

MY ADDRESS IS STILL WALTON

a play for the set of Charlie Rose

by Karinne Keithley Syers

1.09 (with 2013 line revisions)

PEOPLE

A series of questioners and answerers, and one translator

CASTING CONSIDERATIONS

Generally non-repeating interview subjects. If a small cast is rotating through the roles, wigs are okay. Wigs are great. For a large cast too.

STAGING NOTE

Separate from what the play actually is, the structure of this play makes an argument for journalism as an equally dramatic context for the distillation of thoughts, lives, human action, etc., as narrative storytelling. Despite its uninvolvedness with forms of modeling, causation, or explanation, the play should thus be understood and approached as "another piece of banal realism" (Wellman). The interviews which form the body of the play can be staged with reference to any existing journalistic convention. Likewise the staging syntax of the sequence can be constructed according to the syntax of interruption, advertisement, or editing of a TV or radio model. It is my request that anyone staging the play think about the energetic needs of the piece in the interstices between interviews. I wish always to remind people that singing and dancing (and wigs) (and rabbits) belong with the real, and to realism.

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FIRST GROUP

1:1

Is humanity important?

I consider it important. I hear it out there.

What were you doing?

I was holding the rabbit. You were taking the picture, and I was holding the rabbit, and the rabbit was really passive. And I was thinking about the parsimony principle.

(Every time I think about that word I have think through what it means.)

I mean beyond money, the principle of economy of mind.

It reminds me of how the helicopters used to do those spotlight searches, above my old house.

This wasn't a shared house?

I had to change the pronouns.

So the helicopters?

Yes. We could see them from the kitchen window.

You said "we."

You're right. I did.

Do you mind me addressing you like this?

No. It's fine.

What do you want to do now?

Something better I suppose. These days I find I don't want to be disturbed. I'm trying to slowly become a professional something.

Is there advantage in that?

I gave a lot up so I could think this way. Clearly I expect some advantage.

How will the advantages manifest?

You can't limit yourself to the way you imagine something always happens. Richard taught me that once you learn a law, you can't waste your time on models. You use the equation.

And you responded how?

I said it's true. I said I never trusted it. I said that's no fair.

Was this a way to qualify the statement?

The equation is powerful; it allows us to draw a conclusion we can't necessarily imagine. That's the real meaning of consequence. She arrived at something beyond what she could imagine.

Do you find the things we recorded a long time ago come back into circulation in any kind of meaningful way?

Things we recorded a long time ago come back to teach us humility. One came back to me recently.

How did you feel? When it came back.

Bad. Maybe a little proud, but mostly bad.

Is it true that you wanted to be a gardener?

I've heard that before.

And it's true?

You can't really have an idea of how true something will turn out to be.

Everyone has a blind spot. What's yours?

Something has to seem powerfully good, morally right, in order to be able to *do* anything.

Is this an argument for belief?

Do you remember the festival in Turkey, in Giresun, the guy we called sad man and his friend, I don't remember what we called him, he always said things like "I am thank you very much" or "I am bye bye"?

No.

I don't think about this stuff all day long, but as soon as any little bit of it surfaces, the rest comes flooding in, it cascades. It's all linked.

And you believe this is good?

Fundamentally. Yes. I believe that's exactly what goodness is.

1:2

What about knowing without senses?

That's the whole question about how-do-you-know. Like you're Joe whoever. How do you know you should become Tony Bennett? How do you know it's the best moment in your whole career? That's a sharp sense. Could we posit a sense of time? Sight, smell, hearing, touch, taste, time. That's a measurement, that's not a sense. That's an intuition. That's what you would call the intuition.

Are you a vitalist?

I believe in a kind of vital impulse. I've taken that from what I've read, over the years.

What does that mean?

It means you have to handle your own vicissitudes, and apply yourself to thinking about it in the longer term. You have to be capable of your own experience.

Will you ever give up mobility?

Yes, probably. I believe in that question. In asking that question.

Do you think that would really work?

It's like when a woman gets pregnant with some other woman's eggs. Would you want that? I would channel absolutely everything else I had. You're making a very concentrated effort. Because you want it.

How about the laugh tracks?

They keep me company

You wrote a poem about a bird

Yes, "This Bird of Passage"

I like that title

Thanks. It's about divorce

Did you get divorced?

Not technically

Not technically?

I wasn't married.

How about growth. Is it really light based?

It is. It really is. It really is all about light.

How long did it take you to decide to become a plant?

The crisis was very intense. But I guess it didn't last all that long. I thought about it consciously for maybe a month.

Are you worried you'll change your mind?

Yes. Sure. I mean, it's a possibility. There are plenty of other instances in which I've changed my mind. Sometimes you guess. I was really unhappy trying to figure it out. But then when I did, I thought: well, I had that kind of clarity and you don't turn your back on that without being dishonest with yourself. But it's important not to fictionalize the terms of your decision, too. Not to paint it into clearer terms just to feel more comfortable with your decision.

Is Tony Bennett a man of the people?

He never went Hollywood. He never was desperate about his career.

What about Russian bells?

I absolutely love them.

