

tildetown

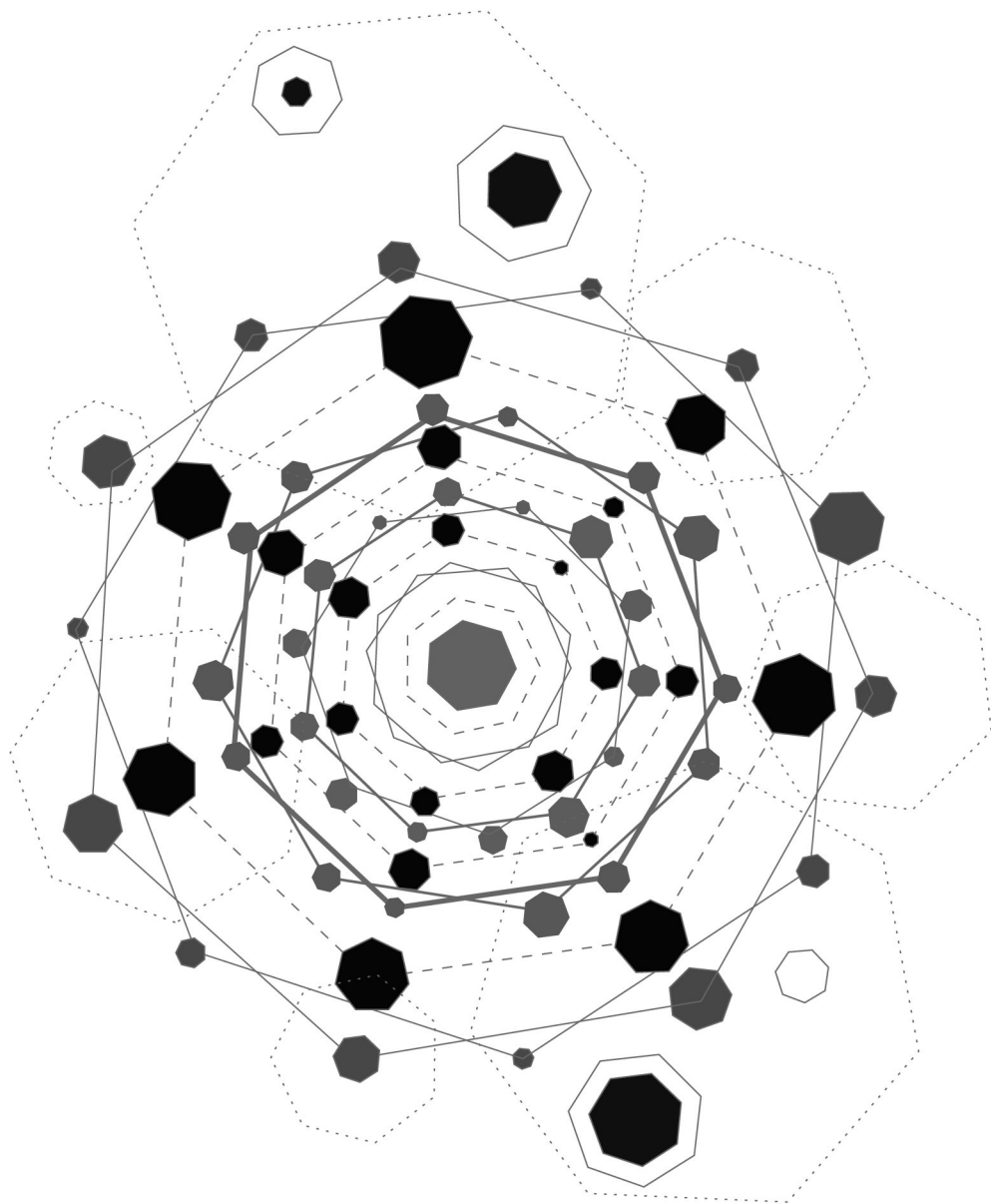
#7





tildetown

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tildetown zine #7  
2023

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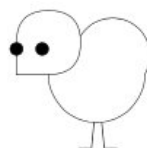


Figure 1: A baby Pic chicken

# Foreword

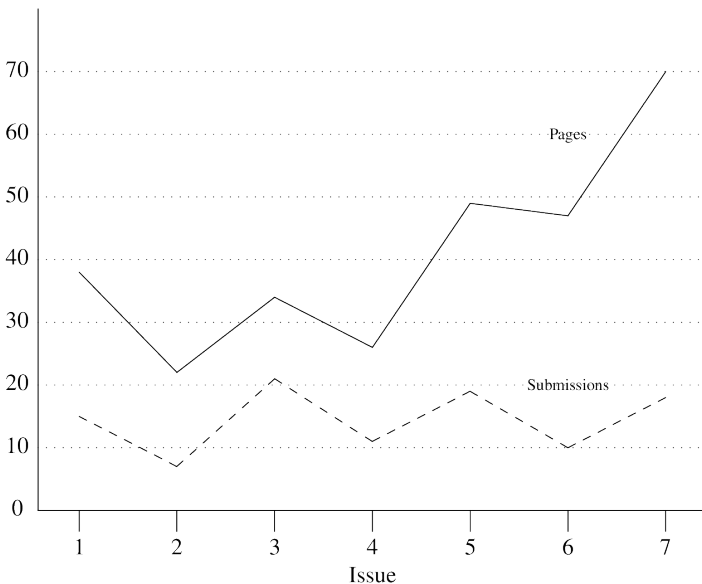
dozens

Hello and welcome to issue #7 of the tilde.town zine! I could not be more excited to share this issue with you. It is positively bursting at the seams with cool stuff. It is indeed our biggest issue ever. Look, I made a graph to prove it! Between these covers you will find photographs and other visual art, poetry, guides and hows-to, a choose your own adventure story, and other submissions that defy easy categorization.

As always, I am super impressed with the talents and creativity of this community, and I am proud to be a part of it.

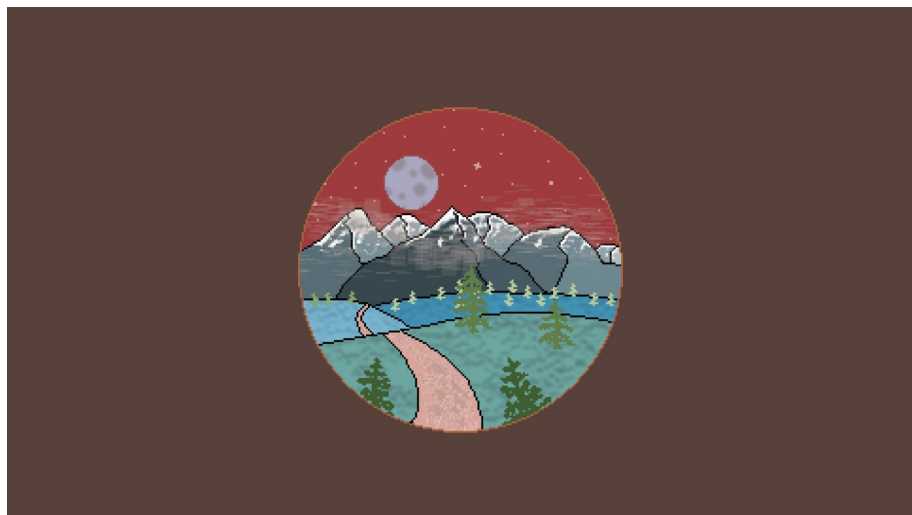
Okay, let's crack on. Enjoy!

<3,  
dozens



# Standby Background

waynr



This is my first ever pixel art, created on my twitch stream  
(<https://twitch.tv/uuayn>)

# I Look For Bones Everywhere I Rest My Gaze, or, The Trouble With Buying Things.

## Being one Yankee's honestly retold recollection of visiting Buenos Aires in September of 2023

vilmibm

Buendía. I have returned from Buenos Aires. For me, Argentina was "the place where Jorge Luis Borges is from" until one of my best friends moved to live there permanently in 2013. I played a decade long game of chicken with his return to the states that I have now lost.

On the first day I woke up and tried to drink airplane orange juice that smelled like dirty socks woven from steel wool.

