

# THE RACKET

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Hi.

Everyone doing okay?

Ruth Bader Ginsburg passed away a week or so back.

I would be dumb to say that I was surprised by the death of an 87-year old human being who'd dealt with the medical issues Ruth Bader Ginsburg had in the last few years of her life.

But wow, what a gut punch.

I had convinced myself a long time ago that RBG wasn't going to die. Not that she was immortal, but that she'd somehow convinced Death to leave her be for awhile until everything wasn't so dire. I'd allowed myself a glimmer of hope that this year - *this year* - would just hold off on one more knee to our collective groins.

Clearly it didn't.

And though RBG's passing makes me stop in the midst of daily activity to just hold my eyes tight and try and hold my anxiety at bay, her passing isn't what makes me truly sad and truly angry.

It's the thought that in our nation's capital, a group of men and women spent the last few years perched over their newsfeeds, waiting for the announcement that a titan of progressive law - a woman who helped to change more for other women in America than just about anyone else this century - had passed.

When she did, when Ruth Bader Ginsburg slipped off the mortal coil, they clasped hands and cheered. They *celebrated* her death.

Politics is a dirty, horrible profession. I get it. But the thought of Mitch McConnell squealing to himself in the halls of Congress when he learned of her passing is enough to make me sick.

I am sad, and angry, because a true legend like RBG is gone and we are left with raw, unchecked selfishness in her place.

We are left with a group of people in power who want nothing more than to replace her legacy with whatever foothold to their backward-thinking agendas they can muster.

I wish I had a grimly positive note to leave you with.

But today, today I'm just sad and angry at where we've ended up.

'Till next time.

- Noah Sanders, The Racket



The Racket stands against  
police brutality, racism and violence  
perpetuated towards BIPOC  
communities in all forms.

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**THE LOVELAND FOUNDATION**

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**Breona Taylor's Murderers Are Still Free:**  
[https://www.change.org/p/andy-beshear-justice-  
for-breonna-taylor](https://www.change.org/p/andy-beshear-justice-for-breonna-taylor)

THE RACKET : QUARANTINE JOURNAL, Vol. 2, NO. 22

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Title: *RBG*

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*Code red is bad. I'm still figuring out code purple.*

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# WE HAVE A PATREON

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We aren't in this for the money.

That said: there are costs in doing what we do.

Any help with those costs (and with the costs of future endeavors) would be greatly appreciated.

If not, we get it and we still appreciate you.

If so, we've got weekly micro-playlists, special recommend email and much, much more.

## THANK YOU TO THESE FOLKS

CATHY & JOHN SANDERS  
HALLIE YOUNG  
JAMIE ENGELMANN  
CASEY BENNETT  
LILIAN CAYLEE  
JANE DICKERSON  
LAUREN C. JOHNSON  
ANGIE MCDONALD  
QUYNH-AN PHAN  
SPENCER TIERNEY  
JUSTIN & SARAH SANDERS  
DAVID SANDERS  
SARAMANDA SWIGART

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THE BACK PAGE  
BY  
Laura Jaye  
Cramer