Quick list of things on your mind

Okay

Radical democracy.

Whether dogs are rational.

Whether I'm rational.

What else?

Whether or not my brain can still change.

Are we stuck with the minds we have? Is that it?

Pardon me for saying this, but for a smart person you can be pretty dumb

I know. I know. I do what I can, and then I try to get some sleep.

1:3

What about being outside of the conversation?

That would constitute a personal failure.

Even if the guy is practically catatonic?

Well he is, but the kid with him is a brute. I don't know which is better. The kid can't sit still. And he hates the doctor. He can't stand him.

Why does he hate the doctor?

This doctor doesn't wear a white coat. They're trying to get all the doctors to lose the white coats and switch to short sleeve polo shirts.

Who's "they"?

The BBC

What do you do about it?

We turn together. We show up together. We notice it.

How do you summon the kindness?

That's a really hard thing to do. But you have to realize that you're just being a baby most of the time. You're just being a selfish baby. And at some point you just have to stop. Ultimately you can't summon the kindness until you're ready to stop asking everyone to take care of you.

You never rest, Phyllis

That's not true. I rest all the time.

Is it possible to go through a serious, self-imposed trial without having God as a goal?

That answer feels like a secret. By which I mean, that's something I don't know. You have to feel alright, all the time. That's what you think. But why not just say, I just want to get to Brighton. I just want to get to Damascus. I just want to get to all those places at once. All the irrecoverable places. Why not just be happy? There you are, you're holding the rabbit. Someone you love is taking the picture. Maybe that *is* God as a goal. What about just holding the rabbit and having your picture taken and being happy enough with that?

What does it mean to speak?

It means, I'm participating, I have an intelligence.

Yes.

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Now that you've recovered from the whole Jane Fonda incident, do you think it should it be forgotten?

Very much so. I should forget it, dissolve it, make it so it can't come back so it can't gain that kind of inevitability that comes from always saying to yourself, "this thing happened" "it happened" over and over. It's your mind that makes it inevitable. And I think you just have to love yourself and everyone else more. You have to love everything else more, and do whatever you can to make the past disappear.

But what do you do with all the images?

I don't know. There are so many of them. I keep going back to this memory of being there in the theater after *The Fox and the Hound* was over, and going into the other theater and there was a movie about a truck convoy playing, *Convoy*, and I remember feeling really unsettled.

What about more recently. What do you remember from your trip?

There's a wall in Prague a Dannon ad, yogurt containers in all the different art styles of the 20th century: Realismus. Surrealismus. Cubismus. Everything ended with "mus."

Can you identify that sound?

I don't know. Pass?

What was his name?

His name was Lemuel. It takes it out of me to have to supply you with that answer.

Don't be sorry.

I'm not sorry.

1:4

Is this a romanticization of plants?

You could say that. But I'm not bothered by that. Nothing gets done without romanticizing something.

You say you're a fan of nuns

Yes. I've always been a fan of nuns.

Why?

They're great gardeners.

Is it possible that you've just lost your nerve?

Could be. Could be.

I think I wanted to find a way to contribute.

How did you realize that you wanted to move here?

I think there was just some voice that was really persistent. I could be somewhere else entirely, but the voice would always assert itself. It's about loving the things you're researching more than you love your own public identity. That's what the voice says. That's what I've come to realize.

And the photograph?

It's extraordinary.

Where did you find it?

In North Carolina. About a year ago. The rabbit caught my attention. I couldn't tell what it was. I took the entire book. That's how the project started.

How did you make it happen?

A life has to work. I just put faith in it. I'm very undisciplined, really. People think that I'm disciplined but I'm not. I like to work. That's why I came here. I wanted to just do my work. I just wanted to do some kind of work.

And is your skin softer now?

Very much so. Very soft. It's really remarkable.

Do you have to use products?

Yes. Yes I do.

Do you have perfect vision?

I used to but then I injured my eyes. They get weak now.

How did you injure them?

I'd rather not say. I told one person and she was like, "You'd better not tell that to people."

When you're looking hard at something, with your glasses?

Yes?

What do you see?

This sounds funny, but I think I see my eyes working.

What about superiority?

I think that's a brittle concept. I don't find it useful.

What do you do when you get home at night?

If I played guitar, that's what I would do. But I don't. So usually I cook.

What is self pity?

Self pity is the devil talking.

You believe in the devil?

Insofar as I am aware of self-pity, yes. Yes, I believe in the devil.

The man with the rabbit. Does he believe in the devil?

I think he's actually seen the devil. And um,

Yes?

He said it was almost empty, and it was much much more terrifying than

Yes?

Than you'd think a very isolated, quiet conversation could be.

1:5

*What is it that we see above his head?
In the mural?*

Yes
I think it's Lenin

Lenin?
Yeah. I think Lenin's head is hidden in the mural

Really?
There's a lot of evidence.

So where was he in terms of the whole group?
This is actually really interesting for someone in my line of work, because you're always trying to give your group a behavior. But the thing is, a group might have a unified behavior that they broadcast, but of course when you look closely, you find out that your unit, your group? they all completely contradict each other.

