

# The New Lycanthropy

by Noah Friedman

Who remains after the aching night has departed into dawn  
and left us to week-old sleep  
slouching from lofted beds and cartons of Ramen  
rocked by finals week.  
Books languish  
beneath half consumed pints of chunky monkey, lips chapped,  
beneath the fortune of the take home test, jaws open,  
and beneath the mistaken ease of plagiarism  
whose impetus sprang from empty dimebags  
like racehorses in Dzungaria.  
To comfort is merely to procrastinate.  
But even still, we manage.  
Trekking savage expanses of blue books,  
rows of votive Red Bulls  
Indulge God in exchange for the salvation of a full stop;  
    the most sanctified well in the world.  
The sighs roar through the Great Hall  
and though we tremble, we still put up a fight  
to exorcise an ellipsis  
that's sneakier than all of the Sylvias  
and hungrier than all the Hoaglands  
it will get us all,  
    that is, if the scantron hasn't beaten it to the punch.  
But whom can I charge overnight  
with potential pizzaz?  
who will run beneath the weary morning banner  
without so much as a groan  
and still let me push its buttons;  
Mac. The apple of my eye.  
Who zips tirelessly from rapid auctions  
to neon microfiche without having tasted  
the mystic jolt from the holiest grail

of cardboard and corporate imprint.  
Who captured the blaze of Alexandria  
and reconstructed the ashes  
in thirteen and a half inches of  
miracle mystery and authority  
that once belonged to marble-bearded professors  
shackled to print and pocket-protectors.  
Not me, though.  
Mac conquered far and wide for me  
as if Ghengis Khan met Lebron  
and together balled up all the world's triumphs into one,  
with the cavalry circling  
from baseline to baseline in a flash  
while with solemn fondness  
they recall the wild blue incantation that locked  
the entire city of Cleveland  
under the key.  
Because after all  
even Khan was no Superman,  
Lest we forget that even he too  
once bent to a final bow in equestrian free-fall.  
Not Mac, though.  
Mac's got 'em all cornered  
beaten into binary  
and packed neatly away in cyberspace  
  
along with Casey and Peter and Ricky  
and the rest of our pledge class  
where we once would have met  
in coffee shops or roof tops  
above the bronze pennants of our neighbors.  
There is still one missing.  
The campus,  
a place Komunyakaa fought for  
and loved harder than any tenured faculty member,

his temple, our coliseum.  
I used to love U.r.  
before the angels forgot America's favorite son,  
whom you loved,  
letting the dagger through his letterman jacket  
to carve a silver star out of his cardinal heart  
leaving the shelved hills of Arlington to question their superiors,  
wondering whether or not they'll be held accountable in court for  
their participation in  
the greatest cover-up  
since Amazon rewrote Plutarch, having originally stated that  
"The Kindle is not a vessel to be filled,  
    but a mind on fire,"  
a smear of history that buffet Bishop and Lowell  
into a fox-trotted retreat through the library stacks  
where they disappeared like black sox through cornstalks.  
Together, they'll be safe there  
and can do old fashions justice  
hand-in-hand, face-to-face  
for these methods that are not allowed  
belong in my burn folder with Cam and Shortbus  
and Cupid, who stung arrows across the Great Provide  
right through his girlfriend's behind and into her inbox,  
reminding us that its Hard To Miss Low  
with a homunculus so huge  
as it charms us all

one  
    by  
one

with open lips,

"Welcome to the New Lycanthropy.

Mac's got your back."