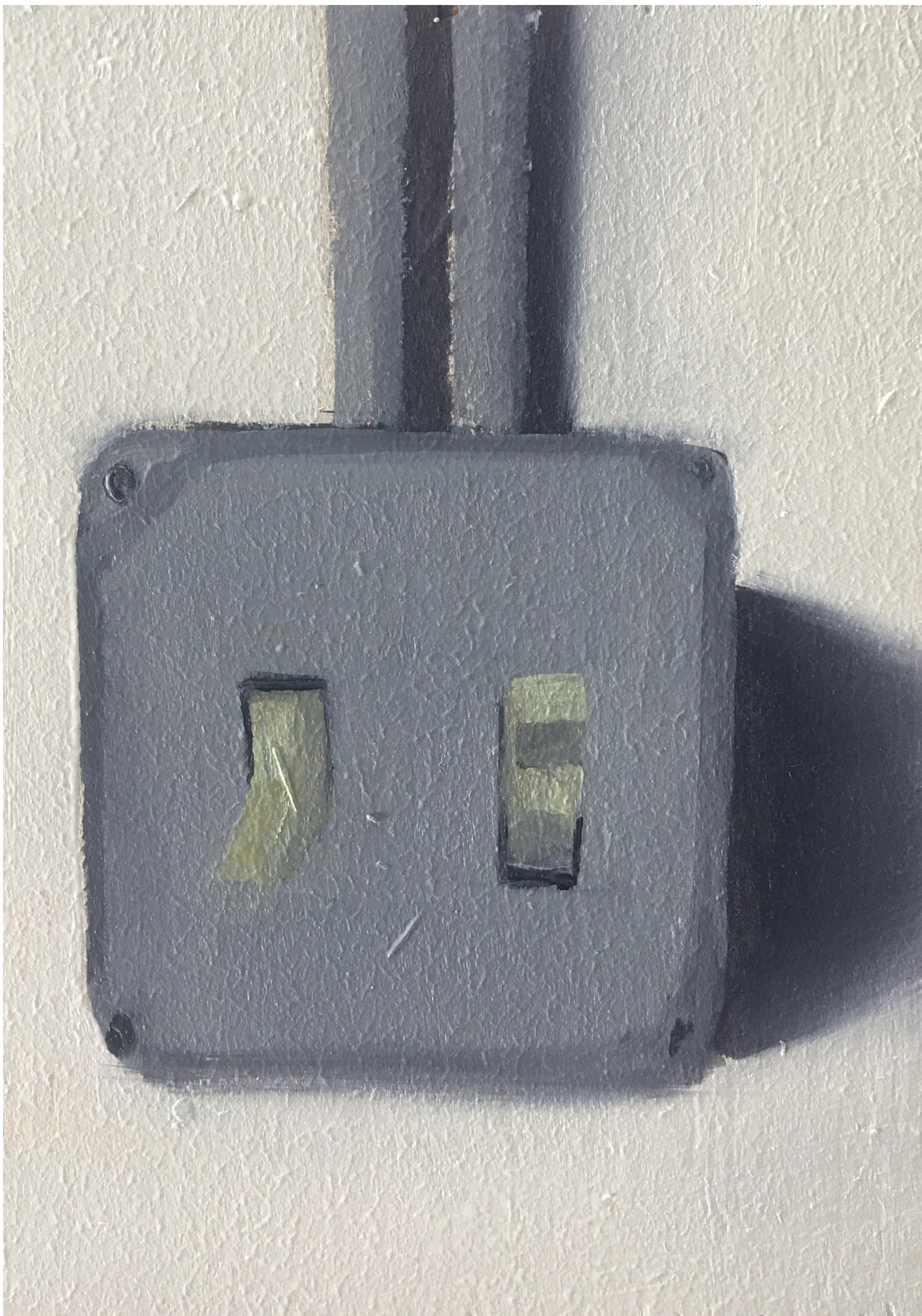
CURATED BY:  
**Noah Sanders**



# THE RACKET

22





*SELF-IN-PLACE*, 48  
BRETT AMORY  
2020



# Close, But No Guitar

STEVEN GRAY

---

Having the generic genitals of someone from my generation  
I'm depending on the generosity of women.

The opposing forces are a generator.

Existence is a gender-bender with genetic side-effects,  
a rancid side-show with some kind of genius.

Doing time, intuiting the present with the antennae  
of an anti-social show-off.

He was careless in expanding his awareness,  
though it landed him in Paris with a melodramatic heiress  
where he felt like a photographer in love  
with a statue of limitation.

# Family Portrait In Closure

JESSICA KIM

---

There they sit, in that photo.  
Father with his back bent over  
newspapers in monochrome,  
squinting at frazzled alphabets.  
His loafers dangling from  
the armchair. Forgetting to wash  
the dishes after dinner and from the  
kitchen, mother spouts admonitions  
at him. Her apron smeared with  
chili sauce and old age. Tonight, her  
receding hairline braids itself onto  
the beads of perspiration that rain  
down her cheeks. The children munch  
down peaches in quietude and  
the plate sits empty on the coffee table.  
They straggle upstairs like inquisitive  
visitors and there is no one left in  
the foreground. Only a lone window,  
shapeshifting into winter, then spring,  
summer. Someday they will all

return as if to wake up from their  
slumber on an ordinary morning  
and wonder why the house  
is stagnant, framed into a picture.