It also tasted like dirty socks woven from steel wool. I could not finish it before the turbulence of landing began and prepared to take it as one horrible shot before it splashed all over my pants. They were the only pair I brought on the trip. I was saved by a flight attendant just as things became dire. My time to bienvenidos was short and I emerged into the smoking area by the international arrivals door. My friend was to meet me there but I was 45 minutes early. To pass the time I pulled out the one book I brought to the country: the Labyrinths collection by Borges. I have owned this copy of Labyrinths since 2006 or so when this same friend showed it to me at a used book store in Poughkeepsie, NY, USA.

"His stories are like murder mysteries where the killer is infinity," my friend had explained. When he showed me the book I realized I had no idea how to pronounce Borges and thought it might be "boar jizz." I also realized I was very



intrigued by his description. I don't remember in which year I actually read the book but reading it changed my perception of reality and the world forever. When I first read Borges it felt like the first step on a long journey. I didn't know what the journey was or where it was going, but every book I have read after Labyrinths has been part of a conversation with Labyrinths. I sometimes feel like that journey is near a kind of completion. Perhaps it would complete in Buenos Aires? I couldn't say, but I felt I had no more choice in whether to bring the book than I had the choice of inhaling clouds of cigarette smoke outside of the international arrivals door of the Ministro Pistarini International Airport.

My friend arrived in a cab that was also an Uber and I squeezed in with my one backpack and my one metal case of modular synthesizer equipment. I could not make the country around me seem foreign. The sprawl, the highway system, the trees, the billboards, and the gray skies all looked like they could be in USA. This disappointed me. I deposited objects in my friend's apartment and hugs unto my friend and brunch into my body. I would have napped, but we had synthesizers. We spent the rest of the day on the floor in and out of headphones basking in a video synth playing on a big TV propped up on chairs looming over us. After synths, talking, a break for exceptional Armenian food at Sarkis, and more talking.

On my second day in Buenos Aires I stared into the water heater of my friend's apartment.

A tiny charred portal on the metal box let me see the secret world inside. Tiny mountains of flame filling a black void with blue light. I had never considered the beauty inside of a water heater. I think we ate medialunas. We took an Uber to the Recoleta Cemetery where the driver observed that if he followed the application's direction we would have to scale a very large wall.

"Gracias, la puerta es mucho más fácil," replied my friend. Recoleta was promptly overwhelming with its beauty. A dense sepulchral city covered in Art Deco and Belle

Époque iconography decaying elegantly yet filled in its corners with discarded bottles and wrappers. Below the crypts I saw pits descending into abject darkness. As we walked I saw statuary so magnificent and yet so cramped I felt surrounded by a vast empire with eons of history clicked, dragged, and re-scaled into a city block. Metal wept green and stone sprouted weeds all around me. My friend wanted pictures for his online dating profile among all of this. I did not know how until I saw him reflected in the glass door of an overgrown crypt. Friend merged with plant merged with shadow merged with me merged with darkness.

From Recoleta we walked and then cab'ed. I again tried to nap, perhaps, but failed. Memory resumes at a bar where we met with a person who became a new friend. The bar turned us away because of a private motorcycle club event. Another bar, many blocks away, welcomed us. The bar remains a mystery of memory but they focused on vermouth based cocktails. This was a nice time. I finally worked up the courage to go inside from the patio and ask,

"Baño?" I was not understood. I repeated myself with a more nasal "ñ" and a tentative "donde esta el" and was motioned as needed. After the bar came our actual venue: a drag show in a warehouse. I enjoyed this drag show, though I caught myself being more enchanted with the wall sized projection of Divine music videos than with the show in front of me a few times. A thing that scandalized me was how drinks could be ordered with "speed." Given Argentina's reputation as a cocaine enjoying place I, in my tired state, completely believed that this meant amphetamines could be added to beverages. My friend later explained that speed is just a popular energy drink of the country. A long walk and far too much Argentine pizza later I slept. I rather liked la fainá and resolved to eat any further Argentine pizza on horseback.

Photographs from my phone inform me that on the third day my friend took me to San Telmo.

I was very tired this day and recall it faintly. We looked

upon many beautiful buildings and I purchased Simpsons magnets from a vendor at a street market. We circled the market and I caught a glimpse of tango. We looked in the windows of many antique stores but did not enter any. I pet a cat in the entryway of a witch (brujxs) supply store. We became lost in an indoor market and spiraled around our need for bathroom, coffee, and food. We pushed through a confusing altercation between the police and a couple for the former. We drank fancy Brazilian coffee from Coffee Town for the middle. For the latter the easiest option seemed to be empanadas but we could find none sin carne. We gave up and left in haste for my friend had an appointment. That night I loved a maximalist dinner at Salgado and had my first glass of Argentine red wine since arriving. I selected the wine at random and was not disappointed. Between this Italian meal and the earlier Armenian meal my dire fear of every meal in Argentina being a meat mountain subsided.

El cuarto día en Buenos Aires I arose on my own and got in an Uber for Tigre where another old friend of mine lives.

This friend is inextricably linked to my other friend. They do not live together anymore, but in my mind are always interwoven. As this was my first solo trip in Argentina I felt panic. A food truck on the side of the road going into Tigre read "You do not need teeth to eat my beef" in English which I could only interpret as a threat. Near my destination my panic briefly abated when I saw a horse, unadorned and seemingly wandering free, grazing on a pile of dirt and garbage next to a polluted waterway.

The day's visit was the first in many years. My friend gave me a tour of birds, trees, canals, sadness, love, endings, beginnings, fear, reunion, and a large abandoned boat. The boat evoked the glorious decay of the Recoleta Cemetery as it sat rusting in the quiet water of el río Luján. The sun began to set and I realized I would be late getting back in time for evening plans. I returned to panic.

Against most odds I made it on time. We took in a gender fucking cyberpunk opera in a building where thousands of



people had been tortured and murdered during the dictatorship. Like in Recoleta, I could feel a kind of folding of time and space.

My friend and I had gone to the opera with the new friend and a new new friend. The new new friend was a food writer. Such a friend is a good friend to have when dinner is needed. We ate comida perfecta at Divino, a restaurant so new I was unable to find it online. I was relieved that our server was eager to practice English.

On the fifth day I had enough feelings to fill a mountain.

I needed to walk and exist outside of cars. So, with my friend: un día de los flâneurs. From his apartment we walked and walked. On days like this a city becomes a smeared gradient. We oozed from the mostly middle class Villa Crespo to the canned and stale Instagram aesthetic of Palermo to the big money of Belgrano to the canned yet fresh Instagram aesthetic of chinatown. Somewhere in the middle was the market of the fleas. On this walk I learned about the need for a law to regulate neighborhoods being renamed as a new subset of Palermo. Everything is Palermo. I shuddered imagining an imploding city of Palermos. In chinatown exhaustion and confusion led us to receive a double espresso carefully portioned into two tiny cups. It was enough to get us home and then out again to La Conga. This restaurant is a chance to encounter the divine. Every seat inside was occupied and the line to enter stretched down the block. Staff wired with radios and with the attention of show runners on a film set moved everything so swiftly, however, that tables were never left unoccupied. We were seated in the corner of what used to be another Peruvian restaurant that was absorbed by La Conga as a result of La Conga's indefatigable commercial spirit. Everything is La Conga, but its unbounded growth did not frighten me like that of Palermo's. La Conga's madness was virtuous and real. Palermo's was just another real estate developer's greedy dream.

The speakers above intermittently rang out with the sound

of Windows 10 alert notifications and abruptly launched into an EDM rendition of FELIZ CUMPLEAÑOS at least five times while we ate. Our order: lomo saltado de pescado, chicharrón de pescado, leche de tigre, papas a la huancaína, and chicha. I had worried that our tiny two top would not contain the bounty and was proven correct. Everything was so good that the lack of space did not bother me. I hunched over our mountain range of food clutching my plate with one hand like a plateau of earth split by seismic activity and flung into the air.

Eventually the couple next to us left and in light of us lonely two having irrationally ordered enough food for five people the staff kindly converted our two top into a four top. I ate and I ate and indeed it felt like a feliz cumpleaños. I danced in my seat whenever the music came on and became so shoveled full of satisfying food I imagined myself as a piñata I could pop whose innards I could then eat all over again. We got our many left overs to go and resolved with boldness to walk home through Plaza Miserere but it was very cold and some men stared at us so we entered a cab waiting at a red light. At home we talked until the eve of dawn.

On the sixth day in Buenos Aires I awoke to construction sounds as usual and inserted my ear plugs in order to sleep more.

