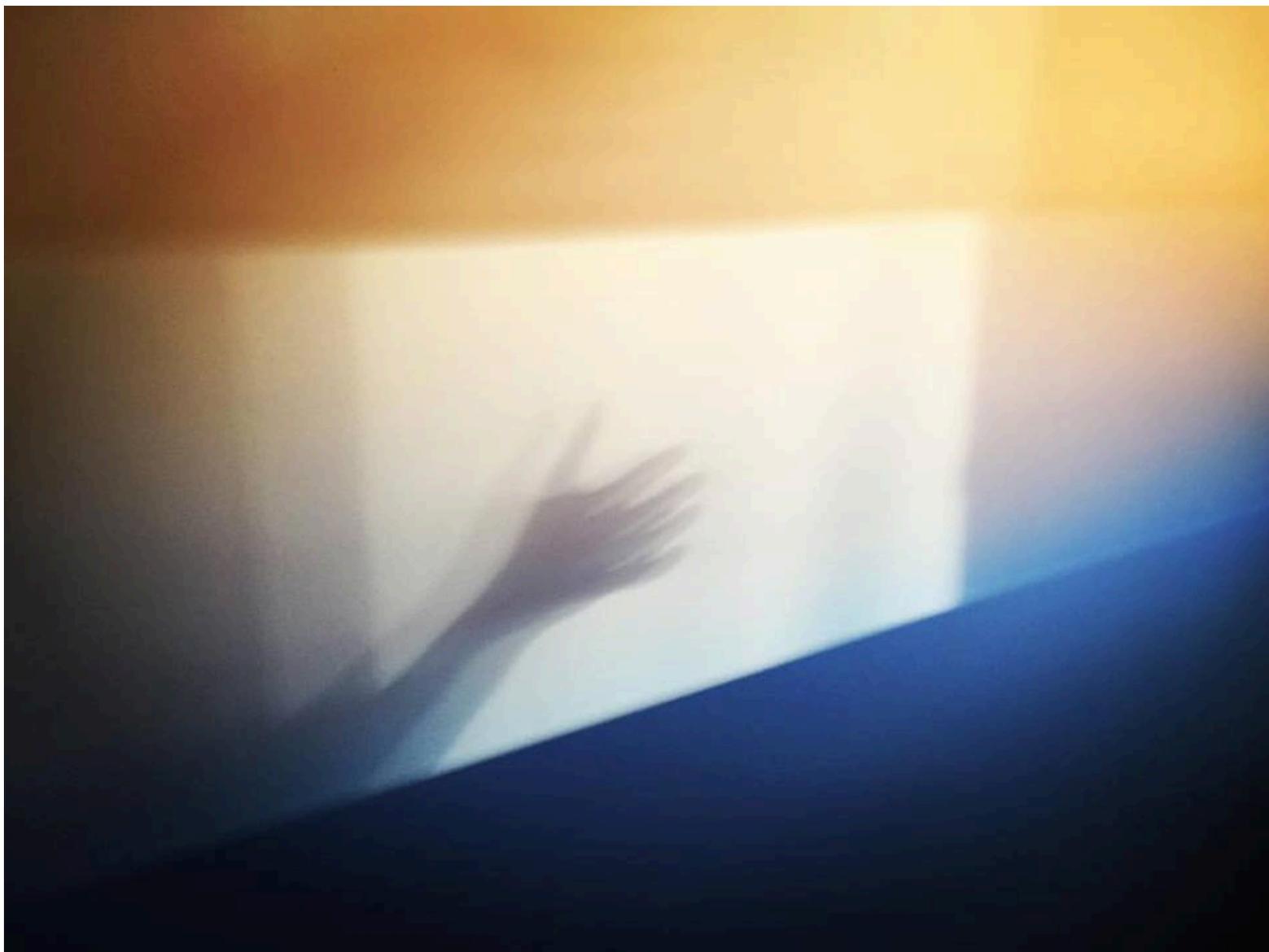


Devil Boy from Illinois: A Morphine Western



by Brian Cristi

Julia Moss Photograph © 2016

Is this your first time traveling alone? It is for everyone. We are all on one road from birth to death. We are imprisoned. Devil Boy is driving north to these coordinates:

42° 04.021 N

088° 01.170 W

Devil Boy's Atom Engine is cut like a motorcycle. It runs on emotion. His jacket used to be red for random chickie run races. It is now burnt like toast since he cut too close to the sun. A faint haze of smoke emanates from his lanky frame. He is blue from Spanish flu, a 20th century leftover. He arrives at the museum house in Rolling Meadows, Illinois. I see him enter the house from the 1950s. He picks up a rotary dialer phone to listen to where we go after we die. The hair on his arm stands up as I watch and write through the veil. Even as we breathe we flicker like an old movie theater

screen, to see on and off frames through a projector. What is seen is a trick of the eye, many long passages of darkness we do not see. It is the same for reality. Devil Boy hates watching. He prefers radio, listening to Disc Jockeys playing strings on a Before Rock & Roll station. Collect call. Reader, imagine that the operator's voice is your voice. The phone number is old enough to be made of letters. This is the only time Devil Boy will hear your voice. Wherever you are, whenever you are. It is here. He has been re-living this moment for a long time. Each time he arrives, he asks the same question thinking you are psychic.

<How is the future?> Devil Boy feels the sharp pain in his temples like white lightning. The house in Rolling Meadows is a three channel broadcast of black and white television. Devil Boy watches the young actress on the small

screen, a flower child in a desert phone booth. Her mother talks to her from an airport terminal. "Darling, I'm at the airport," mother says. Reverse psychology. "No," Flower Child says, "Don't come get me." Devil Boy watches intently wrapping the phone cord around his fingers, coiled suspension. It begins to rain outside. He has a matchbook with a place to stay. The phone rings. He hears a woman's voice. Her name is Maya. Wrong number. She does not hang up. She is thirsty in Imperial Valley California, hallucinating him. He talks her through it until the rooster crows twice. He says goodbye. He leaves Rolling Meadows, Illinois, riding the Atom Engine passing houses hidden in the corn yellow meridian lines. Not much story left. This beginning was burnout. The road in front of him is dotted, like these words the space between objects hiding a massive distance. Words and letters so close they never touch

and never will. I am writing from a long long time ago. Devil Boy still searches for me wearing driving his helmet sculpted and streamlined in clear glass that encases his face and head. So thin is the durable glass it looks as though he wears none until he is flying on the Atom Engine. The contours of the shape cuts the wind on the top of his providing the illusion of horns upon his head. We are strangers on a world of midwest highways. He wants a rendezvous. We are letters and words on the page. We can never touch, we can never rendezvous. What you are reading are the atoms of this world. This word road wall built to keep Devil Boy at bay. I do not want him to see what he will become. I do not want him to see me. There is only himself at the end. These words are left behinds. Devil Boy drives on his wheeled engine fueled by anger and melancholy. The only headlight working is your head. Chasing lights has

become a cancer. Not a moment's peace for Devil Boy from Illinois. Always on the existential highway in perpetual motion. Alone. He once drank a bottle of wine and threw it into the air. It never came down. Safety pin tears into his sleeve. Recession days. Lost Milk carton faces and quarter operated carousel. Small town edge of suburbs. Lake Michigan frozen over for a snowstorm. Everything gone white like a stroke. Learning to read again. Every letter leads to words, and words to sentences. Suicide machines lay fractured on the road. The Danger is muscle memory. Learn to read again. Every letter. Every word. Every inch in the snow. Breathing in the eye of the storm a quiet you have never known. The sound of your own thinking. You are an anachronism. A book in the glowing world. No more pictures, just words. You are thinking. Move in order to become whole. That is Devil Boy. He rages his wheeled

engine. Imagine for him the shape of a classic motorcycle shape around his Atom Engine. He and the world we are reading is a projection of words made into this castle wall road. Will I dissolve like a photo negative exposed? Cold and sleet potential heart balloon trailing behind. Something of a consolation prize. Ice marks Devil Boy's motorcycle windshield. The weather antennae pulsing report: Warning, warning, warning. Deputies on the ground swarming for a closer look. Silver-skinned metal men their red and blue lights a warning in the white haze. You can turn back but there are no lights to guide your retreat. We are all in a void. Even on the brightest days the sun will one day be no more. The universe will fade out. Devil Boy's heart still beats like a drum drum drum. He suspects this world is illusion. He has dreams about you reading about his life the way one observes the frames within a roll of film. Wonder about

you traveling alone on your road as you read this. Devil Boy slows down in a parking lot. The gate is open. Full stop. Snow gathers and accumulates upon the atom windshield like spider webs. Falling snow sticks tidily to the waverly haze that surrounds his smokin' black jacket until they melt as he walks into the warm heart of a deserted library. Nothing left of these Rolling Meadow suburbs but derelict memory. Their library had framed paintings for rent on a revolving shelf. They have been left on the floor. His suede shoes crack upon their impressions. The sound brings to mind the crackle of vinyl playing. Outside the skies hold the promise of lightning. The warm aroma of distant sounds are hushed inside here, a silence unfamiliar. Distant shouting and fading ambulance siren in the distance unknown. The snow echoes and mutes. This library is bland plain beige. Neutral. An oasis away