UNTITLED (SNAKE)  
CARLOS VALENCIA  
2015



# Suntanned, Windblown

LAUREN PARKER

---

To remove the skin of a rabbit, you cut a hole  
In the back and tear, working your fingers under  
The fur and out like you're ripping open a package  
Of taffies at the shore, the salty sea air making your  
Hair curl, be quick, quick as the thing, the hard part is always the head

To remove the skin of a deer, you have to go slowly  
Technique is important, keep your eye on the knife  
not on the iron hooks hanging from the ceiling  
Don't let the clink of chains fill your head  
Start at the back leg, follow the tendons  
Learn the release of skin separating from muscle  
From fat, split it, like the back of the leg  
Is coated in the most erotic of stockings.

A bear is a bit like a human, you start at the wrist  
The curl of the paw outstretched, handshake  
Split the fur like parting a sea, seam on seam on seam  
Meet at the throat, jaw, snout, highways of the body.

The meat will glisten too, pink and white  
Soft angelic like Easter lilies. You'll be surprised

At how the meat is stored, the legs mostly bone  
Cut knuckles, snap tibia, the symmetry will rock you to sleep.

When you cut off your own skin, you won't be able  
To just tear open and out, snap a leg bone after  
Gliding through tendons, careful to avoid the rump meat  
It doesn't begin with the knife, it begins in the car, day  
Four, two more than the map said because you're lost  
So incredibly lost, and your car is a classic Chevelle  
Not built for long trips, and the crook of the neck  
Of the girl you love is louder than the radio

You pull and tug at your exterior in the hotel rooms, at the sites  
Where she runs out and says *take my picture*  
And you pretend that the camera is the eye you  
See her through, the concave glass lens the thing  
sees her the most, stark, arms out, shadow among cacti  
She can feel everything, her sides pushed in from  
The world, and you stand with your camera  
And your skin worked off with a knife, limp in your  
Hands, limp in the heat, praying she'll eat you or wear you.



COCKSCORB  
AMY NATHAN  
IMAGE COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND CULT | AIMEE FRIBERG EXHIBITIONS  
2020

# Childhood

KUSHAL PODDAR

---

A bar. The red in Tim's mother's glass  
disappears. Hit me again. She says.  
A bar. Tim shall look after himself.

A blur. The tire swing replaced every summer  
wets the muddy ground with its rain soaked  
shadow. Tim blurs away in  
his eyes. I am late. I should be there  
with those underaged beers I promised.

We have toy revolvers that look like  
a heady mix of black and clotted blood.



DEAD END

# Carve

CHERYL DUMESNIL

---

The doctor has removed  
my femur and carried it

to a table across the room.  
I am awake, but not in pain.

The doctor is a white coat  
turned away from me.

I hear a sound not unlike  
the buzz of a tattoo gun.

Above me hang the usual  
flood lights encased in steel.

In the curved reflection  
my leg is a coin purse

snapped open, a gaping  
mouth crayoned red.

The doctor returns holding  
my bone like a majorette's



baton, rotating it to reveal  
the image she's carved:

the girl I was, sitting  
beside Emily Dickinson's

grave. There's the checkered  
wool coat I wore all year,

my scuffed black boots.  
There's the acorn I left

on her tombstone, the prayer  
I whispered to the leaves.

A casket latch is the sound  
my bone makes, clicked

back in place. Yes, was  
the answer on my lips then:

*yes* and *always* and *please*.



*SELF-IN-PLACE*, 34  
BRETT AMORY  
2020

# THE BACK PAGE

BY  
LAURA JAYE CRAMER

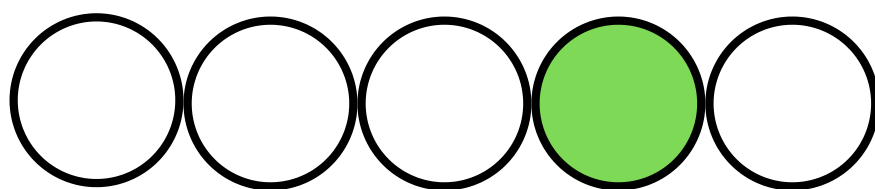
# THE WEEKLY MUMBLE

## WORD STUFF

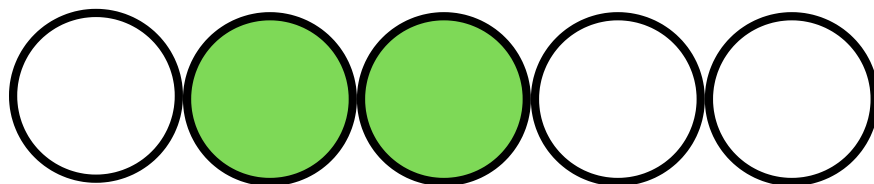
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Unscramble each Mumble to form five ordinary words.  
Then, arrange the green letters in the highlighted spaces to  
complete the punchline.