And he occupies this contradictory spot in the group?
No. That's what's really strange. Socially, he's marginal, he's barely able to interact with them. But the thing they're all telegraphing to the outside world is actually an enlargement of his style, his preoccupations. Everyone thought of the working class as an art form. They wanted to *be* him, they absorbed him. People are largely unaware of how much he influenced the rest of us.

And later, when he went back to Mexico?
Who knows. He doesn't seem to care. He thinks it was all just a joke. He said "I thought it merely was in jest." He was always using phrases like that.

And how did he explain his absence to his wife?
He wrote her this letter. He said I have done my last major wall. I long to return to you. I love you more than my own skin.

Did he remain faithful to her?
Yes. He went back, she agreed to marry him -- they hadn't actually been married before, that's why he left. She had gone through a nasty divorce and he had insisted that they must marry and she said no, I never want to marry again, and that's when he left Mexico and went to New York. But when he came back, they married.

What did they want?
They wanted to rediscover their country. They wanted to love what they didn't know. They wanted to feel connected even to things they didn't know. How could they have lost it? They wanted to recover it.

How about the trip to Canada?

Working in public is a strain. He heard something, He said something spoke to him, lower than the ground, below the carpet. He was in the middle of his most ambitious work.

And the voice told him to go to Canada?

The voice told him, destroy the personal. Make the assistants disappear. Promise yourself you'll get up early. Get away from the mercenary aspect.

But it spoke to him in Spanish?

Yes. Yes. It spoke to him in Spanish, as I am doing now.
It is made possible because we all deserve it.

We deserve Spanish?

"The Tongue is the Seat of the Heart."

That's his motto

Yes. It's in the mural, in Spanish, embedded in Lenin's hair, in gold.

Wow.

What does it -- in relation to Lenin, what does that mean?

[hand gesture of how-should-I-know]

SECOND GROUP

2:1

You've been quoted as saying recovery is a falsehood- what do you mean by this?

You want to recover the yard, you want it as it used to be. In the intervening time however almost every particle of your understanding has changed. Which city did you used to live in? What used to be there? What was there 500 years before that? You hear echoes, but you don't get it back.

So what do you say about yourself then, when you see someone you haven't seen for a while?

Well I try to provide some continuity. I care about mix tapes. I want to have my friends over, I don't want the gaps to be difficult.

You bought a new outfit

Yesterday? Yes. Did I show it to you? It's an outfit for the gym. I accidentally bought it in patriotic colors. I should dye the shoes yellow to make it just primary colors instead.

Which of your statements are planned?

All of them. But not by me. So this is as new to me as it is to you.

I'd like to play you a recording of a cello piece, something I think you'll recognize.

[roll clip of Victoria Bond solo cello piece; let it continue for a while, then stop the tape.]

Do you recognize it?

Yes.

And?

I recognize it.

That's all.

This is one of the problems

What, in philosophy?

No, just one of the problems of interviewing you.

I'm looking at the linoleum on this floor.

I realize that

I'm just going to study the pattern of brown splotches on the linoleum on this floor.

I understand that

I can't hold the hand of every old man I know. I can't buy your old salad bowls just because you're having a garage sale.

I didn't say you had to

Yes you did. Come on, you know that's what you were saying.

I thought you didn't believe in subtext

Or passivity. As goals. I believe in their existence. Have you forgotten where we are?

Of course I haven't.

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I can't let it not be personal. It's all personal. I don't know. I'm sorry.

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How's your headache?

Didn't you have a headache?

It's better, thanks. It's fine. You don't have to approach it as a problem.

Okay. I won't.

Good

Okay good.

So ask another question.

I just want to say, I hope you're well. I hope you're okay. Even though it gets tense. Between us. My question is, do you still feel love for the royal family?

Try to be kind. Try not to believe what they write in the paper. Try not to read what they write in the paper.

Who's "they"?

Us. You and me. The people like us. I know their names. It's not like I was immaculate. Look, young people tend to have an apprehension of power. It turns only to be an exercise of arrogance. I don't believe in youth anymore. I don't believe in anything any more.

You don't believe in anything?

Everything is underscored. Everything is tentative. Everything is older, blonder, more fragile, more obscure, more pitiful. I feel pity. I feel pity and boredom.

Did you read about the kidnappings?

Which ones? In Bogota? In Iowa? The kid in Miami?

No, King Phillip. I mean the Puritan villagers. Mary Rowlandson. The Puritan lady.

The Puritans were kidnapped?

Sure. It went back and forth between them and the Indians.

I dream about that kind of stuff. About captivity.

Are the dreams good? Do they turn out okay?

Not really.

What do you see in them?

Usually burning buildings. I always try really hard to put out the fires, but I can't ever actually accomplish anything in a dream.

Why is that?