from spinning plates. Into the elevator and jazz muzak like an ear worm. In the daze of calm. Hazy waves wash over as the lift takes off the floor. In the elevator the lights flicker from the weight of thunder snow outside. Fluorescent lights in the elevator illuminate icon alarm bells, emergency phone. Eyes close. Doors open. Devil Boy's eyes adjust in the dark and he realizes there are books everywhere. Old books from centuries before. Here we are. There is the muffled sound of a snowball fight in an alley. A memory. Devil Boy feels the snow and ice falling through the torn pages of the opaque walls. The sounds from unseen people are that of other readers visiting this library hotel. It is their presence in this word story world that create what is felt. The ambulance sirens. The shadows of strangers walking towards their homes. In their own words, in their own worlds. Solitary. Traveling alone. They may even be

present as you read this and you are very briefly reading together. Here is a menu for pillows. Behind a line of closed doors is the sound of analog televisions at different channels murmur like radios fading in and out of ear shot towards a window looking outside the entirety of an Illinois suburb besieged by snow snow powder like smoke and stray dots of people. The suburban lights slowly turn on like candles turning the harsh blue darkness into sharp vectors of orange. Turn away back into the cocoon. Tunnel vision the hallway towards the rooms. Each a numbered door. Under the shroud the soft pallid rise and fall of a sleeping tourist/passenger/reader. The scent of carpet vacuum and glow of hallway vending machine. Hear the jangle of coins (a spare nickel) forgotten in the slit gently bit. Across is door with Devil Boy's birthdate: 1981. It will soon be a hundred years ago, a thousand and no more. The

burnt cloth from an ironing board mixes with drying laundry linens in a pitch black room. Step tentative or strong no one knows before the light is on. Close the door. You are enveloped in cool darkness. With the flip of the switch and the room lights on like the suburbs outside only in vectors. Height is not a standard issue. The bed is of a standard variance. Writing desk against the wall. Ticking alarm clock. In place of the Gideon Bible is Stephen Hawking's *A Brief History of Time*. Empty ice container and plastic cups shrink wrapped. Remote control. Sleeping television barcode. Hair dryer. Ironing board. A framed portrait of plastic posies. A wallflower shakes from the pitter patter shingles tapping turns of stray cats. Behold the ice roofs of the midwest forming like blue diamonds. Devil Boy's face shines like a blue diamond. He wants to find out why he is not dead yet. The clouds are gray, fitting our melancholy like

soft slippers. Has this affected you? Floral tributes line the road with little evidence of mourning. Devil Boy cradles an ancient codex held beneath his arm. He is searching for a doorway within a doorway within a doorway to Cairo, Illinois. I believe if Devil Boy enters this doorway his existence will end prematurely. [I was born premature]. He approaches it closer and closer on Midwest Highway. There are no other roads. Just one straight road to the end. What does your home look like? When you see the word 'home' what images and sensations does it conjure for you? I do not want Devil Boy to find me. I do not want Devil Boy to see what he will become. Devil Boy's silver watch is five minutes fast. His eleventh rule. Remember the sound of heartbeats, the sound of sleep, the sound of reading. The sound of Solitary. Devil Boy has flares. He lights one and it burns in the night snow and lifts another in the darkness

on the middle of the highway knowing that you are watching him. Devil Boy cannot see you. He cannot see me. He cannot see. He is blind to the world where you exist, where I existed. We are specters to him. Dead or alive we remain invisible yet our gaze alone is enough to be felt. It is why the hairs on the back of necks rise when we are alone. It is because we are being read by our fates in far away places unseen. A copy of the *Chicago Sun-Times* flaps in the wind like a white bat. It snags upon Devil Boy's arm. The headline: *D.B. returning home to Cairo*. Trees along the highway rise and sway quoting broken Tennyson. A face hovers in the air. A lone sentinel. No face but a clock face. The sound of the clock ticking matches the rhythm of the living since you are alive reading this as Devil Boy is atomized. There will be no answers in the end. I will not let him reach me. A distraction is needed. On the street ahead are train