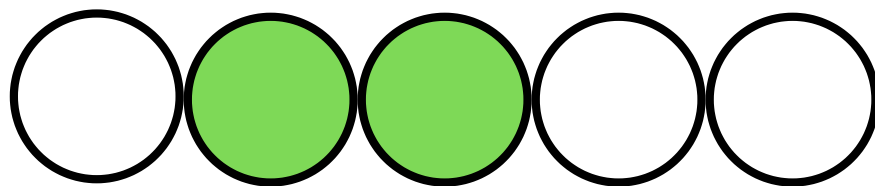
**HGLTI**



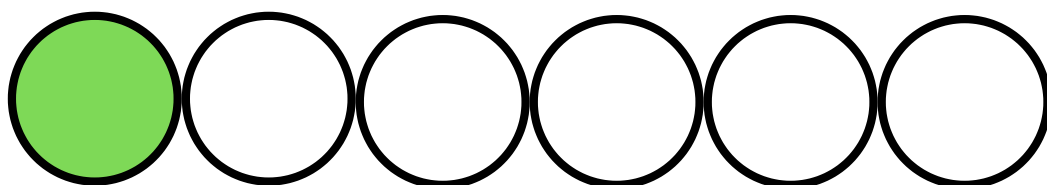
**TAMUG**



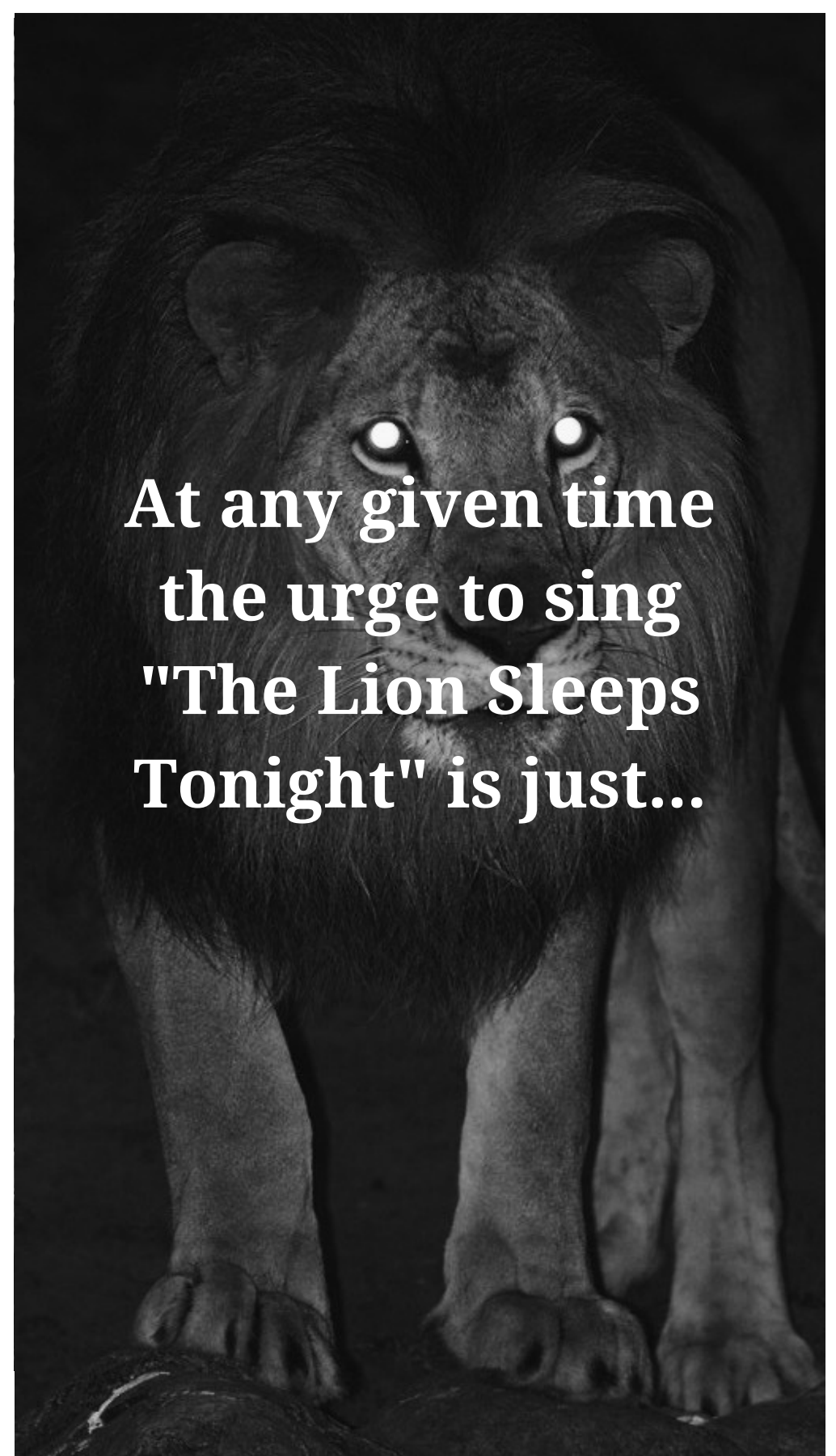
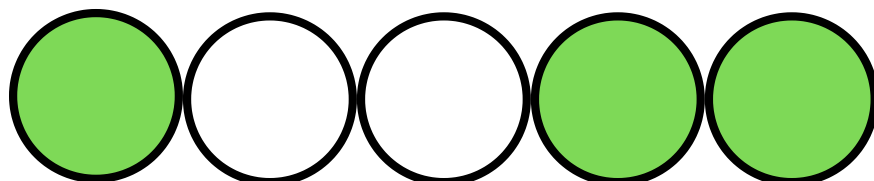
**WETNI**



