

JOURNAL OF ORDINARY THOUGHT

Sticky Situations

Summer 2005

Writing from Bezazian and Hall Branch Libraries, Deborah's Place, and Project Hope, Pausa.

Photography by John Brooks.



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AN ILLUSION

Epifania Ibarra

Today I was cleaning out my handbag and found a wrinkled piece of paper, stained and half torn. As I began to read it, I saw it was an address and a phone number. It was information that, just by reading it, transported me to the past. The address took me towards someone special. With the telephone number, I had the opportunity to hear the person's voice at any moment, at any hour. What beautiful memories that small piece of paper in my bag

brought me. I thought about destroying it, but how was I going to destroy such a special part of my life? What would I do with that bit of paper that meant so much to me, and that could cause some harm? The solution was to let it go. I let the piece of paper go but kept the memory and everything it means. Now everything is different. I think that even my handbag misses the illusion that disappeared one cleaning day.

STICKY SITUATIONS

Almaz Oko

Life is sort of like a marshmallow. It has form, yet it's tender; it can be easily smashed. But, like a marshmallow, it springs back and recovers its shape.

If you stomp on it, maybe the shape is altered, but it still exists. If you tear it open or bite it, you get a sticky situation.

PLASTIC FORKS

Jean Durkin

My upstairs neighbor, Mary, seems to plant plastic forks in the winter. Actually, they are markers for where her spring flowers will bloom. For months, the white forks are the only things in the black earth. I tell people that I live in the building where the forks grow.

Early in the spring, Mary's crocuses start blooming. Sometimes the purple flowers push against the snow; sometimes they appear out of nowhere in the sunspots. Then come the jonquils, bright, blinding yellow. Straggly bushes, which for months have seemed like bundles of sticks, explode in forsythiatic joy. By this time the dog walkers and

baby-stroller pushers start stopping. Through my open window, I hear their oohs as they teach their children not to pick the pretty flowers. Bizarre pods begin growing among the low, early-blooming tulips. The dark purple hyacinths start sweetening the air and the pods grow in height. Three inches, then half a foot, the stalks with green egg shapes grow. Within another ten days they grow about ten feet high, then explode like purple fireworks into these odd, Dr. Seuss-shaped beauties. By then, Mary has filled the beds with petunias and peonies and has stopped the foot traffic.

IN A TIMELESS PLACE

Arthur Tennyson Docks

A mere thought,
A bit of whimsy,
Faith, the intuitive hope in the mind of all men:
A better life, a better world,
A brighter tomorrow,
Another time and place?
In a timeless place
Where there is only space,
Peace and essence to be you,
To be me.
A state of mind and being,
A billion light years and counting,
Away from a world gone mad,
A world in the wake of poison,
In the inescapable throes of Armageddon.
In a timeless place,
Imagine you,
Imagine me

At peace,
In total joy,
At repose
Under azure blue diamond-lit skies,
Beside a crystal river
Flowing between tall columns of pearlescent
marble,
Black onyx,
Beautiful,
But so old,
An endless serenade on streets of gold.
Tomorrow never comes
For today never ends
In a timeless place
Where there is only space,
Peace and essence
To be, just to be.