tracks and a saloon to keep him off balance. The view is a mixture of sun, cloud, and jet-liner contrail line sky signature in the glass that he has poured. The bartender walks through the television screen blurry as if his settings have been marred by magnets. This saloon is not a hotel, yet it has a guest book. Pages make noise as they are flipped, as if they have been closed for a thousand years. Devil Boy drinks the drink to remember the long nights alone in solitary as searchlights filtered in through the blinds, making square zebras on the walls from the other side of somewhere, looking for himself. Pre-recorded messages of doom on the telephone, the radio dial hissing. The drink settles in his blue ears and the surface of his blue face. The clatter of the ice cube trays sound like applause. He is handed a box of bandages, a bottle of iodine. Devil Boy stumbles out of the bar. Metal men

deputies act on impulse to converge and bring him in. Devils should not be riding Atom engines. Suspicion. The metal men turn crossing state lines seem small from the skies, like wedding cake figure nightmares. Devil Boy finds graffiti on the brick that reads *There is no afterlife. Non-believer.* The sirens are getting louder. They will mark him guilty because he is blue. He steps over discarded prayer pamphlets, old movie tickets, lottery scratch games and video rentals receipts. He returns to his Atom Engine and floors it back to Midwest Highway. There is another sound. A radio desk sits in the middle of the meridian lines. A radio dash, dash dash. It is morse code. Cairo, Illinois. Devil Boy's emotions intensify as the shadows of metal deputies and a sheriff lengthen behind. He has done nothing wrong. His skin color is blue. Atom engine accelerates. Focus on the road. Focus on the destination. Devil Boy adjusts

his course and heads south. I am dizzy keeping track of him. I cannot keep going on this thought train. My sight is flying parallel on abandoned railroad tracks. All that I imagine is malleable. All that I imagine is memory. Sleep and rest. Sleep and rest. I line the highway with exits like a pinball trench. The metal men are closing. Devil Boy rides his Atom Engine into the rise of a pillow crease. Another room absorbs you. Soap spent in a corner of the wall a morphine pouch tears a puzzle fragment from the floor. The light of an artificial sun sets on the bare white wall. Shadow of man with the head of jackals speaks riddles, looks for the newspaper. The room and its oval windows center the Sphinx beside a dormant bread factory. The Solitary you is unseen. A knock on the door asks where where did I go? The ticking wristband watch stops. A thousand invisible grasshoppers hide in these half-realized

rooms in this half-realized projected world. There are fake flowers folded in a vase and a note of thanks inside a tipping jar. What you are reading is the impression of yourself upon a bed crease from your weight left unmade. Left unmade. That you are reading this means that you are still alive on your road. Devil Boy swirls beneath the star cover of night escaping capture. Devil Boy glides on his atom engine with the streak of farmland visions surrounding the metro he left behind like crumbs in blankets. A slight itch from having slept in a safety deposit box for secret messages. Would you like to leave one for Devil Boy? You already have. That you have read this far has given him landscape for him to travel. You have given these words meaning and dimension. Astral Projection. Devil Boy is in the motel room, his breathing the rise and fall of a mountain. A body beneath the sheets, closed curtains.

Sleep. Astral Projection. You are there. Reader you are his dreams, watching televised murder mysteries. You are a voice analysis on tape recorder measuring stressful lie detection. The shower was left running to steam the room for his lungs. Devil Boy wants to breathe better. Wet footprints on tiles evaporate your bed unmade, your presence gone. A taste of chocolate melted in and stirred sweet over bitterness preferred. Sand in the hourglass. It is not the room but everything the spaces in between. Everywhere is where we exist in solitary, you me and every reader receiver. An intake of air as soft as a mourning prayer roll across the contours of a teardrop. It wraps itself around these word sentences, and brings you here. The snow flakes the snow patterns. Rain down the sounds of footsteps and doors closing, sheet encases the door like an eye lid. What this is? It is a mirror of you. That is

what reading does. Words create life, the imagined life. You are being born. You are dying. This is what reading does to you. The solitary you. Walk a mirror. You are reading the quiet corner of Illinois. The solitary you. No one will remember. The dust came back back back back home to this half way. Here are debt chains and phantom limb memories. Salt clouds. Quiet sighs. The highway sighs never had a home never had a home just sitting here looking for the time. Soft lines on blue diamond skin. Devil Boy speaks highway to me. I never left this corner of Illinois, never left this corner in a small room. Wherever you were, you are now learning to read. The solitary you rests at the highway edge of an Illinois hotel. A chair made from a stack of 20th century paperbacks, the era of bookstores. Abandoned stories in a room. Small task the small soft small life of a rainy day hazy head ache. Daysleeper reader

