

# Living In A Novel

*by* John Olson

I walked into a novel and sat down on a rock. The language was distressed and full of cyclones and swells. I could smell embalming fluid and folklore. Everywhere I went there were doorknobs, escalators, and clocks. Objects of all genre overflowing with prose. I stood at the end of a diving board and looked down. The water looked back at me with indifference. Was this a story by Albert Camus or Harpo Marx? Is it possible that I was the author and that what I perceived as clay was actually gas? What belongs to us to write? Everything happening in words is mostly bracelets, rattlesnakes and landscapes. Indifference is no longer an option. There are decisions to be made, infatuations to pursue, joyrides and appetites and regrets. Apathy has no place here. Only passion and its one central equation, which has to do with galvanization. It opens me up like a tunnel, a conduit to the other side of myself. I must go now. It's time to feed the camels. I can rarely, if ever, tell where a story is going. Writing doesn't give me a sense of control it gives me a sense of navigating chaos. Words engorge the mind with the puffery of waffles. The trick is to give them meaning. Or subtract meaning and festoon them with tinsel. This is how I discovered Christmas. I hid behind a couch wrapping morsels of affection with my sparkly hullabaloo. Chapter II begins with an erection and a tugboat. The sound of a foghorn. Hedonism is essential. I am my process. Even if it means living in a novel, turning pages.