Unhappily I awoke, again, to drilling and hammering in the apartment above as opposed to the construction site next door. I gave up and shuffled into a breakfast of leftovers. My friend was busy all day so I walked down his street until I found a park. This took a few kilometers. On the way, I mentally catalogued every shop that sold wine. In the park I recorded the sound of traffic washing over construction noise and the rhythmic screeching of a swingset with the sound of a ghost clearing its throat. Parakeets visited the trees over my head. I read Borges and resolved to resist Tlön. I finally looked up Thomas Browne's Urn Burial. On the return walk I evaluated my wine shop catalogue and resolved to try Brooklyn Bebidas in the hopes of their NYC iconography implying a

command of English. No English was spoken, but I did obtain an incredible bottle of Patagonian red wine. While I walked the rest of the way back to my friend's house I devised the rules of a game I called "El Juego De Buenos Aires." This game has two win conditions and two loss conditions. You lose by being hit by a car or stepping on dog shit. You win by finishing your trip to Buenos Aires without having been hit by a car or stepping on dog shit. You can also win by being hit by a car the exact moment you step on dog shit. That night my friend and I were treated to a dinner cooked by a friend of my friend. We watched a movie. I enjoyed petting my friend's friend's cat. On his wall my friend's friend had hung an image of a labyrinth.

After one week in Buenos Aires it was time to go to another cemetery.

Recoleta had been awe inspiring, but I was not prepared for El Cementerio de la Chacarita. My friend and I entered the nearest burial gallery: an open air concrete pit three stories into the ground with thousands of burial drawers. Feral cats darted away at the edge of my vision and the noise of startled birds echoed through the hallways. Dim pools of water collected at gallery bottom. Plants had overgrown their containers and spilled into the burial shelving. My friend knew someone buried there and we tracked down the drawer number only to realize we were in the wrong gallery. It seemed inconceivable that there were other galleries the size of the one we had entered, but there were several. We descended into the correct gallery and studied the dead's dewey decimal system. My friend double checked the burial information on his phone, saying "I'm searching my email for a message from one person who is dead about another person who is dead." I realized that, one day, the Internet would be the biggest necropolis of them all. We found the correct shelf but it had been stripped of all information. It was likely empty but we paid our respects anyway.

Above ground we followed an outside wall. In both directions, the towering wall consisted of more burial



shelves. These shelves were uniformly in disrepair. Cracked and missing doorways framed bones in boxes and garbage bags. The shelves had been adorned with small black and white portraits of their residents. These portraits stared at us now from wherever they had been propped up among the bones that had once given their pictured faces structure. We tried to joke and accept what we were passing by. The weight of time smothered us and we could only feebly sing the lyrics of hair metal hits replacing certain words. Truly, I had been taken down to the sepulchral city where the bones are broken and the shelves are filthy.

After los baños I dropped my phone onto some sharp gravel and shattered its back. I have dropped my phone many times but until then it had never gotten more than a light dent. My friend remarked,

"Welcome to Argentina, the country where everything breaks."

We made to leave Chacarita and passed the kind of Art Deco and Belle Époque designs that filled Recoleta. Their beauty felt distant after the wall of bones. We walked quickly but failed to make it to the German and British cemeteries before they closed. The only thing to do was walk so we entered a Parque Chas, a spiraling neighborhood, to lose ourselves among the living. At the center of the neighborhood we talked while traffic flowed around us. Out of the spiral for coffee and empanadas in an old style cafe bar where a waiter insisted we were wrong about a basic coffee order and then gave us the wrong empanadas. This gaslighting of the gringo, even one who speaks perfect Argentine Spanish like my friend, is a hallmark of the Buenos Aires experience. I attempted to use the toilet upstairs and noticed the flushing mechanism was broken in the exact same way as the toilet at my friend's house. Though I appreciated this familiarity I decided to use the urinal instead.

A cab deposited us across the city in the Broadway of Buenos Aires along Av. Corrientes. Av. Corrientes

intersects Av. 9 De Julio, really a very wide avenue, at the site of a massive obelisk along the lines of the Washington Monument. I insisted on crossing Av. 9 De Julio, then crossing Av. Corrientes, then crossing Av. 9 De Julio, then crossing Av. Corrientes. This put us back where we started but allowed a view of every side of El Obelisco as well as the buildings and signage surrounding it. We stared at El Teatro Colón while basking in the glow of a glitching LED advertisement screen and discussed all of the things we had never seen there.

A lot of this walking was to distance our stomachs from the incorrect empanadas. My friend and I are two people incapable of deviating from plans without significant mental energy and suffering. Our plan was to eat a large Argentine style pizza at Banchero which requires as empty a stomach as possible. Our hours of walking primed us well but I was still not capable of finishing my three slices.

On the way to the final cab my friend told me a reason he appreciated living in Argentina: "In the states people say 'those who can, do. Those who can't teach.' Here, people say 'él que sabe sabe, él que no es jefe;' If you know you know and if you don't you're the boss."

Too much dairy and my sleep is threatened. Banchero made good on its threat to my sleep. Despite going to bed at 5:00 I woke at 8:00 as a result of the bed under me breaking and the construction work. Ear plugs and white noise did not help return to sleep so I put on my big noise canceling headphones and created a playlist of Fennesz albums after two hours of playing word games. I found that if I lined my body up parallel to the wall on the unbroken half of the narrow bed I could ease the pain on my back, but my body had to spiral so my head could lay flat due to the large headphones. I slept in a way: two hours of lucid dreaming. I dreamed of Chicago. I biked, while wearing the headphones and listening to Fennesz, to the downtown DePaul University campus. I found a dumpster full of the contents of a gutted apartment building and dragged three filthy mattresses out. With them stacked under me I laid and stared up at the

skyscrapers black against a gray sky. I put one hand on my bike and waited for something I could not imagine.

On the eighth day in Buenos Aires my friend made me eggs.

I still felt like I was dreaming so instead of anything else we sat and made music in our headphones.

I ceased my dreaming and music for a long walk to a synth workshop where my friend took classes and learned to build eurorack modules from scratch. For hours a wonderful man from Córdoba showed us his instruments both acoustic and electronic. My favorite things were an analogue/acoustic drum machine made of telephone and telegram parts but controllable with voltage, an acoustic guitar hacked up into a bass, and an oscillator module that could blend between symmetrical analogue and digital circuitry. As he demonstrated his work to us I watched his fingers gently holding patch cables at the end of a hand seeking the right jack like a heron looking for fish. He inserted patch cables swiftly and decisively. I left humbled by the knowledge that for all of the inspiring things the man showed us he had no formal training in electrical engineering. I was thankful for how generous he had been with his time.

My friend and I wanted to invite him to dinner but social anxiety and windy rain made us both falter. The two of us returned to Salgado for pasta. I tried Fernet con Coca which is exactly what it sounds like: fernet mixed with coca cola over ice. As a lukewarm fan of Fernet and an avowed enemy of coca cola I prepared to hate but instead enjoyed every sip. Home for talking, fixing the bed, and a very early bedtime.

On my penultimate day in Buenos Aires we met our new friend from the other night for lunch.

Prior to coming to Argentina I was worried about not being a fan of eating meat. I ate very well, however, and especially loved the all vegetarian and mostly vegan meal



at Sampa we had for lunch. I enjoyed a walk with our new friend to her place which was a multi-level maze of wonder and home to a fabulous cat. We stood on her roof where she said apologetically, "the view may not look like much but when the sun sets I promise it's very beautiful." I could not understand. Even in the slump of midday it was magnificent. Below, what looked like a two meter high sculpted head of Jesus stared blankly at us. Above, a train slid by. Around us a cat quietly nuzzled a cactus and a sea of rooftops rippled with ferns and barbed wire like a concrete sea.

My friend and I headed back to Chacarita Cemetery in another attempt to see the British cemetery only to find a locked gate despite it being thirty minutes prior to closing. My friend, charming as he is, convinced a grimacing older woman to let us in for a quick walk. I regretted having to rush but was thankful to get in at all. The statuary was beautiful and the grounds dense with trees and ivy. On the way out a statue exhorted, "THY WILL BE DONE."