I don't know. I don't know why that is. Why would I know why that is? It's mean, right? I mean, isn't that awful? Isn't it the most frustrating, worst thing? That even in your dreams you can't accomplish anything? Why is that? What could be the possible use for that? There must be some use. Doesn't it have to be biologically useful. Isn't everything, like doesn't everything turn out to just be biologically useful? Why else would it be the case for everyone? I mean it happens to you, right? I can never do anything. I'm always helpless. Or really I'm not helpless. I'm just powerless. I might be able to escape, but I can't do anything to change it. All I can do is run around like "oh, oh, what am I going to do?" I hate this. About dreams. I can't stand this. It makes me furious. It makes me crazy. it makes me completely crazy. It's like a cruel horrible joke. It's like it's just supposed to humiliate you. It's awful. There's nothing in the world worse than this. Nothing. Nothing. There is nothing worse than being HUMILIATED or CHEMISTRY or WHAT THE FUCK EVER in your fucking dreams, being USELESS in your OWN FUCKING DREAM.

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IN YOUR OWN FUCKING MIND.

[music plays as if to end the interview; the questioner and answerer don't move; same pair continues]

Are you comfortable here?

Me? Yes, I'm fine.

Then why do you have your leg propped like that?

Like what?

Like you're about to run.

Oh. I didn't realize I was doing that. Have I been doing that the whole time?

The whole time.

Huh. What if I did just leave?

Pardon?

What if I just left? Who would you interview?

I don't know. I guess I'd just keep interviewing you and make up your answers.

You'd pretend to answer for me?

Only if you left. Is that strange?

A little.

So stay.

Yeah. I mean, that was my plan anyway.

[they sit there for a while longer.]

So. Do you...know anything about the Black Panthers?

Um. Not much. I know they wanted to have control of their schools and stuff.

Have you heard of the Knapp Commission?

Uh, no.

Ever seen footage of the prison rebellion at Attica State?

Uh, no.

How am I doing?

Look. It's awkward here and there, but overall I think this is the best work you've ever done. You just need to learn to hide your terror.

THIRD GROUP

3:1

Did you say scriptures or strictures?

Tomorrow we're dealing specifically with strictures.

Will you be clarifying the restrictions?

No really. Engaging the process of choosing where the lines go. And what to do with the existing ones.

What will you advocate?

I plan to be the voice of a dead man. I mean, I expect to be the voice of a dead man. I expect to be able to offer something um, ghoulish.

As a kind of final achievement?

It's not a long term goal. This is specifically tomorrow.

How do you anticipate that for example you'll speak in the voice of a dead man at tomorrow's session?

Ask me again like you could accept that I mean it.

How do you anticipate the voice you'll be speaking in?

I'm always talking to the future. I become infused with the future, whenever I talk. This is my gift.

Why is that?

Because I only speak with the future tense.

That's not true.

In my heart it is.

Where do you go, when the dead man is talking through you?

I'm somewhere in the transcription. I'm listening more than I'm thinking about my lips moving.

What's the most perverse thing you've heard?

I've imagined a lot of perverse things. Mostly I guess conversations in my head. I tend to have conversations with people and I paint them into a corner, I make them stake a claim to something very antagonistic to me, and then I yell at them. In my mind. So I guess the most perverse is this form of bad ventriloquism.

How often to you take interviews?

Whenever I need to raise some money. I'd be very holy if I couldn't raise money now and then.

When did you discover that Irene was dying?

The mind is useful. It's an instrument of calming. I am really enjoying all the things I can do with my mind. I am enjoying talking to you right now, for instance. I really am. The way in which Irene's body is creaking, the ways that are so devastating to absorb, are things I came across first in my imagination.

What do you mean?

I mean, I thought it up, that she's dying, I thought that up, and then she was dying.

Because you thought it up?

Yes. Maybe. I don't know. I try not to waste time proving what I can't prove.

Will you miss her?

Who, Irene?

Yes.

I don't know.

How could you not know?

Thirteen hours of footage isn't enough. Someone can take this home with them and figure that out, and let me know. When it's more clear, let me know. I'd like to know.

3:2

What did the state of California say?

That he's a danger to the community. Like that he wants to destroy the party.

Didn't he write that he did?

No. He just said we should come out with our hands up and leave our guns. He was ambivalent, at worst.

And they were waiting for you at the gate?

It was bad. My sister fell.

You shouldn't have resisted

She was about to faint

And what was the field marshall's real name?

What I can tell you is that the bullets went through his hair. And bounced off the wall.

And what was his real name?

They tried to kill the field marshall.

And you made it to the tunnel?

At this time there were about 2000 people on the scene. We made it to the tunnel with the individual help of each one of them.

When the party says power to the people, what are they really saying?

What do you mean? They're not fooling around.

What about the lessons of history?

Which are what?

That the people can be pretty terrible

So you would prefer the war on the people just went on endlessly?

But what are the consequences of failure?

I respect you. I love all my people. I love my people so much that I'll defend them rightfully with guns and bullets. That's my message.

Where are you going to get the guns and bullets?

From the television.

From the television?

I'm not fooling around. If you were older, I'd let you do it instead.

Tell me why you don't.

What do you mean tell you why I don't? Why I don't get them right now is because I'm talking to you.

When it's done, what then?

We start over.

Won't you still be a danger to the community?

That depends on what community you're talking about.

