



**THE
RACKET | 60**

**THE
RACKET | 60**

THE RACKET

Hello.

Welcome to the new year, same as the last.

As you may have noticed this is our 60th issue of The Racket Journal. I thought to celebrate what to me seems a ridiculous number of these things I'd swallow down the hard stone of rage I usually slingshot at these pages and venture into rarely seen realm of sentimentality. Brace yourself.

These last few years haven't been easy on anyone, myself included. We are creeping slowly into a third year of the pandemic, our government continues to stretch and morph into an inefficient, unrecognizable shape and everyday is an exercise in blocking out enough of the bad just to get by. It is a heavy feeling and we have all been carrying it for far too long.

I've said this before but we continue to exist in what amounts to an immense collective trauma. And though we as a society keep trying to just move past all of this, I think it's time to start coming to terms with the fact that this is how it is. Maybe not forever, but for a at least a very, long while.

So what do we do? How to do wake up every morning with the wet blanket of life draped over us and just keep on keeping on? I don't have a fix-all or even a solution but rather a suggestion based on what I've garnered from my own experience.

I have been lucky enough to have The Racket as a dumping ground for my creative energy and, more often than not, my emotional baggage for nearly the entirety of these last, challenging years. I have had on a weekly, now bi-weekly basis, both a bright spot and a project that I could, in the darkest moments, cling to. A deadline. A self-mandated responsibility to a community that dragged me upright when I most wanted to just pull the drapes and close my eyes and put the world out of sight and out of mind. When I look back into this grey limbo of 2020 and 2021 and think of all we've lost as a society and as individuals I can push back the overwhelming melancholy by holding tight to the gritty pride of having done this thing for sixty issues. It doesn't make everything better—nothing will—but it reminds me even in the worst of times there was something I did that felt good.

My advice: find that something.

It doesn't have to be anything of note. It doesn't have to be anything you created. It doesn't have to be anything but a foothold in the muck to remind you there has been good amongst all this shit. A single, fractional moment where you pulled your head from the choppy waters and breathed deeply and remembered that you existed outside of all of this. That there is, small as it may be, good, whatever that might mean to you, remaining in the world and you are a part it.

That's it. That's all. A milestone always gets me feeling sappy, so I appreciate you indulging my limp swing at inspiration.

'Till next time.

N

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

SUPPORT SMALL BUSINESSES

SCORE

donate here

WORKING SOLUTIONS

donate here

RAIL

donate here

BLACK LIVES MATTER

<https://blacklivesmatter.com/>

THE RACKET : QUARANTINE JOURNAL, Vol. 4, NO. 60

Copyright 2021
The Racket

Cover Image: Gabrielle Raaff
Credit: © Gabrielle Raaff

Title/Date: *Citizen 32 / 2021*

Artwork by Gabrielle Raaff, courtest of Uprise Art (www.upriseart.com)

Website: <https://gabrielleraaff.com/>

IG: @gabrielleraaff

Promotional rights only.

This book, or parts thereof, may not be reproduced in any form without permission from individual authors.

The scanning, uploading and distribution of this document via the internet or any other means without the permission of the author(s) is illegal.

It is usually cold in Minnesota in January.

WWW.THERACKETSF.COM

WE HAVE A PATREON

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're working on some special rewards. And we know you love special rewards.

THANK YOU TO THESE FOLKS

MATTHEW CARNEY
CATHY & JOHN SANDERS
HALLIE YOUNG
JAMIE ENGELMANN
CASEY BENNETT
LILIAN CAYLEE
LAUREN C. JOHNSON
ANGIE MCDONALD
QUYNH-AN PHAN
SPENCER TIERNEY
JUSTIN & SARAH SANDERS
ALEX MACEDA
DAVID SANDERS
SARAMANDA SWIGART
DANIELLE TRUPPI
RUTHIE WAGMORE
SASHA BERNSTEIN

ELIZABETH BERNSTEIN
GEOFF CALLARD
KATHRYN CLARK
YVONNE DALSCHEIN
RHEA DHANBHOORA
KEVIN DUBLIN
YALITZA FERRERAS
TOMAS MONIZ
ALEX NISNEVICH
NICK O'BRIEN
LAUREN PARKER
KRISTA POSELL
FRANCESCA ROBERTSON
DANIEL SCHWARTZBAUM
ARJUN THAKKAR
KURT WALLACE
JUDY WEIL

OUR PATREON:

WWW.PATREON.COM/THERACKETREADINGSERIES

SUBMIT YOUR WORK

P O E T R Y

P R O S E

A R T

2 0 0 0 W O R D S

O R L E S S

Send to:

theracketreadingseries@gmail.com

CONTENTS

| | | |
|-------------------------|--|----|
| EMILY PINKERTON | (untitled) | 1 |
| YERRIE CHOO | <i>Apology</i> | 2 |
| ANNA IDELEVICH | Seagulls | 3 |
| ANNE GARVEY | <i>Means To An End</i> | 4 |
| CALLIE S. BLACKSTONE | Dear Sam Dear Sam Dear Sam Dear Sam Dear | 5 |
| ANNE GARVEY | <i>Yarn Tangle</i> | 6 |
| ANNE GARVEY | <i>Cord Tangle</i> | 8 |
| PAUL CORMAN-ROBERT | 9:30 AM, IN THE SPOKANE VALLEY | 9 |
| YERRIE CHOO | <i>Apology</i> | 10 |
| NOAH DEEMER | Doom Haiku #5 | 11 |

THE RACKET

60

(untitled)

EMILY PINKERTON

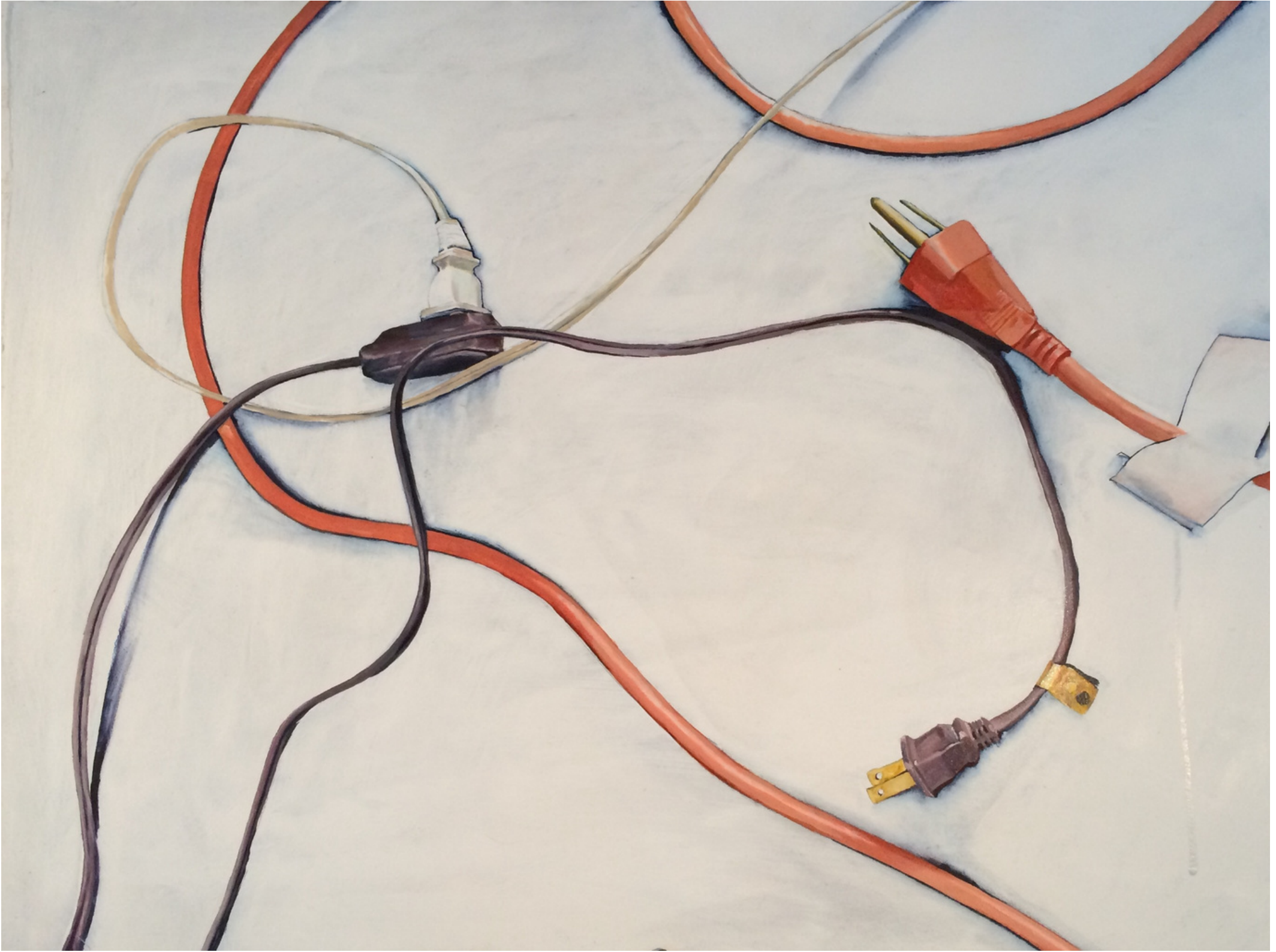
without the water running
the shower
is just another place
that needs cleaning.