Our will was to drink yerba mate in Parque Centenario. On the way back to his apartment we stopped in a labyrinthine multi-level supermarket to buy a new thermos and yerba. Two developments threatened my resolve to do our will upon return to my friend's apartment: he could not find his mate and I discovered, through an unfortunate interaction with boiling water, that his new thermos leaked. I held my burned hand under cold water and felt that Argentina was truly a land where things broke. I poured a tea cup of malbec and sat down defeated.

My friend's will was stronger than mine. He knew a place, he said, to get a new mate. He wrapped the thermos leaking scalding water in towels and crammed it into a backpack with the yerba. I allowed myself a sliver of hope as narrow as the orange on the dusky horizon. After an eternity standing at the mouth of the subte staring at the sign for the Club Inglés which was inexplicably fully in Spanish my friend emerged from the home goods store next door. He had succeeded. Argentina is a place where

things are mended, too. We paused at the Naval hospital for pictures and spiraled into the park. The sun set, the mate ritual began, and unseen ducks quacked themselves to sleep as the sun finished setting. I burned my tongue on the first sip yet was still so moved by the experience that I resolved to re-obtain a mate. I lost mine years ago just like I lost touch with the person who gifted it to me.

We returned to Sarkis and stood in the crowd. Unlike our first visit we waited for almost an hour, sitting down to eat around 22:00. This is evidently a normal dinner time for the people of Buenos Aires and I love them for it. At home my friend asked me if I believed in free will, meaning, and purpose.

On my final day in Buenos Aires I wanted to end as we began by eating medialunas.

I packed and took stock of the red wine that had accumulated, partially of its own accord, in my friend's apartment. Our new friend asked if she could come over with ice cream; we countered with having ice cream and the rest of the wine. I felt it was a Friday fit for royalty. I got in my car to the airport sad to say goodbye to old friends, new friends, and a city that managed to win my affections despite all of the dog shit and steak.

As for my Borgesian journey: I barely read Labyrinths. Instead I talked labyrinths into existence until dawn with a friend whose mind has played a huge part in shaping mine. I walked labyrinthine paths in a city that played a huge part in shaping Borges. Nothing feels completed or finished and I did not expect anything to. I had gone to the land of the gardens of the forking paths where there can be no true endings. Only new alleyways of being beckoned me.

EDITOR'S NOTE: As of publication, the author is a winner of El Juego De Buenos Aires

# A (small) guide to indie internet radios

tsui

You're back home from a tiring day out. You want to relax listening to some music. You have acquired lots of music along your journey throughout the Internet. However, you don't want to listen to any of it right now. You don't want to deal with the decision paralysis of youtube or bandcamp either. Furthermore, spotify and friends are out of the question. Lastly, your old radio doesn't catch any frequency that's interesting to you.

But there's hope. While your old radio can't catch much more than what's physically near it, the internet radios got you covered.

Internet radios come in many varieties. Some of them are just the internet version of old-school radios, and many of those are mostly available to be listened through their website only, so they can track you, show you ads, or cut the streaming after you haven't been engaged to their website for some time. Worst case scenario, they require you to get their android/ios app that's riddled with who knows what.

I won't bother with those. I will focus on just a few Internet radios that are available both through a webfront and a direct streaming link, so you can tune in using a browser, or a media player when the former is inconvenient.

## Tilderadio

Link: [tilderadio.org](http://tilderadio.org)

I can't start without mentioning tilderadio. Tilderadio is the online radio of the tildeverse. Members of the tildeverse request time slots and stream things to their liking. There are shows dedicated to music playlists and talk shows. Highly recommended.



## Link for media player

•<https://azuracast.tilderadio.org/radio/8000/radio.ogg>

## Anonradio

Link: [anonradio.net](http://anonradio.net)

One of oldest pubnixes is is the Super Dimension Fortress Public Access UNIX system, or SDF for short. The folks at sdf maintain anonradio.net. Like tilderadio, anonradio operates on a volunteer basis, with DJs being members of the sdf. There's a wide selection of music shows. Rock, synthpop, metal, electronic, dubiousness, partying, languages, old and new. There's something for almost everybody.

## Link for media player

•<https://anonradio.net:8443/anonradio>

## SOMA FM

Link: [somafm.com](http://somafm.com)

Soma fm is an entirely listener-supported independent radio with as many as 30 channels dedicated to different music genres.

- Do you like a mysterious soundtrack in the background? The secret agent channel might be of interest to you.
- Are you hacking together that project that has been keeping you awake for many nights? Check out the DEF CON radio channel.
- You haven't had enough of 70s style rock and wish you could hear more of it? Here's Left Coast 70s.
- You prefer the synthpop of the 80s? Here's some more too at Underground 80s.

And many more channels for you to explore, playing obscure and popular tracks within the genre of the station.

## Link for media player

There are too many channels to list all of them, see the webpage for the other channels for more ways to listen to them.

- <http://ice.somafm.com/secretagent>
- <http://ice.somafm.com/defcon>
- <http://ice.somafm.com/u80s>

## Lainchan radio

Link: [lainon.life](http://lainon.life)

While lainchan is itself an anonymous image board, with all the controversy that entails, their radio project has given me many hours of enjoyment and i believe it should be treated seperately from the place it comes from. It has 4 channels.

- Cyberia, for electronic music in the style of the popular japanese anime series Serial Experiments Lain's Cyberia Club.
- Cafe, for touhou arrangements, relaxing soundtracks and mellow pop-rock songs. This is my favorite channel and the radio i listen to the most.
- Swing, for swing, jazz and blues music. Very soothing, energizing or both!
- Everything, a combination of all previous channels.

## Link for media player

- <https://lainon.life/radio/cyberia.ogg>
- <https://lainon.life/radio/cafe.ogg>
- <https://lainon.life/radio/swing.ogg>
- <https://lainon.life/radio/everything.ogg>

## KMFA 89.5

Link: [www.kmfa.org](http://www.kmfa.org)

This is an old-school radio station located in Austin, Texas, that happens to have an online streaming channel that fits within the constraints of this guide.

Their focus is classical music. Their offer ranges from Baroque, to the Modern period, including classical arrangements of contemporary pop songs. Chamber, Cantata, Concerto, Mass, Opera, and so on, you can find all of those here. This is the single best radio for all of you classical music fans.

## Link for media player

•<https://kmfa.streamguys1.com/KMFA-mp3>

## R/a/dio

Link: [r-a-d.io](https://r-a-d.io)

This radio station is also part of the community of an anonymous image board, but it can be safely ignored. They focus mostly on anime and game soundtracks, if that's your jam, you will probably like this. It's also possible to request songs, but i haven't used this feature, so i don't know if it works.

## Link for media player

•<https://relay0.r-a-d.io/main.mp3>

## Hackers.town radio

Link: [hackers.town](https://hackers.town)

Hackers.town is a fediverse instance that also happens to have an radio stream that i discovered by chance. Their music selection is very eclectic, so whatever label i might throw will probably be too narrow. I can't recommend it enough, very nice tunes there!

## Link for media player

•<https://radio.hackers.town:8000/>

## Wrapping up

These are only a handful of the hundreds, if not thousands, of online radios that you can find online, and they were subject to my own tastes and technical preferences. But surely there's a radio out there that's more suited to your own likes. If you feel like exploring this world, i would be thrilled to know your findings and get to know more radios. If you'd like to do so, please mail me to [tsui@sdf.org](mailto:tsui@sdf.org). Happy listening!

a respite  
a special treat

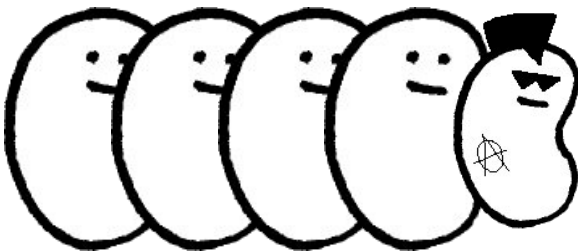


Figure 3: A Gremlin duck

---

format: poem

title: Durian

time: 8.57 PM, 3rd August 2023 A.D.

location: Esplanade Theatres, Singapore, South-east Asia

---

During a durable durian season  
Tourists carefully took a taste  
Oh! Wheezing and sneezing  
Some abstained

