

War Doc Week

by Glynnis Eldridge

Douchey Jake made me cry until my eyes puffed so much I couldn't see through them. I said hey look, to my friends who slept on the futon, don't I look like one of those dolls with the real fake eyelashes?

The truth is I've been pretending I don't exist: the slight mustache I have is not there when I feel it isn't, nor is there rust on my razor blades. I pretend you are not using the things I left in the big bathroom, even the bottle of soap meant to make the user feel more relaxed that is upside down every time I see it.

Last night I went to antarctica with my family. We walked through a stairwell and it was all white, it was cold, it was a big room and there were plaques for alien landings. There was a corridor surrounding antarctica and I took it. Decided I had to leave. Antarctica was too small, felt artificial, felt scary, dark, empty. I tried to instagram it. Back in the lobby the corridor looped around a small hill. It was a crowded Friday at the museum, there was a special exhibit for new elk dioramas. A road wrapped around the hill that had grown taller and wider. We were outside Pittsburgh and the elk were alive, were trampling, the lighting was orange and there was screaming and the elk rounds the hill for me. I lay on the ground and face the charging elk. The elk looks at me and runs by. I consider masturbating in new ways. The elk disappears and rounds the hill again. Comes at me. Vanishes. We are running to find places to hide. Your mother is there. She has not been dead all along. My mother is there. She is looking for a place to hide while her hair falls out. Your mother tells her about Antarctica. The lobby is full of people touching their hair and I see their hairlines are far back, moving, maybe. It smells like fish and cheese.

He said "we're kind of dying, I think." I tell you I'm sorry when I tell you this story.

I mean to say I care about you a lot more than my actions may have suggested. This year is very different from last year: I am listening to the same songs but in different rooms, not speeding down roads alone but sitting in stagnant places alone. You live down the hall and we got along fine for a long time. Some sobering thing brought me back with April's arrival. I'm six months into being halfway through my twenties. Yesterday Dad took me out for lunch which was a smoothie and some pastries and asked me if I have ever been raped and I say I don't know and he says what do you mean and what would most people say and I say I think they might also say I don't know. He then compliments me on my Facebook posts.

(I let my room reflect the way my brain feels, let myself start to smell like onion gook. That long mirror that reflects me as longer and weird in the face.

I told my friends about this mess over spaghetti and one said it sounds like some kind of greek tragicomedy, but it's all gonna be fine, but hey, have you ever considered suicide?)

"Hindsight is twenty-twenty." I can end things with you through text but so what? Yesterday there was a taco competition and we didn't talk. I say its too much, I don't think I can and you say me either and thats that? I start an immediate search to fill the void. You send me a self portrait from the ferry.

The doctor said if you think you're freaking out you might be inside but you wont be outside. Don't forget: don't tell anyone.

Not everything is a war but if I don't evaporate I do give permission for you to eat me, if you need some food I guess. A lot boils down to zeros and ones and its easier to do big things with mouse clicks.

She asks how I'm feeling about it:
relieved and shitty
shitty

I miss you.
I miss you.

You clench your jaw a lot.
I clench my jaw and my teeth start dissolving.

But why would you want to write speeches for the president?
Remember life before the war? No?
"Do I have the right to kick you out of your own house and move
in there myself?"

We all close our eyes from it, for it, while its happening.
I've been glued down from it, stupid from it. (How do you be
single?) (Not this way, I think.)

He writes on his self portrait three times: hope to find ~~~~~~
(hope to find ~~~~ hope to find ~~~~)

What is democracy and respect of the other opinion? The really
free debate?

It took two hours to get from Brooklyn to Manhattan last night.
The whole way we played truth or Truth and you said hey, wake up
there is something happening in the world, there is something still
happening in the world! "I just had another break up, lol."

A number of sensitive site exploitation teams, a number of
suspicious sites. Maybe I should never involve myself with anyone.
Freedom doesn't come from violence but you have to look it in the
face to know it.

The bombs go off behind the broadcasters, my childhood determined by colors of risk, "he says there is heavy bombing," but there is always heavy bombing.

I mean why?

All of your friends angry at you specifically.

They try to have their cake and eat it, but you can't ask us to love it. We can try to talk about it, it's the sitcom news desk, it's so scary to go live.

Democracy sounds like a can hitting a plastic roof and exploding, but Americans go in and scream at people to face forward and lay down. Everyone faints when the white people burst through. Hey invaders, hey invaders, you American cowards, no wonder, the american people, where is your conscience? Your humanity? Their elbows going the other ways, their tubes all over the place, "people like this," being who? A face of bandages and black holes. A human cost. I care about you and I don't want to be crappy.

How can I smile through this? We are hiding under the statue of liberty from aliens who blast through our bellies. George Bush's small ignorant dogs care about him. What does humanely mean?

My jaw cracks loudly. I try translating the fibers in my wall hanging. For a second it's turning from French to English. Some words include garlic, this, arrival, burst. It's easiest seen in dark rooms. I can't try talking to you in this room: she's on the other side of the door, and keeping it simple means keeping quiet, separate.

My friend reached out behind her and touched her arm as an identifier: of course it wasn't left as some nothing. An ex's name appearing on the website for class: everyone has to use digital swank. Maybe she knows better and that's where sound machines

come from. Someone drops a bathtub upstairs and it reverberates through my walls.

Overseas they use plastic handcuffs too, like those my grand-mom wore. I am glad we can talk about this like adults. What do we owe to our audiences? Few people go from television star to farmer. What do you do when you move backwards in reverse?

I'm numbed by seeing it on repeat for years: a stomach is a stomach is a stomach. My point of view balanced against yours. I want to tell you about what is on my mind, but I think I mean what did you expect? The media that relies on emotions and wishful thinking, a wistful government.

Your voice makes me feel like a nightmare in which I am traversing monkey bars and in every direction I look I feel a fear of heights. The thing that is the most gross is patriotism he says, its a fox.

He sips tea and hopes for the world to be quiet. "Democratize or I'll shoot!" Can you see the back of your head?

A new empire with control of oil.

Remember when you barged in demanding your dirt bike gear? Digital Swank?

Why would you move to the country killing you? The nicest guys leave you raw and pink, not broken in spirits though. Why are we doing this to ourselves? The whole world falls apart.

An advertisement for storage compartments on the train brings me back into the moment: you are here, on this very tiny dot in space. It doesn't matter. But salad dressing, and universes. "History tells us that humans have short memories, and the history books are written by the victors. Life will continue, there will be other problems, other things to think about ... Is that rain? No, don't

worry." She reminds me we don't actually know each other. I can't help but wonder if you might love me. If saying I care about you means anything then what? There are little bugs all over us. On every dot isn't there something else? You steep tea in hot water and gulp the smallest galaxies. A round surface will always look flat to the small things that tip toe across it.