Seagulls

ANNA IDELEVICH

Seagulls waves in the night fed
endless
the squeals of the mind of the sea,
wings, beaks beat.
And when they were awakened
city screams
then thoughts grabbed the floor
drunk, powerless ...
Pushed, you pushed me,
but said he was shaking me.
I fell asleep, the city fell asleep,
only the windows blink in a dream.



MEANS TO AN END
ANNE GARVEY
XXXX

Dear Sam Dear Sam Dear Sam Dear Sam Dear

After the film Supernova
CALLIE S. BLACKSTONE

I.

In the movie, the character writes the phrase over and over, scratches out some and leaves others. He thinks *opening, middle, closing*. His third grade teacher's voice still comes to mind when he starts a new project, even after all this time, even after his successful writing career. Dear Sam
Dear Sam Dear
Sam

II.

I want to pause the movie
and transcribe what the character says
on the tape recording. It is something like: *My heart
is full of love for you or I love you
completely--words lovers say
to each other, words I say
to you, my Sam. I want to write down
the words that make his partner
wrestle him to the ground
so I can write them to you,
so I can feel the strength of your arms
pushing me, holding me down.*

III.

I've dreamed of the letters



YARN TANGLE
ANNE GARVEY
XXXX

I would leave you, Sam--
taped to front or bathroom
or bedroom door or folded
into elaborate shapes to ensure
you notice them on the cluttered table.

I've dreamed of where I'd smuggle
my body--left to bleed out on the bed,
left to float dead, pale as a pickle, in the tub.
I've dreamed of climbing into the hills
and hanging myself--they'll find my car,
but never my remains. The rope will eventually
break with the weight of my corpse, my corpse
will crumple to the ground, curious animals will sniff
and pull my meat apart, scatter it
amongst tree roots. But why bother
with all that? I can just climb
into the hills, curl up on the ground,
never get up; I can whittle myself down
to nothing, my remains down
to nothing, until they intermingle with the dirt
a passing dog will eventually piss on.

I've dreamed of angry words. In my letter
I will reassure you that I didn't use one
of your guns, that you don't have to worry
about your guns, I've wondered if you'd be more upset
over the loss of me or your guns, which is it, me
or the guns, but I'm lying,

I've opened the cabinet, I've opened the drawer--
I've looked at the guns--I like putting my hand on the one
in the drawer, the cool heavy metal a reassurance
amongst hot tears, I like putting my hand on your
gun Sam Dear Sam Dear Sam Dear Sam

I like putting my hand on your gun



CORD TANGLE
ANNE GARVEY
XXXX

9:30 AM, EAST BROADWAY IN THE SPOKANE VALLEY

PAUL CORMAN-ROBERTS

It's 9:07 am and 85 degrees already. A young hipster, wearing the style of yesterday, backpack, manbun wildly splayed, only the rough sneakers giving any clue his destination is either someone else's couch or perhaps the rollicking clubhouse where the local football heads drink in opening day of the NFL. He sees the junkie shambling down the sparsely used sidewalk here in the 'burbs, and he's not sure how cool he should play so he talk-sings his little backside burler song while dance-skipping across East Broadway in the Valley.

In San Francisco he would be a "tourist." Here in this endless series of abandoned box store strips littered between Post Falls and the Spokane Valley, he is "homeless."