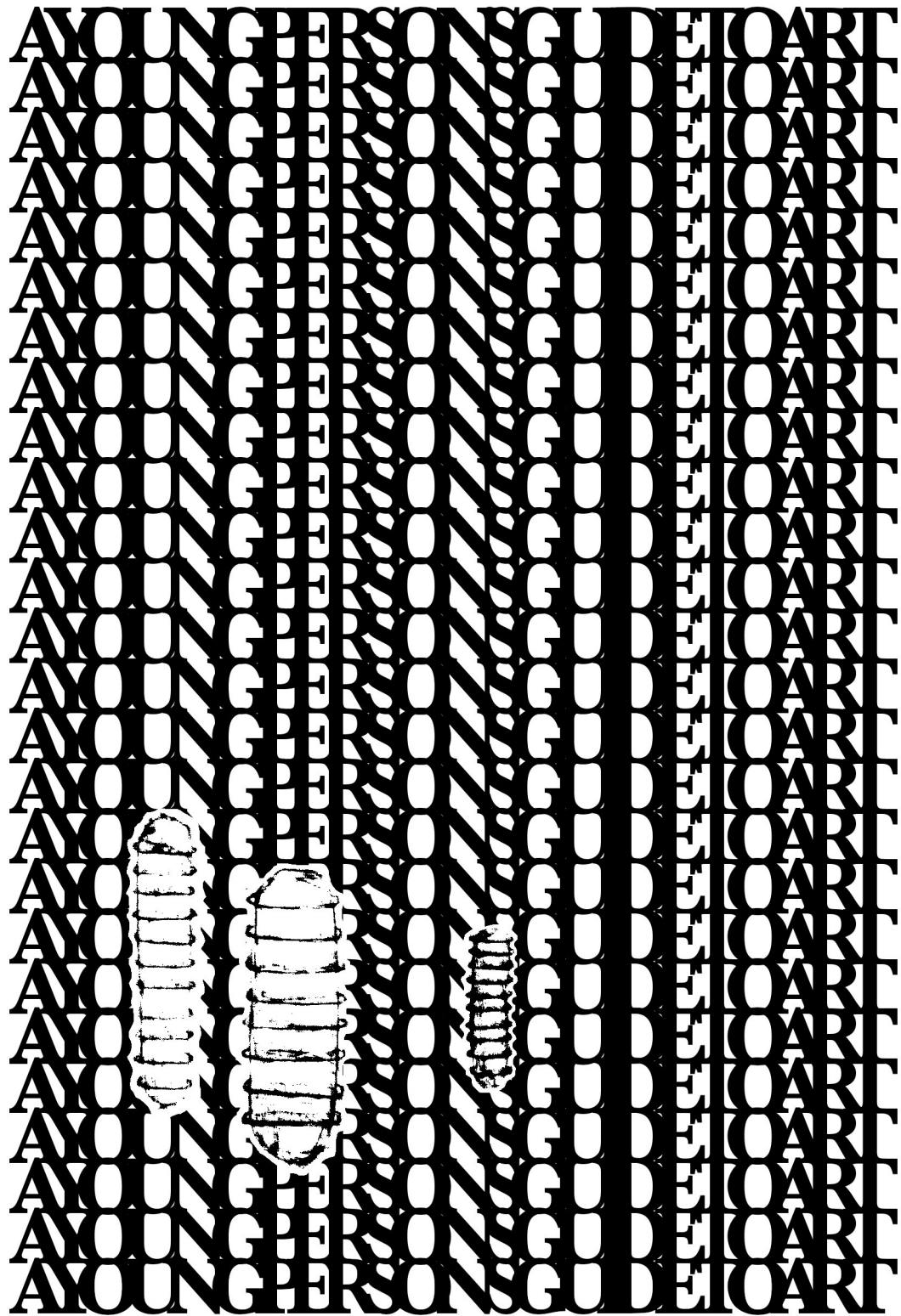
Durian, so divisive  
The pulp, so cohesive  
Its spikes, can't help but pierce  
Eat it thrice, does it induce tears?

Run away from the porcupine-husk  
It gets solitude, at last  
A protective shell repels;  
Invites lovers; disgusts all else

Durian, what is it?  
Must be some evil treat!  
Creamy flesh, pungent smell  
Don't complain about this hell

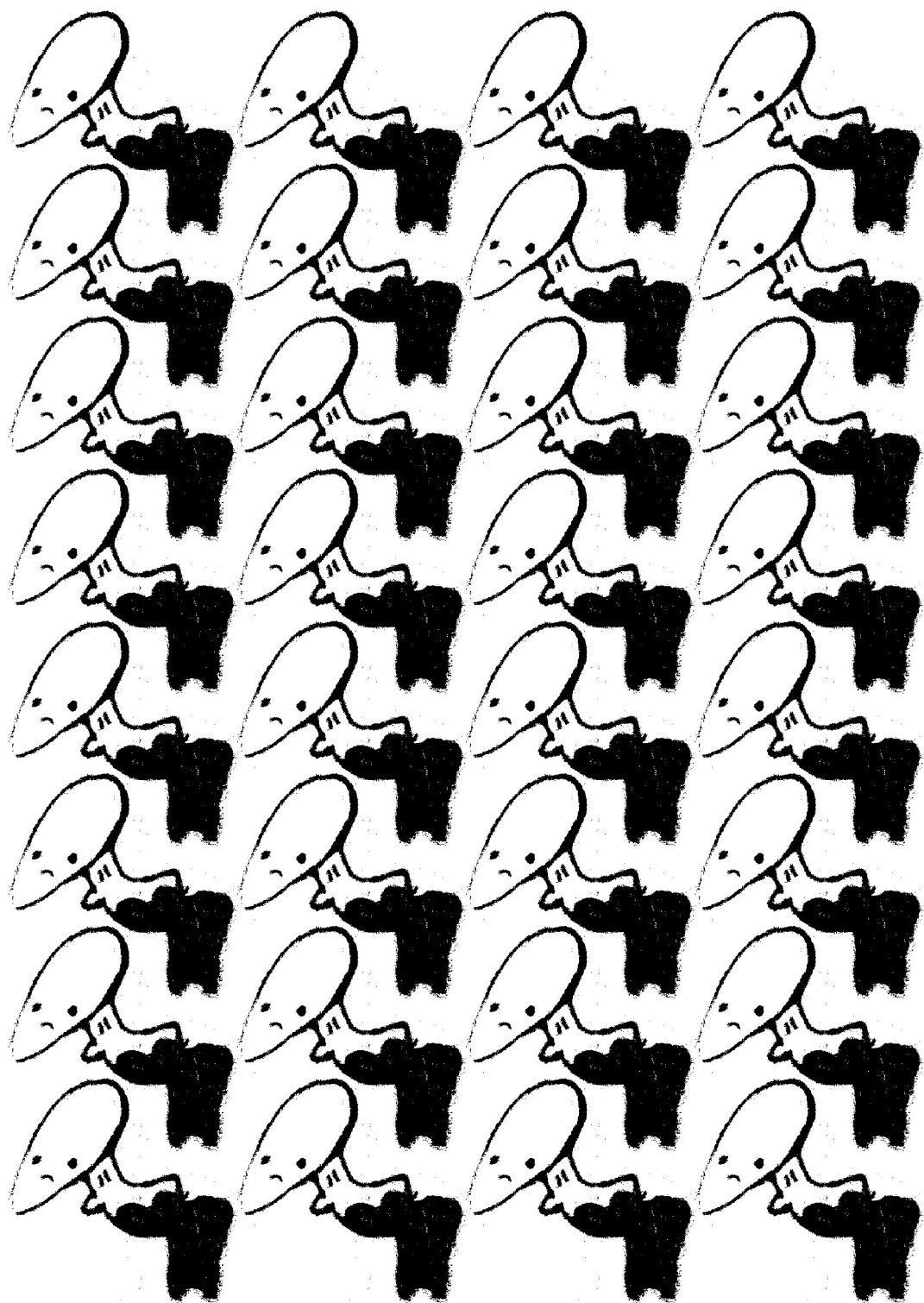
Nest of centipedes,  
lay in wait  
Come ye, brave hunters,  
'tis not too late!

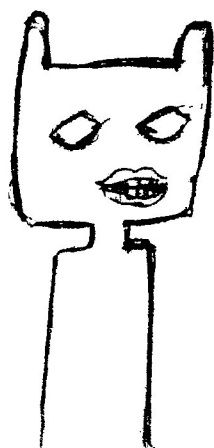
It's harvest season —  
Who wants some?  
Durian-lovers —  
I bid you come!











flub  
lub  
tub

# dolsan

mio

A photo study of the *Brassica juncea* (var. dolsan), or mustard greens.