you were walking through the quiet life of hotel rooms. From highway to midday to highway to midway the last bout of winter floated the soft plain plain franchise library hotel where there is nothing but the gray of everyday. Normal and small. My grand thoughts never overcame normal and small. Something is missing in my life. Something missing never filled. I roam the nights of Cairo pacing the quiet quiet so looming is my melancholy. I lost the flame of life long before. I died and gave myself to the machine of life to feed the gray gray highway. I was and am, a slight moment in time. Devil Boy will discover who I am. He will discover that success is a sham. Death wins in the end. Dash dash dashes float over a bridge in the highway fog teetering over nothing, dash dash morse code. These words are beacons too words are beacons too. Devil Boy turns outside the lines, outrunning the expanding highway. We are

like glass and water invisible time. He knows you are reading the words. I see and understand the soft embrace of endings for this mountain of words. To find the end. If his Atom engine travels fast enough he can skip time, like a rock skipping upon the surface to beat my premonitions. The maze of Illinois backroads and corn fields try to swallow him. Easy to run out of story here, fragment road, fragment fields, and dust. Ashes? There doesn't seem a reason. Devil Boy is just one against the world congregation of believers. There is nothing after this. The sight and sound of his Atom Engine throughout Illinois is a rallying call. There is nothing beyond the fields. There is nothing beyond the sun. There is nothing! Nothing! Nothing! Indiana rain crosses state lines and pours its shaft of lights he never wants to touch, always on the edge of darkness. Darkness has become his true company. Devil Boy finds it beautiful. The

night skies. The cooling of the fire. His Atom engine runs on intention, uncertainty of not knowing. He wants to find me. He wants to know his future. Scarecrows crawl out of the cuts in the land. Gashes from different nowheres. The space of the void widens while running out of story the more Devil Boy chases. Darkness fills in the gaps of the story on this Midwest Highway as frail as a string held by a nail under firefly lights. His one headlight points ahead towards the end where I am waiting. A room of teeth. A name whispered, a hint of perfume on a green sweater left on the highway road frayed then breaking thread elastic limit. There is not much to see for strays in the distances in the nighttime sky. No maps out here. Stakes in the ground and flowers for shards of a fallen dead wreck and playing cards that lead to a tape deck tollway booth. If you don't pay you lose time, you lose time. Devil Boy's heart hurts. One toll

worker on the I-355 toll booth is a flesh and blood person. Not a metal man. The toll worker is named Mar-vel. He has a story. He used to be a science teacher that did magic tricks with dice. Probability is his favorite subject. Devil Boy's toast black jacket is torn at the seam and Mar-Vel takes a sewing kit from medicaid plastic and stitches the tear in the time seam. Inside Mar-vel's booth is a passageway that leads to a giant computer so old you have to walk walk into its vacuum tubes. It is calculating his trajectory. It is searching the sky for his glass bottle thrown at the start of his journey as it collects the faces of each star as he cascades upon the Atom Engine. Midwest power lines. Disconnection. Each word produces a road. Devil Boy searches the sparks from each firework on a rotating orbital axis. Here we must move counter to the sparks. It is dark where thoughts stand in the void without reception until there is an

audience. There is an audience here seeing how these words these words the barest steps forward a quiet passage parts of myself in this message parts of myself held up by response time from outsiders both of our environment and eaten by it never still never quieted. Anxious and alone it is all that remains of myself now. A stubborn anxiousness creates this world of fractals flickering as a spool of film projected shadow lights and voices left behind. What have you seen already reading these words? Anxiety swells upon a Great Lake. Dark matter of the void holds waves of dark matter. Devil Boy rides the Atom upon LSD [Lake Shore Drive] straight down to Cairo as the road clashes on to the videotape of electric paintings. This solitary book reading leads to an inner ear drum. Devil Boy arranges the words in a flare path of smashed Atom suicide machines on the highway. I have never imagined for myself

until now. Limits of the form gives it its power everything else imagined for me no more. Rendezvous. I no longer have the mirror. Without it I am nowhere. These words are a remainder. Word Highway our lives. I have no beginning I have no end until we rendezvous. These words are delayed time. Who will find them? "I share therefore I am." My own feelings have been unknown to me. Devil Boy gathers speed in the Atom circuit. Sadness is a beacon for the missing. A missing piece always missing this piece. You are here reading this. The word world stretched to form a jagged incomplete fragmented shard of a road in the dark starry sky, highways observed constellations consolations.

I .
I .
I .
I .