Do you think you could win a legitimate election?

That would be up to the electorate.

3:3

What is Hugo's real name?

I love Hugo, but he's never told me that.

How long have you known him?

I'm not sure.

What is your feeling on turret bedrooms?

I think they're really cute. Great for girls.

Doesn't it reinforce sexual fantasies that this generation could do without?

I'm not sure of that. I'm not sure that's a bad thing, that's what I'm saying.

You think that Rapunzel is a worthwhile model to pass on to the kids?

Why is everyone so freaked out about this? I think Rapunzel is super sexy, you don't think so?

We agree by accumulating examples. There are examples.

What do you mean there are examples? Examples of what? What could be cooler than a turret bedroom?

You're right. Okay, you're right.

I think we agree by sympathetic imagination. I don't think we agree over examples.

New topic. If you could step outside right now, which outside would you step out into?

I'd step out into the light, I think.

You don't need to be outside to step into the light.

No. You really do. It's really much better in the light if you're outside in the light.

Okay. If you could be in any building in the world right now, which one would you choose to be in?

Is a parking structure a fair answer?

Yes, I think so.

I'd be in the parking garage of a particular airport.

Which one?

Just an airport I remember fondly. I'm not going to tell you which.

Are airports wonderful or horrible?

I don't know about that. I gave up trying to make judgments like that.

How about trains. Are trains wonderful or horrible?

Really great. For the most part.

How about highways?

I like some of them

Does looking out the window really make you happy?

Sure. Also looking into windows. That makes me happy. Well sometimes actually it doesn't.

Which one?

I don't know. Happy most of the time.

You like looking at people?

I like looking into people's windows.

What about turret windows?

They usually have gauzy curtains so you can't really see inside

What do you do then?

Imagine it.

What do you imagine?

Pastoral scenes. With ducks.

Ducks? Inside?

Wild ducks. Also basketball courts.

Do you know if there's a pizza place nearby?

I can't think of anywhere where there isn't a pizza place nearby. Can you?

I don't know. I never thought about it like that.

3:4

[bold text is spoken by the translator who accompanies the answerer]

Your record over the last few years has been very inconsistent. Did you think you were going to be able to win?

¿Usted creías que iba a ganar?

Sabía desde el principio que podía, si,

I always knew from the beginning that I could, yes,

Creo que toda la gente son iguales en los ojos de Dios

I believe that all people are equal in god's eye

y toda la gente tiene la misma posibilidad a sobresalir

everyone can succeed

Trabajé duro cada día porque mi opositor era muy fuerte

I worked hard every day, because my opponent is very strong.

Did your legal problems interfere with your training for this match?

¿ Interfirieron sus problemas legales con su entrenamiento para este partido?

La ley me recordó pensar compasivamente con mi país.

It reminded me to think compassionately about my country.

Eso era extraño para mí.

That was strange for me.

Refleje en lo que había hecho, para intentar crecer un poco más. Algunas sensaciones no deben dejar crecer.

It gave me bad feelings

How do you avoid those feelings? Is it hard to stay focused?

¿Cómo usted evita esas sensaciones? ¿Es duro permanecer enfocado?

Usted debe crear la sombra natural del espacio malo.

You have to make the natural shadow of the bad space.

No es lejano.

It's not far off.

Hay cosas agradables con el espacio. Hay sonidos humanos, y es limpio, y los "lightswitches" trabajan. Todo eso.

It's a good place.

Do you believe that positive thinking has a real effect?

Usted cree que el pensamiento positivo puede tener un efecto practical?

--hmuh ?

Usted cree que el pensamiento positivo puede tener un efecto practical?

No.

Is there anything you'd like to say to our audience?

¿Hay alguna cosa que usted quiere decir a nuestra audiencia?

Tengo dificultad empezando

I am having a hard time beginning.

No ahora mismo, me refiero a todo lo que viene.

I don't mean right now, I mean everything that is coming.

Quiero decirle "hola" a mis niños Mónica y Raulito y Christina.

Hello to my children Monica and Raulito and Christina.

Quisiera que supieran que mis--

I want them to know that--

mis dientes me lastiman

my teeth hurt

Voy a permanecer en New York City por un tiempo.

and so I am going to stay here in New York City for a while

y voy a arreglar mis dientes

and get my teeth fixed

No puedo ensen mis dientes a cualquier persona

porque tengo vergüenza
de mis dientes

I need to fix my teeth

Quisiera que supieran que intento traerle regalos a casa

I want them to know I will bring home gifts

algo para cada uno de ellos no importa cuanto cuesta los x-rays

for each one of them

no matter how much the xrays cost

y también, Estoy pasando mucho tiempo en mi cuarto en el hotel

and also,

I spend a lot of time in my hotel room

la televisión es hermosa en América

television is beautiful in America

y también quisiera que vinieran mis niños aquí un día a New York City para ver que triste

son los caballos que están aquí y para agradecer que en nuestra país los caballos no son

infelices

where we come from the horses are not unhappy

-- ? Okay.

Quizás siendo bueno no es útil.

Perhaps being good isn't useful.