The images were taken on a LG smartphone 8 MP camera with a clip-on macro lens and the OpenCamera application. Given the closure of the manufacturer's smartphone division and comparatively low resolution, the camera can be considered old by modern measure. The process takes advantage of unstable light and colour metering to obtain colour variation without editing.

A study is an exercise in seeing. A camera mediates the experience, at times embellishes it. Within illusions of light and shadow is a grain of truth, an observation that is not limited to sight alone. Such is the richness of the humble vegetable.















## MARKETMAN



to: ceo@kopplebox.co.zz  
from: codyrad11@yahoo.com  
subject: re: WANTED - General  
Manager for Wilkes Barre Branch

DEAR MARKET MAN,  
I AM MARKET FOR 9 DAYS.  
PLZ HIRE. HAVE CAR.  
HAVE RESUME, K?

UR PAL CODYRAD11

-----

to: codyrad11@yahoo.com  
from: ceo@kopplebox.co.zz  
subject: re:re: WANTED - General Manager  
for Wilkes Barre Branch

DEAR CODYRAD

THNX 4 CAR. WILL WANT TO HIRE IN OFFICE.  
DRIVE MUCH? I HAVE ENORMOUS HEADACHE.  
FIRST THING, REGISTER WITH KEVIN.  
THEN CALL MY JOB GUY.

- CEO

-----

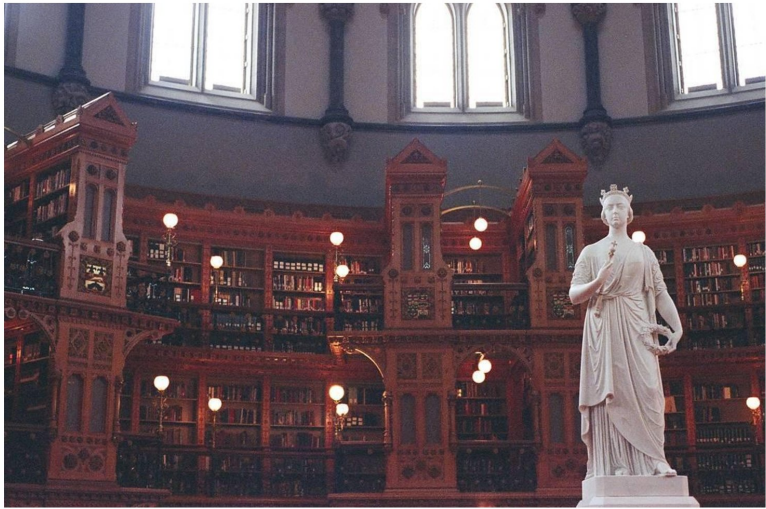


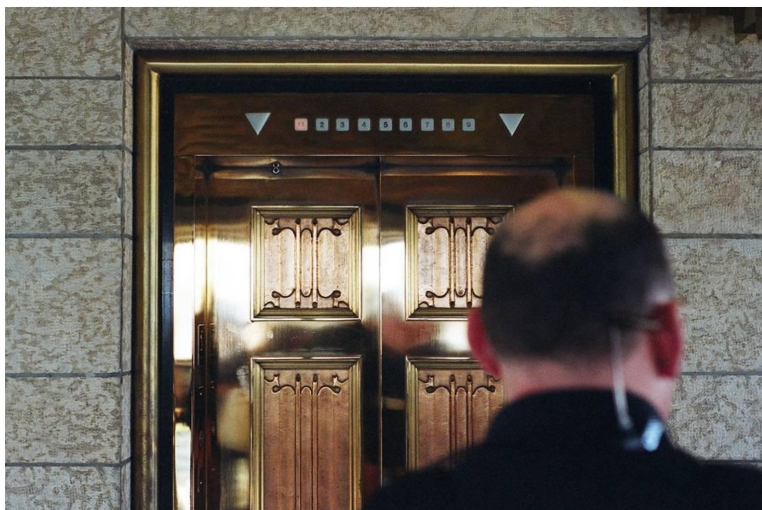
to: vmcurran@dnfsb.gov  
from: ceo@kopplebox.co.zz  
subject: re:re:fwd: WANTED - General Manager for Wilkes  
Barre Branch

NEED MOBILE. MANAGE BEFORE? PLZ CALL FRONT DESK.  
WE SHOULD HAVE TALK MANAGE MOBILE FOR TUESDAY, OR ANOTHER.  
MUST WORK FOR FREE, OR I SUE.

On 423/4234/23, vmcurran wrote:

>> Hey, this is vinny. I'd love to meet sometiem between  
now and next year to discuss our plans. your gonna love our  
sales rep. clean, Gorgeous, and barely used.





*Scenes from Parliament, 2017*  
Nikon FE 50mm f/1.4 on “probably expired film”



# sage

durrendal

Sage is a little shell script I wrote to make managing multiple ssh keys easier. It's pretty simple in nature, but honestly massively helpful if you happen to use password protected ssh keys with strong passwords, and have a nice cli based password manager like pass. I imagine that you could sub pass for the bitwarden cli, lastpass cli, or something similar, so long as it can return the credential needed to unlock you key.

Here's the script in all of it's glory, short sweet and to the point!

EDITOR'S NOTE: Where lines in the code snippet below would run off the edge of the page, I have wrapped the line, continuing it with a ->. When you see this at the beginning of a line, understand that there is not a literal line break; what you are seeing is a continuation of the previous line. -ed

```
#!/bin/sh
#ssh-agent management script, uses a profile hook to
#ensure the agent exists between sessions, and integrates #with
#pass to unlock ssh keys protected with passphrases.

#On Alpine Linux you'll need these packages installed
#apk add util-linux-misc openssh-client-commonprocps-ng pass sed

#To persist ssh-agent between terminals, add this to ~/.profile.
#Otherwise honestly, this won't work.
#export SSH_AUTH_SOCKET=~/.ssh/ssh-agent.$HOSTNAME.sock
#ssh-add -l 2>/dev/null >/dev/null
#if [ $? -ge 2 ]; then
#    ssh-agent -a "$SSH_AUTH_SOCKET" >/dev/null
#fi

keys=$@

if { [ -z $1 ]; }; then
    echo "Usage: sage [key]"
    exit 1
```

```

elif [ "$1" == "-l" ]; then
    printf "Active Keys:
$(ssh-add -l)

Protected Keys:
$(pass show ssh)
"
    exit 0
else
    #For each key passed
    for key in $keys; do
        #Check if it's password protected
        protected=$(ssh-keygen -y -P "" -f ~/.ssh/$key 2>&1
        ->> | grep -o "incorrect passphrase supplied")
        #If it is, "" will not be a valid password
        if ["$protected" == "incorrect passphrase supplied"]; then
            #Use script to pass in credentials from pass
            # to a subshell running ssh-add
            { sleep .3; pass ssh/$key; }
            ->> | script -q /dev/null -c
            ->> 'DISPLAY= ssh-add ~/.ssh/'$key''
        else
            #Otherwise we can just load the key
            ssh-add ~/.ssh/$key
        fi
    done
fi

```

Now the way this works is by combining our profile settings with the script. When we add this snippet to your `.profile` or `.bash_profile` it'll ensure that the `ssh-agent` is running whenever you open a terminal. If it's already running it just quietly continues.

```

export SSH_AUTH_SOCK=~/.ssh/ssh-agent.$HOSTNAME.sock
ssh-add -l 2>/dev/null >/dev/null
if [ $? -ge 2 ]; then
    ssh-agent -a "$SSH_AUTH_SOCK" >/dev/null
fi

```

The only reason that works is because we're exporting `SSH_AUTH_SOCK` to a specific static path, normally `ssh-agent` would just make a random temporary one in `/tmp`, but doing it this way ensures that the agent communicates the same way each time.