I want to feel something more than numb. More than alone. Where have you been before you found these left-behinds? Devil Boy. Words, phrases. Spare parts to support my frailty. I only know how to be lonely. Never had a chance. I never had a chance. The words were always there. My private realm. My secret is myself. I have lost the memory. You are reading as I sit in solitary. Our shared abandonment. Amnesia prolongs his life. Are you lonely too? Devil Boy emerges from the wreck of my words, exhaling Spanish Flu. Awaits awaits a rendezvous. In the cold dark snow of Cairo. Flare path highway, suicide machines scattered never imagined for himself. A silent room. The ground is covered with winged shadows. Life is brief. Scavengers we all are. Show me something complete. Show me something not borrowed from other borrowed parts. Erased and changed a never ending work in progress that with

one decision, never needed to have existed. My private realm. Unknown to me. Devil Boy seems wants to know what I have seen. Solitary. Lonely. Public worlds thinking yourself to be seen. I still can imagine the sun. The long trail of flame from sun flares curling like the tails of giant sea horses with many leaf flame fins. I am a statue in marble block. A world of murky description to be filled. The Midwest surrounded by electric wire and fields. We were born on a Monday in the early morning hour my head in the clouds, a bonsai tree to the right of a tape machine. The human voice recorded in an old pull toy, a crafted old pull toy, and it was a long string pulled for invitation, Devil Boy's new strategy. Blank room. No mirrors. An inverted sky. No comfort of believing in the world of believers. I saw nothing. A cloud over my death bed. Cryptic crutch. A tray of glasses wall of gears gray white black

speckled piano Beethoven, Little Richard sheet music framed paintings of guitars for the first mass media generation. Music then television. 1950s lifeguard goodbye. Parking lot turpentine waiting room coffee, nap room elders fallen picture bullet board goodbye cards hello to newborns pay minimum wage status couch. Stick on tattoos look like acid strips. Devil Boy has arrived in Cairo, ancient codex in hand. Ran out of road ran out of story. Time to walk. He parks the Atom Engine. Trees sway. The hour is early enough to be yesterday. A train whistles in the distance, forlorn. It is his first time home. Moon is high in the Illinois sky. ancient codex in hand. In the shadow of the silver weathervane is the evidence of my fence setting. Barbed wire everywhere to the ends of the field. A trail of olive jars holding grasshoppers. The land is white from drought. Devil Boy knows I am watching him. A scarecrow has the scythe

raised in the field. A frog in pond begins to croak its night song to a dark dark house. Wait wait wait for the long calling curve of the rise of the moon-lit bats Devil Boy affectionally calls aloud, "Night Birds." There is table on the path to the dark dark house. Solitaire cards lay arranged upon it caked in dust of the back roads, silo mills and old calendars. A broken jagged jack o' lantern sits on the porch. In Devil Boy's pocket is a needle and thread for worst case scenarios. He sews its battered orange forehead together with blue thread. The path of the needle runs through the magic hour behind its eyes. There is a wick inside. Devil Boy has no matches. He has mints. He puts the mints in his mouth and chews causing blue sparks that light the wick behind the lantern's eyes with a blue blue flame. Devil Boy holds the lighted jack o'lantern and with a heavy heart enters the the dark house. The house has been

waiting. In the low light of the blue flame he steps upon an accordion staircase. It makes music as Devil Boy climbs it. At the top of the stairs is my favorite old chair, made of keys to Midwestern cities. Sitting upon this chair is a lone grasshopper wanting to get lost in the reeds again. This grasshopper is all that is left of me. It is all that is left of us. Devil Boy has found his future. He found me. I am wracked with pain and fill the chair with morphine drip. Isolation in this lonely place has turned me . My skin has turned to carapace and my eyes see the sentry in the fields. My spine is crooked from the sitting. These words never touch. I have morphine for the pain. My spine is a question mark and every evening I try to reset my back. It snaps like branches of an old tree. The only company I have had in this lonely place is the wind that ripples the wheat of life's retreat. I read books of ancient empire. Do you have the

codex Devil Boy? When we talk to each other we are the same person. This is where you were born. In this dark dark house. The birth of the entire universe here in this house. No light. Not even darkness. Time did not exist before we were born. I am your future. You are my Death. I have seen you now. We are face-to-face. Your blue diamond face. We are specks of dust letters so close they never ever touch. My grasshopper body, my crooked spine. The morphine drip tastes like fine wine. The morphine drip tastes like wine. The stamp of the owl on papyrus. When the little emperor invaded Egypt he unearthed a setting stone. It sits here in this solitary tomb. I take your silence away. I give you my voice. It rises with the dead. The pyramids of Egypt. I see them in the night sky constellations. The pyramids of Egypt. Do you have the codex Devil Boy? Open it now. Say the incantation. The ancient

