

# Extracts

by DJ Young

I nicked this from a 12-year-old famine victim living under a bridge in Disneyland.

The radio in the car keeps cutting out -

*unny came -  
to her favorite  
-oom  
Sun - sat -  
in the kitch -*

When he was three, my nephew used to pee on spiders. When my mother found out, she made a video and posted it on Youtube. Half a million views in the first two days.

My dad used to read magazines made of stolen hymens.

At school, I used to watch the older girls getting pregnant in the bathrooms. They'd always spit the babies down the sink.

Reading *Alice* in the tree house on the beach — again. It's overdue from the library, but no one asks me for it.

Mom says she loves us. We want to believe her, but.

There's an imaginary grave under my bed — just in case.

*- opened a book and a  
box of tools -*

In first grade, I wet myself waiting for lunch. Should have waited for the toilet, my dad said. He made me wear a diaper so I wouldn't forget.

On the day Elvis Presley died, my mom was all shook up.

When we were nine, Shannon Lewis and I would pretend to be married. If I touched her breasts, she had a headache. If I kissed her neck, she'd ask for money. We named the twins Alice and Edgar. When I died, she cried. She always wanted to be a widow.

Katie Ward tastes like a salty mango.

Shouting really isn't necessary. Ever. Look at those kids. They're scared of you now.

*I close my eyes and -*

When we arrived in London, the rain was coming down so hard - we got wet just looking at it.

Nicholas rode his bicycle into a street sign and needed six stitches over his nose. The ER nurse threatened to call the Child Protective Services. She'd never seen so much damage to one kid's face. My mother told her if she had kids, she'd know better.

Jeremy thinks our parents owe him a place to stay. His children live with their mothers.

*- a list of names she didn't*

*believe in -*

On the little island we lived in a little white house that froze in the winter — you could scrape the frost off the walls of the bedroom. In the summer, I found all the little graves of Russian children who had died of cholera a hundred years before.

We were housebound for a week during the ice storm. You read Nancy Drew mysteries and the Agatha Christie one about the train. I wrote a space opera about humanity's end.

I'm sorry we never met.

When I was 11, my mother paid me to spy on my father and his girlfriend in her house. They would fuck in her son's bedroom. When I told him, at school, he said he only sleeps in his mother's room anyway.

*it's time for a few -*

All I remember about the accident was the hood of the car, crushing through the windshield. The way the glass spider-webbed. And the sound my shins made as they broke.

*- repairs she said -*

My hand slid into Heidi and she laughed. I panicked.

If he were in a good mood, Andrew would show us his collection of fossilized bones. If he were in a bad mood, he'd twist our fingers until they popped and spit in our mouths.

Shannon showed me where she cut herself whenever she was sad or angry or confused. She doesn't really know why.

- *dry is go — d* -  
- *wind is be — t* -

The boys dug a shallow grave at the old cemetery and stole an old headstone to make it complete. They hid bags of weed under the dirt.

“Stop worrying about the fucking road.”

“Don't tell me what to fucking worry about.”

The fire alarm went off and everyone in the music library got up and headed for the stairs. The librarian asked us to grab as many of the old manuscripts we could and run.

Watching Jeremy being arrested outside the hospital. On his knees, hands behind his head, the cops tie his wrists with plastic restraints. He looks old.

- *walking on a - fly out of my* -

The last straw: stalking me online and trolling my friends. You're like termites. An infestation.

The therapist wants to know if I own a gun. I tell her no. I don't tell her that everyone I know owns one.

We find seven bottles of Vicodin in my grandmother's sock drawer. My mother is smiling as she takes an unopened bottle and slips it in her purse.

The surgeon comes into the room holding a plastic bag with a pink-black glob the size of a grapefruit inside. He says I can't take the tumor home, but I can look at it. It's covered with nipple-like nodules and looks like something out of *The Thing*. I want a picture, but no one has a camera.

- *world is burning* -

Nicholas came to my room after the party and started crying. He doesn't want me to tell mom about our uncle. He doesn't know this isn't the first time I've heard this.

*down* -

The lights come up as the projector's bulb burns out. The audience isn't happy. The old man holding his penis looks mortified. Everyone wants a refund.

Walking through the museum, you point out the odd-looking bird from the *Alice* story. It's much bigger than we imagined. It's just a model. You read how no one really knows what the Dodo looked like, exactly, as there are no complete specimens. This is what extinction looks like, you said.

*she's out there -*

Driving through the desert between Oregon and California, on our way to the Happiest Place on Earth, Jeremy says it looks like the end of the world. Our parents look happy. The air conditioner hums along with the radio.

*- she's alright*

This is the last thing I remember.

*Sunny came home*

END