After that we just add our keys and the little {command; command;} piped argument catches the interaction from our password manager and brokers it to the ssh key credential prompt. Here let me show you, we'll add my primary key!

```
~|>> sage neuro
Enter passphrase for /home/durrendal/.ssh/id_ed25519:

Please enter the passphrase to unlock the OpenPGP secret key:
"Durrendal<...@...>"
4096-bit RSA key, ID .....,
created 2023-11-19 (main key ID .....).
Passphrase:
<OK> <Cancel>

Identity added: /home/durrendal/.ssh/id_ed25519
(durrendal@neuromancer)
```

Et voila! By virtue of unlocking my password manager I can import my ssh key into the agent. Now when my keys are at rest I don't have to worry, the passwords to use them can even be absolutely gnarly long random strings generated by pwmake, like this:

```
~|>> pwmake 256
oqkIkASPYms3b=ip%0GitISs4symJ@HJeKF0rJ@c93lYByM1Uk@jIG
```

It feels good to know that my keys are more secure while at rest, and I can utilize a modern authentication workflow to unlock them. Hopefully someone else finds this useful too!

# Perspective

durrendal

I've been thinking about art a lot lately, most of this year has been consumed in some way or another by it. I think it's because it stands so starkly in contrast with the mundane routine of my life. See, there's something magical that happens when I pick up a camera. I start to take in the world around me in a different way. I gauge the light and the color of every aspect. I see with fresh, almost child like wonder, buildings and streets I pass through daily. And the world comes into focus through the viewfinder in a way that is unique.

Sometimes the light alone paints a picture of breathtaking beauty, and all I need to do is stop, compose a shot and breathe in the world around me. Others I need to calculate, tinker with the aperture and shutter, iso and film emulations. And almost certainly, in every moment I exist as artist behind the lens I find myself inextorably attached to the scene. Is what I see, the way I capture it, what everyone around me takes in as well? I feel as though I am creating something with my perspective if nothing more. For every street I wander, who's lines and colors, shadows and vanishing points, seem oblique and mundane a thousand other people see it with fresh eyes by virtue of the simple act of creating that photo. And so many of those I hid away from view due to imperfections, afraid to show the stumbling jarring path that exists during the creative process. It is with that perspective that I bring this years submission to the town zine, a collection of photos shot on a Sony DSC-S85, all flawed in their own unique way, but beautiful in my own mind.

Art is, after all, a matter of perspective.

## Waiting

ISO: 100, fStop: f4, Shutter: 1/200 [waiting.png]

## Invader

ISO: 200,, fStop: f5.6, Shutter: 1/1000 [invader.png]

## Ramonas

ISO: 400, fStop: f8, Shutter: 1/400 [ramonas.png]

## Night Colors

ISO: 100, fStop: f2.3, Shutter: 1/3 [night\_colors.png]

## Sentinel

ISO: 320,, fStop: f2.3, Shutter: 1/30 [sentinel.png]

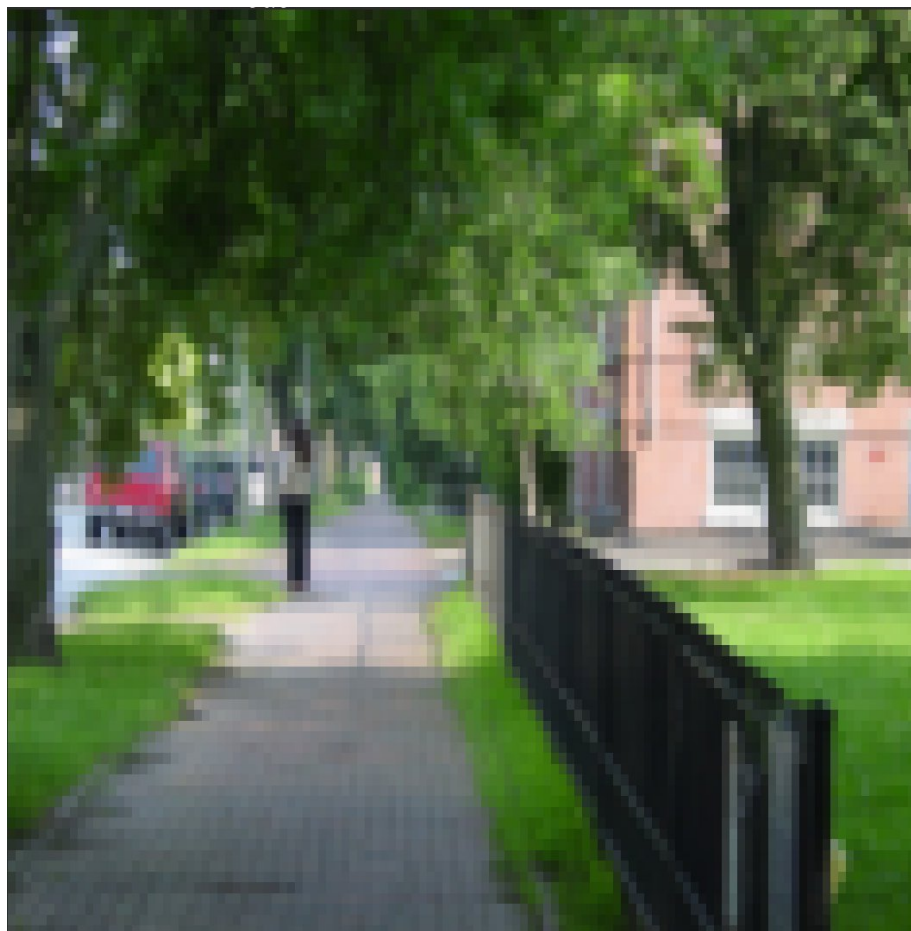
## About

Each one of these photos was run through viu, a terminal image viewer, and then screenshotted with scrot. All of these photos are in some way flawed; shot either over/under exposed, horribly out of focus, or compositionally bland when viewed in full resolution. By lowering the resolution to emphasize only color, line, and composition of the images they become interesting once again.

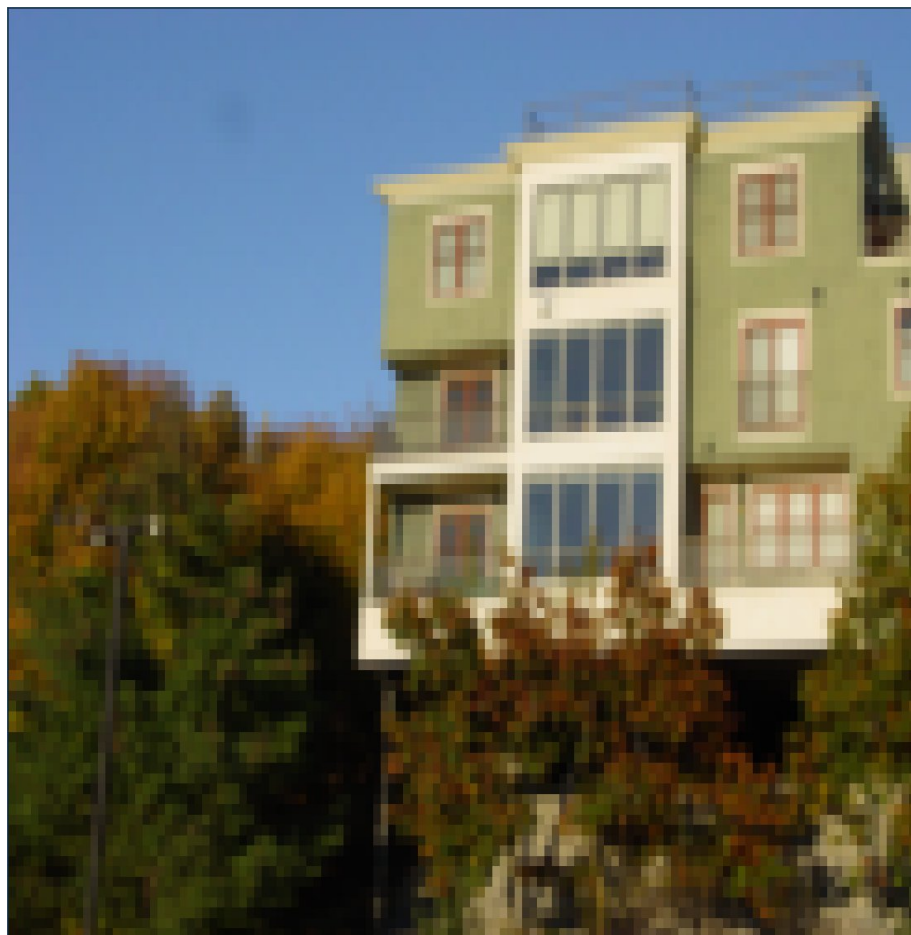
I struggle a lot, both as an artist and just in life in general, with constantly striving for perfection and feeling as though I fall short. All of these photos are a reminder that our perspective in life matters, and that there is beauty in the imperfect.

