

LOVE LETTER TO NO ONE

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EUCALYPTUS BOOKS
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up this morning. aura and image in my head of a young woman seated in the bleachers on a high school athletic field in the South L.A. area I've frequented a number of times photographing graffiti, and where I've planned to go today. she is part of the group – students, teachers, and administrators (discussing safety issues following an off campus shooting several days prior), but appears to be more in her own universe, kind of a dreamy state, than the other predominately Latinx attendees she interacts comfortably enough with, mostly listening. she has light brown, almost blonde, hair loosely tied back in a knot, with a comely face and no make-up, she's wearing a white button-down blouse, full yellow-ochre skirt, her bare legs modestly crossed at the knees, and thick black ankle boots with raised heels, her only nod to sexually fused trendiness. the detachment or selfcontainment is not a pose, however, but appears to be she's not quite there in the external sense, but more in another, more inner, separate place from where she is still able to project, and my having arisen in a masturbatory state with this image of a white overcast day, blanketing and enhancing the detached, dream-like, but totally erotic, aura, is something I am trying to retain; the essence of the vision, which is my creation, so encompassing, giving me what has been lacking, a feeling of completeness, and extremely wanting her in real time, as I make my breakfast, hoping to integrate it creatively into my day. driving east on the 10 freeway the state is still there, but weaker, and by the time I exit at Grand and turn south, then proceed further east, past the school where I initially had envisioned her, it has dissipated entirely.

in the twenty-five years I've been shooting graffiti all over

Los Angeles, graf in the areas east of downtown, both west of the LA River from north of the 10 to about Adams, and east of it to Boyle Heights, has increased to the extent it covers the walls of deteriorated warehouses and abandoned railroad yards almost from block to block, its ubiquity, now, not likely to generate much more than a shrug. but in its present form dating back to the `bombing` of subway trains and gutted apartment buildings in 70s and 80s NYC, it is still a unique phenomenon. and has evolved. spaces forming the newer large block letters on the upper part of the warehouse walls read like windows. it is a new, colorful, garishly ambitious architecture totally appropriate for the surroundings, turning buildings into huge sculptures, that could never have been invented by architects



I shoot whatever turns me on I see. but a lot of it is graffiti.

`do you fear danger'?, I've been asked. mostly, no. they are not gang bangers. I had one bad experience when I thought I'd lost my car keys in a blighted neighborhood east of skid row with transients living in junked campers and improvised plywood shanties, police cruising homeless, tent inhabiting prostitutes who were walking the streets, far from public



transportation, no cash, without my phone, my car parked on a shipping dock subject to tow, and no additional coded ignition key at home, realizing I was totally helpless, but while searching the street the keys turned up in my back pocket.

another instance – I'd taken a couple of shots of a wall in an adjacent area. I waited until a homeless women walked past so not to include her in it. as I approached my parked car I was then accosted by she and a homeless male. I got in my

car. she got in front of it and he stood by the driver side window. they were complaining but as I'm hearing impaired I didn't know what other than it related to my photographing there. I tried to drive away but she got on the hood and wouldn't budge. I picked up my phone trying to make it seem I was calling for help. I opened the driver side window. I told him this is a public street and I have a right to photograph graffiti. he said photographing homeless people is a violation of their civil rights. after typing me a message on his phone, they both had phones, he finally walked away.. I started up the car and carefully tried to move forward but she wouldn't get off. then I put it in reverse but she hung on. no way was I going to risk injuring her and she knew it. finally she typed on her phone that her issue was I photographed her. I exclaimed loudly that I waited for her to pass before taking the shot. knowing what I said was true she replied "Oh, in that case" and stepped aside. I said, "take care," and drove away. I never felt physically threatened, but even though I got some of my best shots afterward, my neck was tied in knots as a result of their messing with me. fortunately when I got home I was able to pretty much work it off, partly by watching porn before I went to bed at three. graf walls downtown and the homeless encampments now are pretty much inseparable.

