

It's Easier to See Light Indirectly

The path is covered in berries; by arrival, it seems
each step has bled. Red spreads across the harbor:
the day ends with water holding sky. Washing our
feet, the waves appear to be bleeding. Distance tastes
of brine and berries—I watch another summer fade,
your face, washed in gold, shift slowly into night.

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Refrigerator Art #1

I. The drawing by Age 10 is this:

Her face, a fresh egg, looks out with noticeably different sized eyes. A dress, made from Magic Markers, has bleed a bit in the construction

fibers—her body is something of a stain. A heart splits into a gaping hole—this must be her mouth, for this is where a mouth would go.

Her neck is held in a crayoned vice. A giant razor-blade, dangles. Her hair is stacked high as the drawn guillotine—layered yellow circle-curls

suggest something electric. A coffin-shaped man stands near, holding a rope. His face is an unlit taper. His smile, a red liquorish horse shoe—

sweet and lucky. When I ask Lia what her picture is about, she says *the beginning of democracy*, slice of cake—enough for everyone.

II. Parental Response

Dear Age 10,

I was too impressed with how right you sound to say, *you're wrong*. When Marry Antoinette told people to eat, she meant she didn't understand the law of the land—she didn't even have land; she was land to her husband who was not a man but a metaphor for law. Few could afford white bread, so bakers gave it freely—metaphor against metaphor. When asked about freedom, Marry replied she believed in sweetness—that if bread is free, let it be free. Only bread is never free. They killed her and so killed a metaphor and in doing so laws did morph. The guillotine is the perfect metaphor—death hung from a string—for we can cut puppet but the players always remain. The beginning of democracy is not in the blade, but in the giving of bread. Bread, remember, is never free.

Refrigerator Art #2

I. The drawing by Age 8 is this:

Thirteen figures—some sticks, others with torsos fleshed to plump raisins, run about the 8 x 11 paper. Some spout interjections like “Run” spelt with a backwards N or “Fu...” “...it.” There is, in fact, a bobbed-blond smiling

from behind a box-shaped counter; she sells apples, bananas, grapes. Just behind her, a volcano is blooming. She looks satisfied, her concession-stand the perfect end-of-world business. Who wouldn’t want a final taste? What is

this? I ask Aria. *Pompeii*, she says. In the left hand corner, two line-thin people sit with a checker board between them. I ask her why the couple is not running. She explains, *they’re old and are not afraid of dying*. Above is a mess of brown

on top of blue scribbles. *They’ve been dying for so long*, she tells me. The sky indicates soon no one will be able to breathe. *They understand there’s only time for one last...*
would you like to play a game with me?

II. Parental Response

Dear Age 8,

I’m too old and not young
enough to play checkers.
Does that make me the con-
cession or blooming volcano?

Refrigerator Art #3

I. The drawing by Age 6 is this:

Stacked arches where red paint drips onto a frantically brushed black sky. *A rainbow at night*, he tells me. Titled: *The Universe*.

II. Dear Age 6,

I won't tell you, what can or cannot exist. Even if allowing you to keep a Universe requires being a monster instead of mother.

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With These Things: A Mother's Map is made with Landmarks

At night, wonder if the moon understands its solitude—
wonder if after years of listening to the wishes of others,
has it formed its own desires.

By day, the moon is past wonder—it's a rock hung from
the sky—a reflective surface—show it light and it will
cast back that same light.

In the desert a hill catches planes before they reached runways—
wings in flames—metal melted into tears; crows collect these flickers
for nests, same as they amass stray balloons, Christmas-tinsel, and
dropped change .

To find a pocket full of tears, you must disturb a crow-nest's un-
broken weave.

Just this year, hikers found a boys arm, well the bone of it. Lost in
a war not many remain to speak on, or is that of. What is the on
and of this? Who held on? Who was this of? Bone.

When tested, the birds only take what is needed to build a home.
They show no preference for shine—sheen is what they have to
harvest from.

I am warned that what seems big now will seem small. What seems
small, will seem large. Large. And lost.

Sleeping , my son's face casts back the light of the moon. This isn't my
light—it is its own brilliance. I watch him breathing. His breath too large
to fit in my pocket.

We collect objects because time doesn't fit in pockets.

I've been put in a pocket.

If I burn you, don't hate me. You should have known better than to treat fire
like a fallen piece of the moon.

I offered you a door that could open anywhere; you only saw an old brass-knob to set on a shelf.

In my pocket is a bruised dandelion and a fistful of rocks. “With these diamonds we can see the world” he tells me—the whole world in my pocket. “I can buy us sight” he tells me. “We’ll see,” I reply.