfly wings, //  
&this

—liQuid *love* ::

on the rocks  
settled bourbon-brown,  
dirt underpinned by  
such motives  
as // our *forlorn*, jealous peace

or simple  
reinvention.

The way we've spawned, here in Great Halls  
where before us there has happened revolution, fury of art, and hope  
for the times yet to pass, for the future yet to breathe; (slug) on  
from here

the way we've grown...  
some pictures of our history, stolen from their frames—(but just) *you*  
let it roll.

Downe quiet/ly, feathered light wrapped  
around us, our distant faith the point upon which  
this life is balanced,  
the waters in which we bathe.  
The songs through  
which we breathe.

After this  
after our

eyeyes are closed;

until all that's left  
is the synthesis of shape  
between light and darkness,

and all that's left  
is an eruption of time  
that slows down fear  
but speeds up love,

and all that's left  
is the collision of stars.

# Basil On Beet St.

1 oz Kentucky straight bourbon  
3/4 oz *mildly* peated, blended scotch  
preferably: IAN MACLEOD Sheep Dip  
3/4 oz ginger liqueur  
such as by NEW DEAL DISTILLERY  
or, BERRY BROS. & RUDD The King's Ginger  
3/4 oz beet juice  
3/4 oz lemon juice  
1/2 oz honey syrup  
1-2 dashes fennel bitters  
3-4 large basil leaves

In a tin, muddle basil with lemon juice.

Add remaining ingredients plus ice and shake vigorously.

Strain over 3-4 large ice cubes in short glass.

Garnish with pea tendril, ginger slice, and lemon spiral.

# prose, no. 5 {s.IV}

Apart from many different times, in part because of our bruises painted in rhyming colors, or other strokes of brushes against skin and then again stoking brushfires leaning into the mountainsides; spark showers confetti rain like holiday poppers, new year's fireworks, and fountains of sparkling liqueur. Knowing you have fallen into water. Letting each one of them lie.

In its sweetness. In its intangible comforts nuzzled into the crook of coffee, chocolate, and oatmeal stout, a twist of tangerine set atop an old fashioned armoire with rings from abandoned drinks. And from that a bitter aftertaste, pleasant in its salt of olive, the rind of lemons, and a touch of vinegar. But from each sip must then rest afterwards in the fumigation of bitters' scent, blossomed deep green unfurling herbs at morning.

From the soft sandy bottom of a well, so that for only a few seconds each day does sunlight leak in before climbing out. But in that time it overtakes the entirety of the small space around you.

—and here we are. The world is left to us, alone.

What is known quietly, understood in our center of being; echoes of fingers dipped in a pool caught between the river run, into distances burnt as they pass, a thornbush road paved by the water's ripple through gravel baths and all the while an ocean beckons from either end of an untamable continent. There can be no comfort in domestication, and such will always be met with resistance. This war will begin the moment each of us first emerges.