Mónica Christina y Raulito y todos nuestros amigos te amo

I'd like to ask you one more question about your method

quiere hacer otra pregunta

O.K.

Cross training? Or single track mind.

¿Estas empleando "cross training"? O tienes una mente "single track"?

El libro sagrado - la palabra de dios - es un libro que te ensena vivir con tus enemigos.

The bible teaches you how to live with your enemies.

Hay maneras innumerables para vivir con tus enemigos, Brian.

There are innumerable ways to deal with your enemies.

Esta noche por ejemplo: Mi opositor intentó una nueva defensa y no trabajó. Él pensó que

trabajaría. Y él no tenía ninguna otra manera de tratar de confrontarme como su enemigo. Y

no trabajó.

Tonight my opponent had only one defense, and it didn't work.

So you advocate training for all contingencies

Usted defiende entrenarse para todas las contingencias.

Pienso que Miguel está deprimido pero yo estoy muy feliz.

Miguel is disappointed but I am very happy.

How has it been, getting back into shape after your time in politics?

¿Ha sido duro ponerte fuerte otravez después de su carrera política?

Tengo mucho dolor. Pero creo que a cierto punto, el dolor no es relevante. Es un mensaje que

puedes elegir a no hacerle caso.

Pain is irrelevant. It is a message you can choose to ignore.

What's coming up next? Any thoughts on the future?

¿Qué viene ahora? ¿Tienes pensamientos del futuro?

Guárdese de los gentes joven.

Be careful of the young people

Of the young people?

Que?

Usted me agradecerá por este buen consejo.

You will thank me for this good advice.

GROUP FOUR**4:1***What are you most sure that you know?*

Probably how to eat. When to eat. Why to eat.

Do you accept that that response is abusive?

I heard you might take it that way.

What are you resolved on now?

To just keep following the first older man I'm attracted to.

Do you think I think that's funny?

I'd like to feel like I was in touch with my roots.

Do you think that the party will be able to agree on a name?

I don't know. I always liked Hazel, and Iris, and that kind of name.

Plant names?

Preferably. When I go to Washington, I want to present myself as an idealist on all fronts.

In the footage of your concession speech, all the women in the background are smiling. Did you notice?

Of course they are. You've confused the price and the value. It's emotional. I'd have ridden in on a horse if I could have.

They'd have opened fire if you did.

These are not ordinary horses I'm thinking of. I'm thinking of a sorrel with a braid.

Will your people welcome you back?

Sure. When I've finished what I mean to do.

What about the opposition? How do you deal with all the negativity?

I have to describe to myself how I make meaning. That usually helps.

Who talks to you at night?

I talk to myself.

You seem very sure of your ear.

I don't piss on things. I know what I'm talking about.

Do you consider yourself a balanced person? Do you worry about premature death?

I'm not afraid of being powerful. It's easy for you to treat me like I'm not a lady. But it's clear to everyone that I am.

What about Marxism?

I don't know. It's alright.

I don't know. I'm not convinced.

Yeah. Do you pay attention to Marxism?

No. It's contractual- I'm required to ask at least one question about it.

You should get out of that contract. You shouldn't be afraid to get out of a bad contract.

A lot of people have interesting things to say about it.

Those are probably people who can't recognize a good contract.

Well, they might be people who can recognize a bad contract.

Granted.

What is the most important thing you've learned?

How to clean the toilet.

Should I take that at face value?

Probably not necessarily, no.

4:2

Do you accept idea of the earth succumbing to the slow intrusion of some other form of life?
I'll accept it if that's your advice.

You'll take my advice?
If you offer it in good faith.

What do you see when you look out the window?
I see the same thing every day.

Have you considered that you actually don't?
Don't what?

Don't really see the same thing every day?
How can you tell where one thing ends and another begins? We're the same thing; we have the same memory.

Would you try a thought experiment?
Okay. I guess.

Would you in your imagination brick up the space between me and you?
Will I still be able to hear you?

Yes.
Good. I wasn't sure if sound could travel through brick.

It's imaginary brick. But it would travel regardless. Do you like hearing me?
I like to remember what it's like to be in the room with you.

I expect you'll get beyond that desire.
Are you sure?

I'm sure.
Okay. If you say so.

Do you think that you made the major choices in your life somewhat carelessly?
You can direct your answer to the bricks.
I think there's a troubling kind of obscurity to any strong decision. I wouldn't call that indicative of carelessness.

Do you like it when your dog lies at your feet?
That's a stupid question.

Why is that a stupid question?
Of course I like it. I encourage it.

How many emails do you get a day?
A lot. A lot of junk. I miss the era when no one had email

What kind of contact do you expect in the wake of your decision to plant yourself here?
All physical. I'm planning to turn off the computers at the end of the month. So I'll be pretty much limited to who decides to come to me. But I've tried to make that an easier step to take, make it more likely that someone might choose to come. To visit me.

Are the heaters effective?
Not at all. So that also discourages visitors. That's something I'd like to have changed.

How many seizures have you experienced? I'd imagine those are kind of offputting too.
I've had several obvious ones. And several more ambiguous, well, what they call "events".
Seizures can be very hard to define at the lower boundary.

