

Glendower: I can call spirits from the vasty deep.

Hotspur: Why so can I, or so can any man;

But will they come when you do call for them?

-William Shakespeare,

Henry IV part 1: Act 3, Scene 1

Dear Frank,

I think of you often.

I want to drink a Coke with you.

I want to watch Lana Turner movies with you in bed, pausing to kiss and paw and fuck, and then – sweaty and giddy and smelly, slightly sticky from the patches of lube and cum that we missed when toweling ourselves off – finish watching, the platinum glory of Lana amplified by our hormone exhaustion.

I want to go to Peggy's gallery with you on a drizzly autumn evening, and then to Times Square to browse skin mags and cruise hustlers and maybe we'll take one of them back to your apartment and afterwards, when we've sent him on his way with cigarettes and a few glasses of whisky and a handful of crumpled cash, we'll look at each other with conspiratorial satisfaction.

I want to have a threesome with you and Larry.

I want to wake up in the morning, and you'll already be at your writing desk, and I'll wonder what you're writing (is it finally about me?) and I'll try in vain to coyly distract you, but I'll just plod out of bed and putter around the apartment naked.

I want, and I can't, and I never will.

So I read you –

Mostly in bed, always naked, before I fall asleep, or when I've just woken up.

My aching wish, Frank, is for you to read to me –

Mostly in bed, always naked, before I fall asleep, or when I've just woken up.

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What does your lust look like? Not the object of your lust. I mean your lust, in and of itself. Think of the feverish height of your arousal, when your mind is a torrential slide show of fantasies and your grip tightens and your pulse races and your concentration narrows. If that febrile moment had a shape, a texture, a material, what would it look like?

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In every young gay man's life, there is a gap. Not everyone is aware of it, but it's there. It's deep and terrible, and we carry it with us like a scar that will never fully close, like the plague wound on the upper inner thigh of Saint Rocco, continually weeping.

I remember when "vintage" porn was "rediscovered." It was sometime in the late 90's. Porn movies were shot on slick, featureless flatly-lit video, and featured shaved and waxed and largely hairless men, because body hair was a signifier of the onset of the deluge, of before. But vintage porn! Shot on film, with all its textural depth, with

“naturally” hairy men, and no condoms, because that was before, when they didn’t know the deluge was coming.

We summon the past, not out of nostalgia, but out of a desire to bridge. A generation is missing. We have no parents who would have told us directly how to be in this world, how to think in this world, how to make in this world, how to love in this world, how to fuck in this world. And so we move through each other, through time and through death to find them.

In an effort to fumble blindly into the future, we try and summon the past. In elaborate rituals, we give material form to our lust; we write love letters to Frank; we moan “OH DEREK!” as we cum; we try and build a bridge across the gap, with torn-up shreds of old porn magazines and needle and thread and video cameras and hard-ons and strands of semen.

- Sholem Krishtalka, 2015

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