

Your house is ugly.

Your house is ugly. You paid too much for it.

Your house is wider and taller than the modest surrounding homes that now are all potential tear downs until the next, deadlier iteration of the Great Recession arrives..

Your house has too many gables, too many materials used in awkward ways that demonstrate no sense of scale or proportion.

This bastardization of traditional styles is a grotesque parody of a building.

The developer knew how to exploit every loophole of an ineffectual zoning ordinance.

The front porch is a vestigial joke. No one will ever sit in your rocking chairs .

Stop flying flags of your attended colleges or favored sports teams. No one cares.

Pierce had started writing the letters, anonymously, even before his diagnosis.

It was something he had always wanted to do.

He had no bucket list, and could not even leverage cancer for mercy sex.

having molted from the larval stage of emotional awkwardness

into a state of pure adult undesirability.

His pre-illness appearance was not very attractive.

He had no pets.

The letters, dozens of irate missives, were typed on a computer, then printed and mailed.

In an age of online trolls and whining neighborhood blogs,

there was something artisanal and caring about an old fashioned poison pen letter,

hand delivered by the United States Postal Service,.

Your energy consumption is no doubt appalling

The site placement and orientation of the house shows your builder knew nothing of how the earth moves around the sun.

Every piece of your pretentious palace is deteriorating as you read this letter.

Water is migrating to where it should not be, propagating future generations of mold.

There was no lack of suitable properties to target,

and writing the letters eased the monotonous torture of chemotherapy.

He felt he was performing a public service.

To Pierce, the built environment, as well as all matters cultural and political, were deeply flawed and unfixable.

Pierce had already put his pathetic affairs into order,

to the point of starting a pre-application for hospice care.

The form remained unfinished. He could not yet bring himself to put in writing

that he wanted a specific Belinda Carlisle song ("I Get Weak", circa 1988)

pulsing through his earbuds as the opiate du jour pushed him into the end zone of nothingness.

You bought this monstrosity to impress people who are not really your friends.

Your house will only get uglier even if maintained.

I may address the landscaping in a future letter.

The office visit was supposed to be perfunctory.

To his surprise, Pierce was told by his oncologist that his updated white cell counts, the credit score of mortality, showed that his treatment was actually working.

Dr. Anderson looked self-satisfied, and even made brief direct eye contact,

semaphoring with his sputum colored irises,

as he spoke of alternative therapies in the same monotone that he had used eight months earlier, when he had sentenced Pierce to a certain and painful demise:

"Whatever you're doing, keep it up," he said.

Lincoln

Here is the proposition, regardless of where you are relative to the x and y axes of gender identity and sexuality: For the rest of your life, you can only achieve gratification through the auspices of Abraham Lincoln. You can't touch yourself, or rub against a tree. It's Lincoln or total abstinence.

We're talking Abraham, not the guy who plays Rick on *The Walking Dead*. If you were hungry for love, and the only item on the menu was the 16th president, would you sup? Would you fuck Lincoln? Sounds like a concept for The History Channel ("Tonight on The History Channel, *Would You Fuck Lincoln ?* followed by an encore presentation of *Would You Fuck Madame Curie?*").

What if you were scrolling through the pics on a bizarre app one boring, horny Sunday, and came across his profile? ("I am tall, and very good at oratory") You stare at the scanned penny and five dollar bill. What the hell.

Would you swipe right? Would you drive to his shitty apartment complex? You would and you do.

You buzz for the gate code "It's eighteen hundred and sixty five" "That's too many numbers". "It's the year of my second inauguration". "What?" "#1865, you can park by the dumpster".

You tap on his door in the furtive morse code of clandestine sexual encounters, drug transactions and ill-considered Craigslist purchases.

The door opens and you stare up at his furrowed gaunt face, his pale torso encircled in a towel.

He looks glad to see you. What's up with his facial hair?

Is it equally weird below the Mason Dixon line? You're about to find out.

Historians speculate that the Great Emancipator had a full bush, but shaved the upper portion of his scrotum, leaving unruly tendrils below.

This was a bad idea. You really want to bolt. A door opens behind you. "Step aside".. It's Lincoln's pissed-off across the hall neighbor, John Wilkes Booth. A shot is fired, problem solved.

You are grateful, "Thanks! Do you shoot people for a living?"

"I'm actually an actor." "Really? I can see that".

"You look shaken by this unfortunate incident.

I have a flagon of brandy and something called Netflix. Do you want to hang out?"

Six weeks after your hot afternoon with an assassin, your searing urine flow sends you to a clinic.

A haggard doctor tosses you prescriptions like you were the world's worst blackjack player.

"Do you know where and from whom you may have contracted this?" he asks.

"Goddamn John Wilkes Booth." you confess through gritted teeth, in a tearful whisper.

"Consider yourself lucky," the healer chuckles, "at least it wasn't Lincoln."

Three dogs , at a party, on a boat, at night.

after P. D. Eastman, *Go Dog Go*

Three dogs, at a party, on a boat, at night.
Short Dog, Fat Dog, Mad Dog too.
All aboard an old houseboat, classic 1967 Drift R-Cruz, a fiberglass barge
with a never hauled filthy bottom, furry as a 70's porn crotch, artificial turf on all decks.
Sound travels over water, under water too.
One dog lies afloat in the bait box, a perforated coffin, listening to the hubbub, the tape deck.
What a night, what a shindig.
Tannin dyed water the color of Mr. Pibb flows north like the Nile.
Feel that bass, smell the sweet nocturnal breath of a slight breeze. .
When something is requested, the response is always the same:
"Look in the basement", howling laughter and merriment ensues.
Someone screams, "I can read!"
Near shore alligators lie mouth agape.
Pretty poodle please step inside, they pray, so it can be snack time.
The garnet carpet of the moon lies on the water
Someone can't help stepping on it, with predictable results.
The moon looks like a porthole, and yes, it looks like a paper lantern, but you know,
sometimes the moon just wants to look like the fucking moon.
What state is between drunk and unconscious? They are there.
'Your hat is nasty', one dog growls.
'Your's makes you look like a cat.' someone snarls back.
When the sun comes up the ship has sunk.
All seek refuge on the Isle of Funk.