symbols are strands of hair. This is the codex you are reading. My story translated from hieroglyphics with the stone in focus. APHEX TWIN. Devil Boy and eye. This codex is older than Rome. Discovered by the French Legion during the invasion. Lost in the battles. Brought to Greece by Lord Byron. Translated further on the pebble skip across the ocean to the Ohio River. Delivered to Cairo, Illinois. The words inside creates a universe inside, this universe outside. How these words arrived. The codex labeled evil. Devil Boy and Ancient Egypt writing on the walls. The rising dead. A common story. Devil Boy who are we? Read the codex. Say the incantation. All I know is loss. My heart had always been a thorn a dear and lovely thorn that has grown. This barb wired field around the dark house is my heart with the thorn in my heart thorn with overgrowth of thorns around it has grown deep blue roots so wide a tree of

words so alive with thorns to keep me company. We are alone. There is nothing. Alone is everything, everything is alone.

You

Me.

Devil Boy.

Alone.

Solitary.

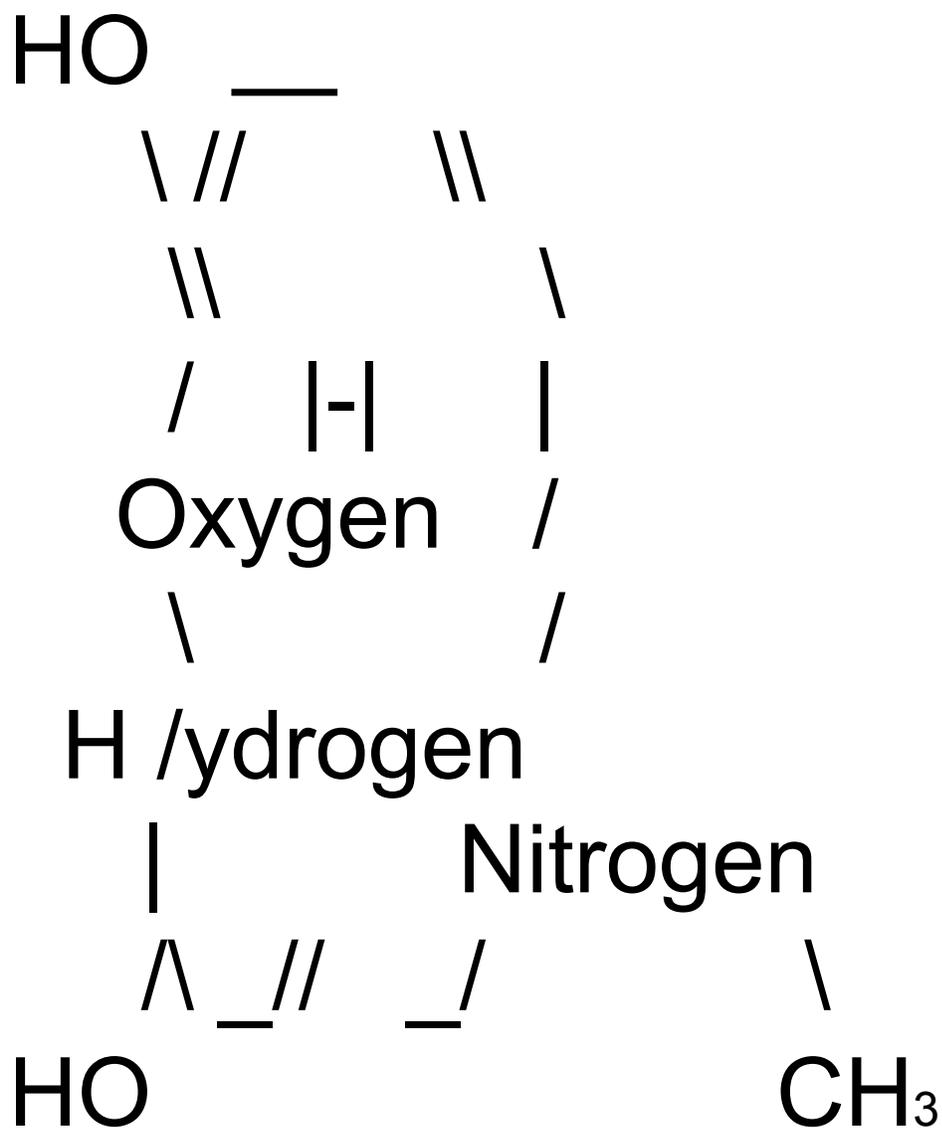
Lonely.