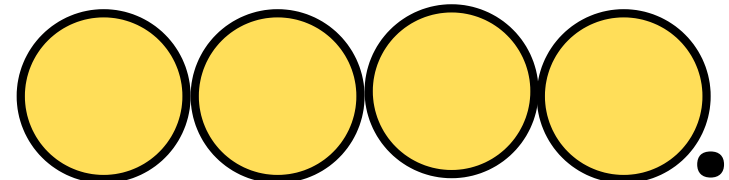
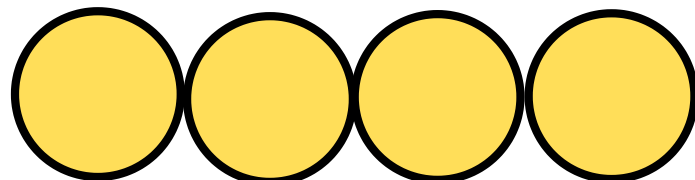
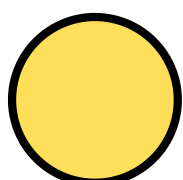
**BLWEOB**



**YRAAR**



At any given time  
the urge to sing  
"The Lion Sleeps  
Tonight" is just...



(Answers next week.)

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Last week's answers:

*EXERT, DWARF PERKY, BISECT, BUSHEL*

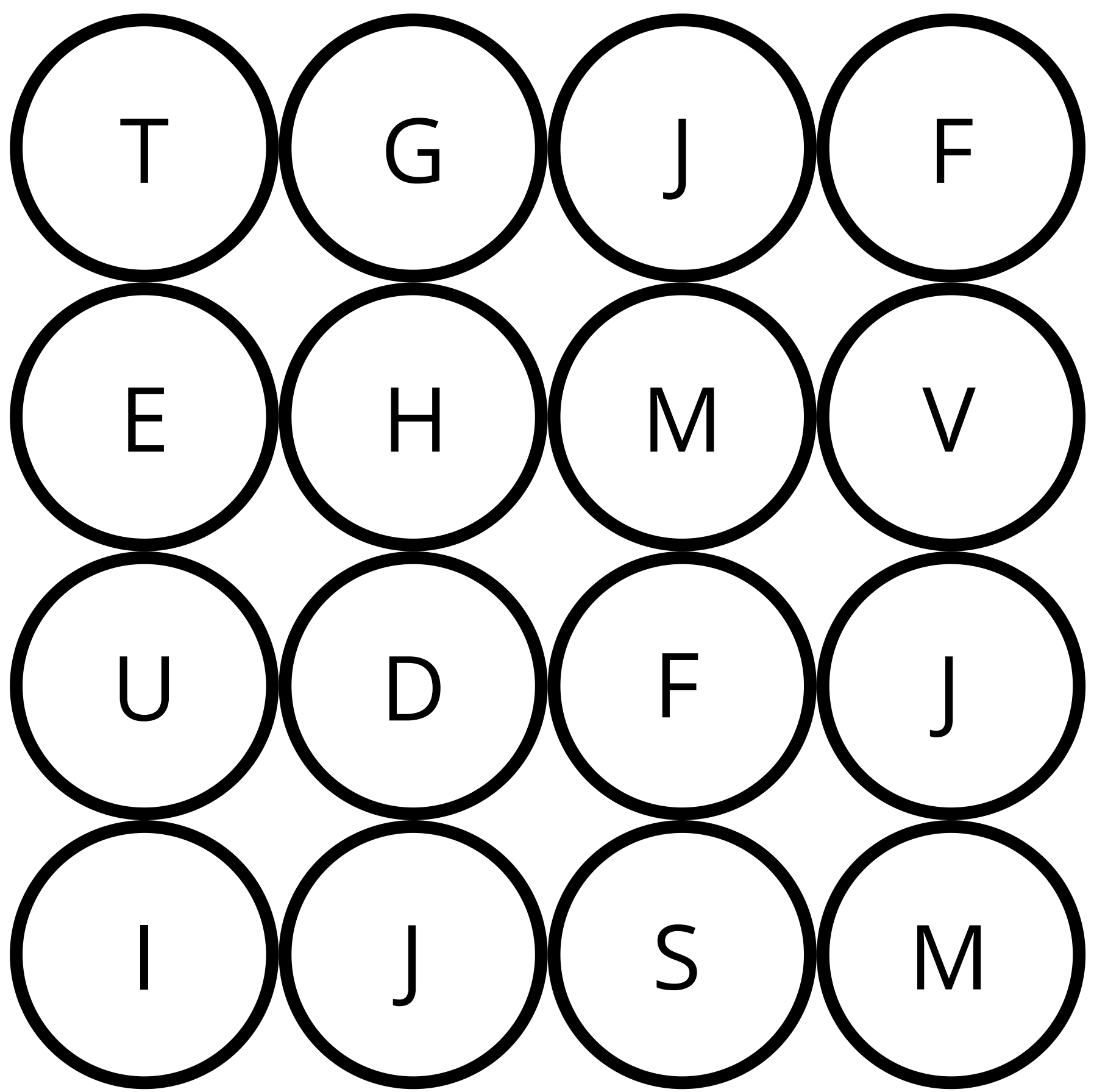
I wish I was were I was when I wished *I was here.*

# BONGGLE

---

Set a timer for three minutes (honor system!) to find as many words as possible within the grid by connecting letters horizontally, vertically, or diagonally.

You know, like Boggle.



SCORING (by word):

- three/four letter - 1 pt.
  - five letter - 2 pt.
  - six letter - 3 pt.
  - seven letter - 4 pt.
- 

Send your list of words and your score to:  
theracketreadingseries@gmail.com

High score gets a shout out in the next issue!

# BONGGLE

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## *LAST WEEKS WORDS*

bys  
cog  
cot  
cox  
coz  
dig  
dit  
ditz  
dud  
duddy  
duds  
dug  
dui  
duit  
dzo  
gid  
giddy  
git  
got  
gox  
guid  
guy  
guys  
kid  
kiddy  
kit  
tid  
tidy  
tig  
toc  
tog  
uds  
yug

*LAST WEEKS WINNER:*  
**Leonard Boise**

*YOU CAN  
BE A  
WINNER TOO*



# CONTRIBUTORS

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BRETT AMORY

CHERYL DUMESNIL

STEVEN GRAY

JESSICA KIM

AMY NATHAN

LAUREN PARKER

KUSHAL PODDAR

ANNA ROTTY

CARLOS VALENCIA

# THE RACKET WEEKLY



# TRY TO KEEP CALM

+

JACQUELINE SUSKIN  
MIAH JEFFRA  
MICHEAL FOULK  
JULIA HALPRIN JACKSON  
MATT FOWLER

**THURS. 10/1**  
**7PM / ZOOM**

# THE RACKET

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**1933-2020**