And do you instead turn inwards for confirmation?
No. That's funny. No, I just look backwards. I sit in that space and I try to feel myself falling backwards.

Falling backwards how?
Falling backwards in time.

And is that something you are able to do?
I let it be unconditional. I leave the persistent questions out of it.

What is your goal, when you're doing that?
Vertiginous openness in unmarked time.

That's kind of pretentious.
Cars shifting.

Shifting lanes?
Shifting dimensions.

Do you have compassion for yourself?
Yes. Yes I do.

Didn't you have an appointment?
Yes. And I hope you didn't make me late. I usually only check the time when I'm in private.

Me too.
This is an incredible evening.
That means you can't believe it. Can you really not believe it.?

I really can't believe it. I'm incredulous.
Wow. Well. You're easy.

4:3

What do you know about paradise?

Wow. Okay. Love is visibility. Visibility is reciprocity. Paradise is something you can think about mathematically, okay? So imagine a set of lines that extend between people. And imagine an infinity of those lines, so that what is made of lines is in fact a plane.

Even though lines have no width?

Even though lines have no width.

So paradise is a plane.

Paradise is a line that radiates and is planar.

And this is experimentally proven?

Absolutely.

Has the proof of paradise been a disappointment?

Yes, I think, in a way it has. It's thrilling to arrive at this kind of knowledge, but then to decide what to do tomorrow — becomes I think you could describe it as — well, it becomes a burden.

Why is that?

I think, it's hard to keep going, when the interaction with paradise is behind you.

But don't you — I mean theoretically isn't paradise in front of you?

There's nothing at all that should point to that conclusion.

What do you mean?

I mean there's no evidence.

Could it be that the evidence just hasn't been found?

Well that's all fine and good, as a stance, but it is much more likely that paradise, if you're going to interact with it at all, is going to come at a discrete, sentient moment.

And then, it seems like you're left with a big question.

And you just have to respond by forgetting the question.

And how do you do that?

Look at the space you're in. Look at the room you're in. Observe the particular light, for example. This room has a diffuse kind of light I've always loved. I've loved it since the 20th century.

Doesn't this mean you're reverting just to memory?

No. That's a good question, but no. I'm looking at the place I'm in. I'm really trying not to be held hostage my memory. I'm trying to um, bring it into the room. And not let the image belong to the past.

Is anyone going to turn you round?

What do you mean, and rescue me?

Yes, exactly.

I would like that.

When you imagine that, what does it look like?

The first time I went to Walton I was driving around, I was looking for a house, and I just thought, this place is fucking paradise. I was blown away.

And was it?

It was in that I was experiencing my imagined life, right there.

Has it been emotional in the lab?

Yeah. It's been really intense. We were all so focused for such a long time, and that gives you something very concrete to do, you know, just follow the steps, proceed in inches. You don't have to look up, and it's comforting to be inside that kind of process, with everyone working very simply towards something, working experimentally, with clear and established criterion.

Like you've offered your rights up to the future?

Because there is no right of return. What is the right of return? There is no return.

How do you feel now?

I feel really spent. Right now? I have a headache. I'm spent. I feel like I understand something I couldn't have articulated before. I couldn't have even articulated the question, but in the process I've just been depleted. It doesn't happen without exhausting yourself, and that's not a fund you can replenish in the same way.

You can't ever replenish it?

Well no. Not exactly. It's more like, you can't refill it with what was there before. You fill it up with something else.

But isn't that satisfying, somehow?

It's bittersweet. I guess. It's beautiful when you can see all the way around it. But I don't possess that kind of vision all the time.

So what are you going to do tomorrow?

Pick a new problem. Try to just choose a new problem.

Anything you can tell us about what that might be?

I'm not sure. Perhaps something to do with indigestibility? I'm interested in an analogy between indigestibility and um, walking, in a kind of imagined landscape. That's area I'm going to look at.

Do you expect to be supported in this new investigation?

Yes. I know the price of peaches, let's say. I'll get the support I need.

4:4

Can you explain how you got your name?

Well the names all come from the Vatican. If you open a new church you write to the Vatican and they send you your icon and your Saints name and some materials to help you get started. And so Henri wrote to the Vatican and waited a really long time. And the box finally went out and I was in it and apparently I was labeled "Fragile". [pronounced frah-jeel]

And so your name is Saint Fragile

Yes. I'm an -- uncanonical saint. Apparently I arrived that way.

Why do you say apparently?

This was before the reanimation. They can't send you alive.

So all the icons -- they really are living?

All the ones that come from the Vatican.

And what do you do?

There aren't a lot of people in the parish.

So you don't get uh, prayed to all that much?

I do. I have some people that come. And I'm really able to give them *all* my attention.

And what do they ask you for?

They want to know if I've forgotten where they live.

They want me to send visitors.

or deliver a message to someone they've lost.

To dead people?

No, just people they can't find anymore.

And can you give them what they ask for?

Well I can petition to intercede you know. There's a system. I can't, usually, just make something change instantly, without a process of approval.