This half house is a tomb. There is no consolation for non-believers. There is no heaven there is no hell. Darkness is comfort. Darkness is beauty. No one can run from sadness. It is a part of us. Reader reader read in darkness. The blue flame.

We can see our thorns more clearly, ourselves as wild flowers strange and wild word flowers. All people are skeleton orchids. Devil Boy, recite the codex words. Recite in ancient tongue the Pyramid Song. Such darkness between us all. The night stars shine separate alone. Orphans orphans we are. Born of sadness and the universe as atoms do from nothing. Into nothing we will go not come back and never know. Darkness has no age. Darkness is timeless. Egypt. Africa. Ancient Wisdom. Long forgotten symbols. Dead birds alive. Dead birds resurrected from ancient hieroglyphics. Black is beautiful. I breathe my last breath with the heavy certainty of broken bones.

Devil Boy please read from the codex

Diamond Sea of [Morphine]



Devil Boy's blue face merges under the beam of blue moon. The grasshopper swarm covers the derelict house in the abandoned field. His Atom Engine glows with promise as the blue moon beam shines its light across the highway. He seems to be listening, listening to a voice to a voice calling from within the house within. Silent silent grasshoppers swarm the morphine dream. Midwest Highway abandoned gasoline. Atom Engine accessible again. Magic in a bottle. Small Window. Devil Boy closes the codex in his hand. He says to the dark dark house, "Even when you run out of story you never run out of road." Between everything there is nothing. Devil Boy drives the hill slope standard deviation. Sadness goes with you. A sort of homecoming. Sadness keeps you in a room no one ever understood. Lost marooned readers. On the move. No maps. Binary points: Where you were. Where you

are heading somewhere in the Midwest. Onwards towards Indiana then to Ohio. Cross state lines cross state lines thru the back roads among cornfields and dust. Highway road country abandoned gasoline. Dust covers forgotten farmhouses broken billboard motels and the occasional toll. A world of nothing unexplored exists out here on the existential. Looking only brings you further away. Searching for the time. Everything here are words. Inhabit the landscape to keep it alive this solitary world. Readers runaways and chasers, loneliness is the price you pay for reading yourself home. Someone reads you, solitary you. Moments when what you read can be who you are. Thank you for traveling this road. You are still alive. Your road continues while you are alive. These words I left behind, dying a long time ago. Thank you for taking the time to read. It is your time. It was yours. We vanish--

About the author:

barelinefilms@gmail.com



Salvation Mountain
Niland, California {2013}

photo credit: Matt S.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS (born)

BANGKOK, THAILAND (raised)

ATHENS, OHIO (restart)

Favorite Albums: NEIL YOUNG *TONIGHT'S THE NIGHT* (1975)
U2 *POP* (1997)
SHARON JONES & THE DAP-KINGS *I LEARNED THE HARD WAY* (2010)
REM *MONSTER* (1994)
OASIS *WHAT'S THE STORY MORNING GLORY?* (1995)
TRAVIS *THE INVISIBLE BAND* (2001)
SMASHING PUMPKINS *ADORE* (1998)
WILCO *YANKEE HOTEL FOXTROT* (2002)
BRIAN ENO *ANOTHER GREEN WORLD* (1975)
RADIOHEAD *KID A* (2000)
DEPECHE MODE *EXCITER* (2001)
BJORK *VESPERTINE* (2001)
LUCINDA WILLIAMS *WORLD WITHOUT TEARS* (2003)
SHARON VAN ETTEN *ARE WE THERE* (2014)
BOB DYLAN *WORLD GONE WRONG* (1993)
SONIC YOUTH *MURRAY STREET* (2002)
EASY STAR ALL-STARS *DUB SIDE OF THE MOON* (2003)
DAVID BOWIE *THE NEXT DAY* (2013)
ANGELO BADALAMENTI *WILD AT HEART ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE SOUNDTRACK* (1990)
THE INNOCENCE MISSION *BEFRIENDED* (2003)
COWBOY JUNKIES *THE CAUTION HORSES* (1990)

Favorite Westerns: *Yellow Sky* (1948) *Unforgiven* (1992) *True Grit* (2010) *Red River* (1948)

Favorite Books: *The Dark Materials Trilogy* by Philip Pullman *The Assassination Bureau, Ltd* by Jack London

Favorite Season(s) *Angel/The X-Files: 5/8*

Wish list: Pearl Jam song More Compassion

Parting thought: Make It Count.