before leaving the area after a, for some reason, stressful day, I drive by the school. it is closed, of course, as it is Sunday. as I turn the corner of the street the athletic field is adjacent to, I spy the figure of a woman sitting by herself on a lower bleacher seat and on closer look, at least from a distance, am stunned by what appears to be the exact image of the young woman I'd half dreamt, half fantasized, before I

got up in the morning. I keep going not knowing what else to do. by this time I am exhausted from several hours of driving around, searching and photographing, parking, getting in and out of the car, and ready to head back, but know I'd regret it if I don't make some attempt to approach her. I hang a U, but when I once again pass the field several minutes later she is gone. I am intrigued, but a bit disheartened, after returning to Santa Monica. I think I took some good photos but wish for a more fully immersed realization of my vision. had I seen her on a subliminal level previously? and if she does exist in real time, I am desperate to know how I can meet her. what has occurred seems compatible with a search to find a physically real but alternative universe to inhabit. frequently in the hour or so before dinner I look at walk videos of shimokitazawa, Kabukicho, Harajuku, Shibuya. the images are mostly mainstream but there is a projection in viewing a scene in which the other is so similar, so identifiable as to provide an alternative universe. I am not seeking an alternative reality, however, rather I am seeking the satisfaction I feel must be in the present one.

I'm convinced I will see her again. I'm not sure whether she, or who I thought was she, was really there or not, or, if in my fatigue, I hallucinated it, but she was there when I got up and there is no other way to go but to get deeper into it.

I need to be silent. silence of being stoned. I think too much which is just a form of talking. as is writing. but writing is more selective and so is closer.

watching a night walk video in Kabukicho on you tube which

is poorly lit because the lens aperture is (untypically) closed down, slowly panning to get the full color of the pulsating neons and signage on the buildings, as the disparate, shadowy, underexposed, but still discernable, crowds mill and walk by, seedy and well dressed, moving purposefully, or standing around, hanging, hustling. females with warm, waist length black coats, short skirts, bare legs and thick black platform shoes (de rigueur replacement of stilettos), implying preadolescent sex. hallucinatory, noirish, side streets with overloaded patches of orange, reds, and greens, cool blues, and suggestive darkness. ominously teasing a desperate search for the soul's inner gratification. for a nickel, a dime. a darkened room. kisses. a grimace. spurts of semen. a knife's edge drawing blood. unanticipated tenderness. how often have I linked my desire to one version, or another, of that?

but this is not my white vision...of her, though they are more similar than one may think. should I call her Hermine after the bar girl muse in Hesse's Steppenwolf? "morality of the artist is replaced by aesthetics," Hesse said. I feel she is here, but in a space only sporadically accessible. higher up, erotic, but dispassionate and remote. possibly dimensionless. to fuck her there would be eternal.....but here she raises her billowy skirt, wafting a freshly laundered scent, framing her bare legs, a vintage slip beneath hugging her upper body. she removes her plain white nylon underwear and unbuttons her blouse, letting down the straps of her slip, freeing her breasts, beckoning me towards her, pulling my hair, pushing my face to her nipples and I suck. I lay beside her hard-on throbbing. she inundates me with languorous kisses, cutting off my air, plenitude of dark sweet scented hair obscuring my

vision, unzipping and pulling down my jeans, lowering her mouth lasciviously onto my swelled phallus. she plays with me, gently, firmly, far off, then settling on top of me we densely fuck. "come on me," she whispers. I'm about to come when the doorbell rings. it is early evening, the blinds are drawn and I do not answer, but I peek and stop when I see what appears to be the same woman who was sitting alone on the bleachers, the same I was just fantasizing having sex with. momentarily frozen I watch her start to descend the stairs, then, in a rush, open the door and call after her. she turns her head backwards, and smiling, holding a clipboard under her arm, re-climbs the steps.. I am, oddly, relieved rather than disappointed, though there is some similarity, it is not her. had I let her go without answering, there is no question I would not have been able to live with myself. she is quite attractive, however, with pretty green eyes and fine amber neck length hair. she is wearing a black mask. my standard reply to solicitors is that I have no money and so can't contribute, but before I can do this she says she's circulating a petition for Heal The Bay (which I readily sign), and is not asking for money. there is a flirtatious overtone between us as we talk about climate and I discreetly look her over, but dominated by the professionalism volunteer solicitors for 'good causes' objectively manifest. after shutting the door I am left, even more, with my horniness, and go back to watching videos on you tube, resisting the temptation to look at porn.

the film noir vision is easy. Wong Kar-Wai light or whatever one wants to make of it. the white dream is not going anywhere as long as I hold on to it. when I awoke I was in its aura

and it was liberating. the irony is it happened because I had nothing and that made it everything. if I give it up perhaps it will return. if it does I will leave it alone.