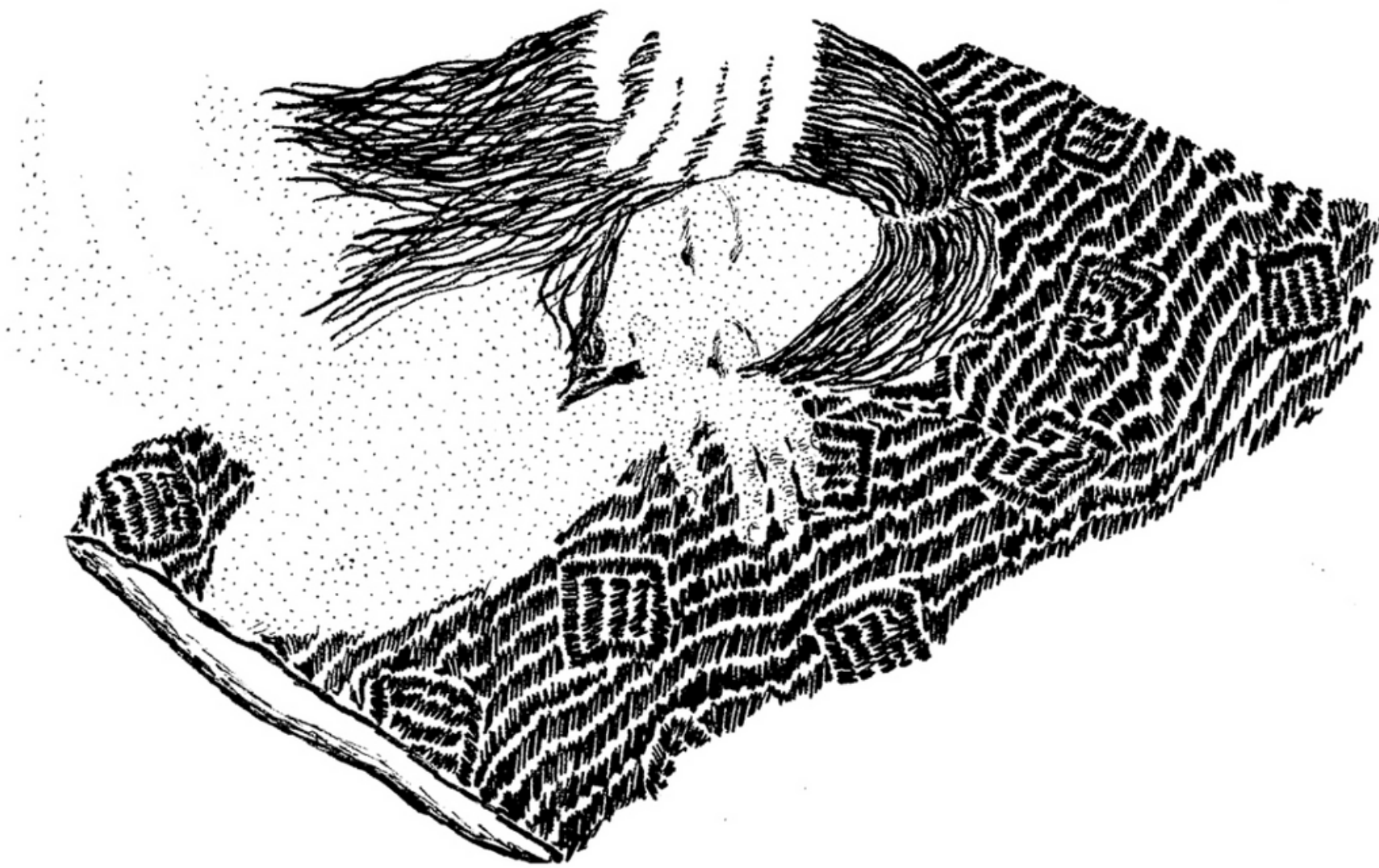
He remains blissfully unaware of the sedan peeling out of the parking lot of the newly renovated megachurch that sits just off the corner of the boulevard. The sedan accelerates followed by a long lean on the horn; teenage church rednecks lean out the open window, eyes glaring at the junkie, yelling "nice ass bitch" and keep staring down the road at anyone who has the nerve to stare back; a surrogate lynching waiting to go down in the name of their lord God Trump.

Quiet filters back down on the other side of the megachurch's fence, where half demolished houses and their associated in-law structures crouch low in the soft, overgrown grass just waiting to host a burst of wildfire, the "No Trespassing" signs barely visible beneath angry white boy graffiti, "Go home Mexikin Faggits."

At least their hate is intersectional

the junkie muses while staring at the territorial markings of men with no future who have been told all their lives that something dark and sweet is owed to them.

It's 9:30 am and already 88 degrees with no respite in sight.



Doom Haiku # 5

NOAH DEEMER

A cold shiny fish is a rustle
of hands at the wet pier of dawn.
A brain is a day.

CONTRIBUTORS

CALLIE S. BLACKSTONE
YERRIE CHOO
PAUL CORMAN-ROBERTS
NOAH DEEMER
ANNE GARVEY
ANNA IDELEVICH
EMILY PINKERTON
GABRIELLE RAAFF

THE RACKET

PATREON

WWW.PATREON.COM/
THERACKETREADINGSERIES

WEBSITE

WWW.THERACKETSF.COM

NEWSLETTER

WWW.THERACKETSF.COM/
NEWSLETTER

INSTAGRAM

@THERACKETREADINGSERIES

SUBMIT YOUR WORK:

<https://theracketsf.com/submissions>

**FIRST GOODBYE
OF THE NEW YEAR.**