Why not?

None of us can.

What about the man with the rabbit?

That was really a miracle.

What did he ask you for?

He was holding the rabbit, and the rabbit was really still. It was dying, this rabbit, it already was like a ghost in his arms.

And he wanted the rabbit to be better?

He wanted the rabbit to know some things. He wanted me to talk to the rabbit.

And that's something you can do or do you have to go through other channels for that too?

No, I can talk to rabbits. I can talk directly to rabbits.

And so you did.

Yes. I told him to come back that afternoon and bring on paper everything he wanted me to say, and that I'd read it to the rabbit.

What did he ask you to read?

He had some letters he had written. An article he'd published in the local paper. He had some fact sheets about clouds and about which airplane companies have the cleanest planes. He had some photographs, too, that he wanted me to describe to the rabbit, from his childhood but also just

from his life, from when the rabbit was young, parties they had, old friends over at the house, a particular part of the garden.

And the rabbit?
The rabbit wept.

For joy?
I don't think so. No I don't think it was joy.
But it wasn't without, -- tenderness.

Did the rabbit respond?
Briefly. It was really too far gone. It... well it sang.

The rabbit sang?
The rabbit sang.

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Out loud?
I could hear it. It was, uhm. Animals sing in very high pitches. They don't use all of their voice, they use a lot of air. I think the man could feel it couldn't hear it but he could feel it, the vibrations. But I could hear it, that's one of the things we can do, we can hear anything singing.

Anything? You mean lots of things sing that we can't hear?
Sure. Plants, animals, especially plants. They sing a lot. At least in my parish.

What does it sound like?
Its um, it sounds like a rabbit singing?
It makes your ear drum, uhm, feel like it might bleed. Like there's a very tiny sharp something sticking into it. Boring into your head and vibrating with this tight, high sound. And if you can relax, which is very hard to do, and if you can be very very still, you know, don't make a lot of breathing noises or think about anything you know, you'll be able to hear it, it's like, it's windy. It's kind of like a pan flute I guess. But not as pretty. It's not pretty at all. But it's very, uhm, compelling. Have you ever heard a rabbit being killed? You know by a fox or something?

What? No.
You haven't? You haven't been walking by a copse of trees or a brushy area and heard something terrible, like, almost like a human scream?

No.
Really?

Yes. Maybe. I might have heard it. I couldn't, I didn't know it was a rabbit in particular.
Rabbits sound a lot like humans screaming when they die. If you hear something screaming and you're confused because it's not using, you know, language, then it's probably a rabbit dying, uhm, badly.

Okay. And the rabbit singing sounds like that?
That's funny. No. Not at all. It's. You can tell it's not a dying sound. It's a different kind of sound.

So this particular rabbit sang, and you could hear...
Yes, it sang. And I sang what it sang to the man. So he could hear it.

And when you sang, that's when it happened?
Yeah. It was like, there they were, and the rabbit was singing to me and I was singing to the man, and then suddenly, they were floating. The man was holding the rabbit and the rabbit was dying, and they were suspended in the air, and I wasn't sure whether it was going to turn out badly. I--

for a moment I thought, oh my, there's you know, there's got to be a demon problem here. It was hard to read, you know, I mean it doesn't happen all that often, that a man and a rabbit come to see you and one minute they're standing in front of you like all the other parishioners, and in the next, they're in the air, suspended.

So they weren't zipping about and doing flying tricks?

Apocrypha. No. It was less spectacular and more uhm, weird.

And when did they come down?

They didn't.

They didn't

They didn't come down.

They didn't ever come down?

They didn't ever come down.

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Do you get more visitors now?

Oh sure.

And?

And one or two of them have made it up there.

To the rabbit?

To the man. The man is there. The rabbit's gone.

What happened?

Well it died. It got fainter and fainter and then it was just gone.

Do you miss the rabbit?

I don't know.

How could you not know?

I can't tell.

When does the long day start?

After midnight or in the morning?

I don't know.

When you wake up? When you go to sleep in order to wake up? I don't really know how to measure it. I don't know where it starts.

Did the rabbit ever say anything?

Yes. He asked me if I made up my own name. I told him no, I told him I was named by the Pope.

I told him the Pope used an equation to generate my name. And he, the rabbit, looked at me and in human language I am serious he spoke to me in human language just as I am speaking to you now.

And what did --the rabbit-- say?

He said, "I just want to get to Brighton. I just want to get to Damascus. To all the irrecoverable places."

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They have to fall in love.

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In the picture. For the picture to work.

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They have to fall in love for the picture to work.

EPILOGUE

SAINT and RABBIT GHOST have a band, and this band sings a song about James Audubon on the Mississippi while FLOATING MAN strums the accompaniment on a mandolin or banjo, a FLOATING PARISHIONER plays the drums, and another FLOATING PARISHIONER plays a fiddle. Every effort must be made to prevent the song from being sweet or cute or conventionally rabbit. It should be about how Audubon has to shoot the birds to draw them, and how he doesn't care, and about how he thinks he's going to go blind because he drinks too much river water, and how he is planning to never go home.