License: CC-BY-SA

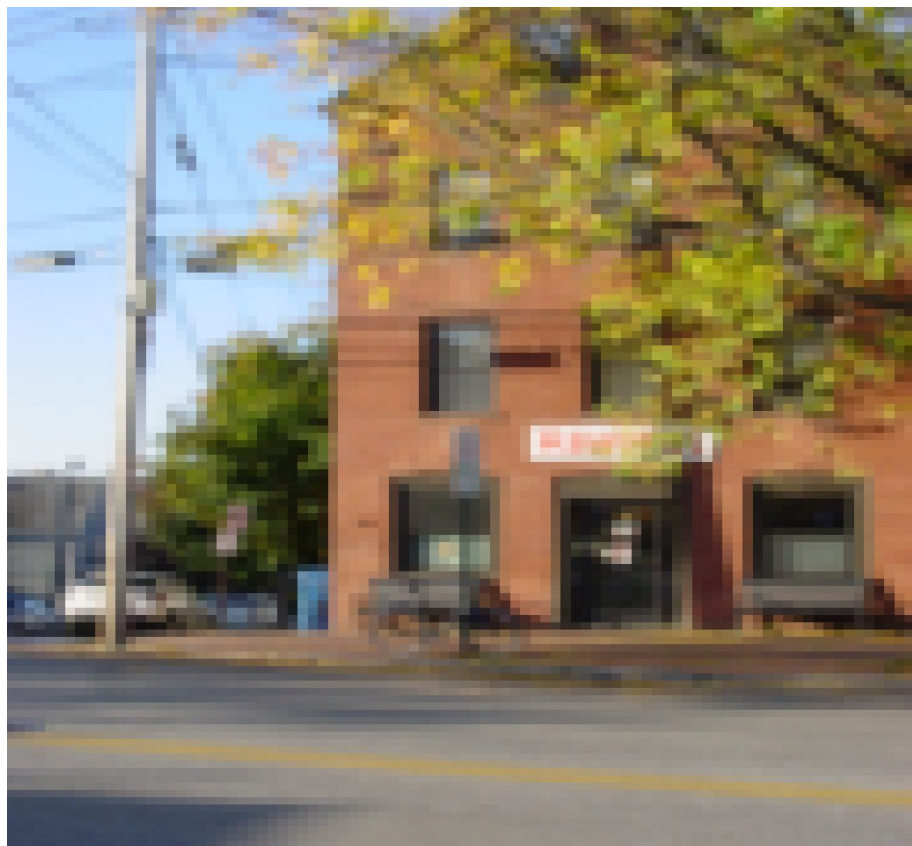




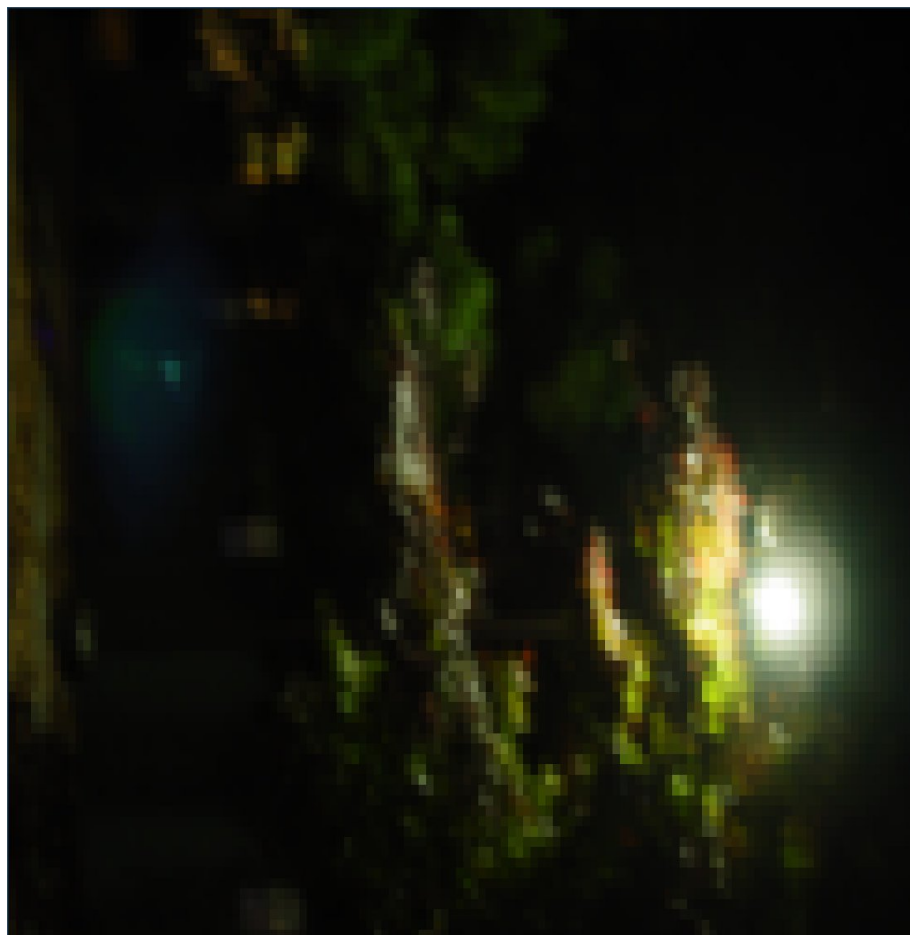
[waiting.png]



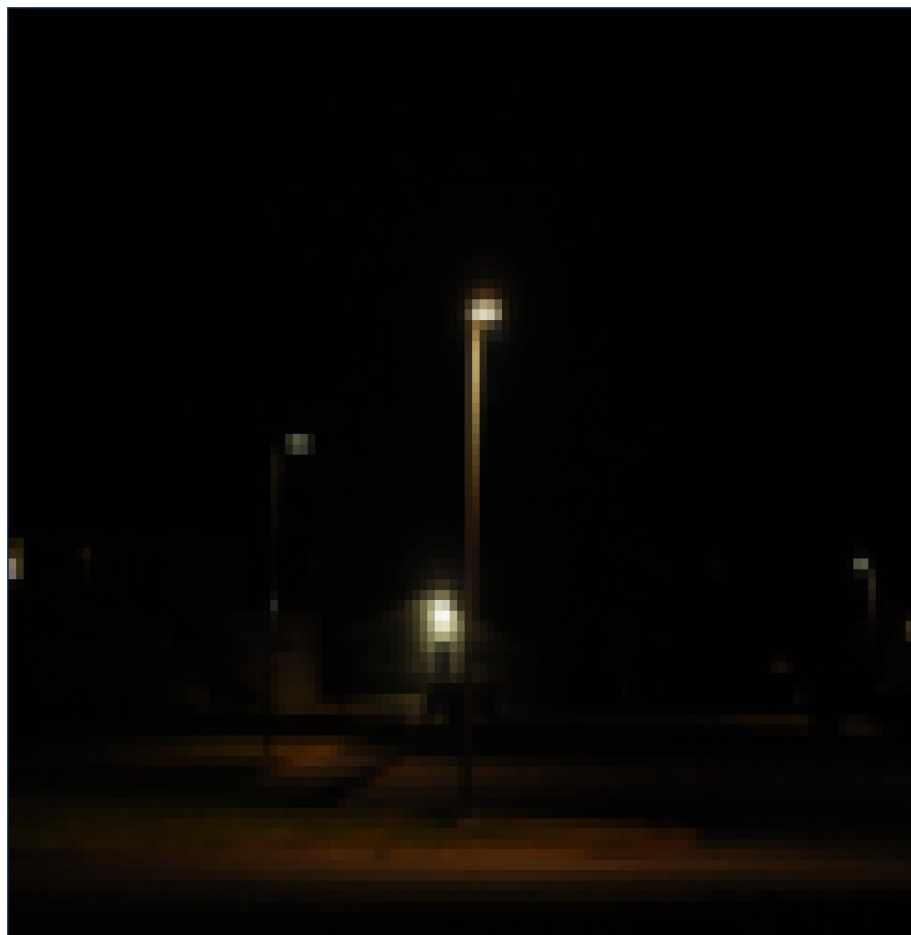
[invader.png]



[ramonas.png]

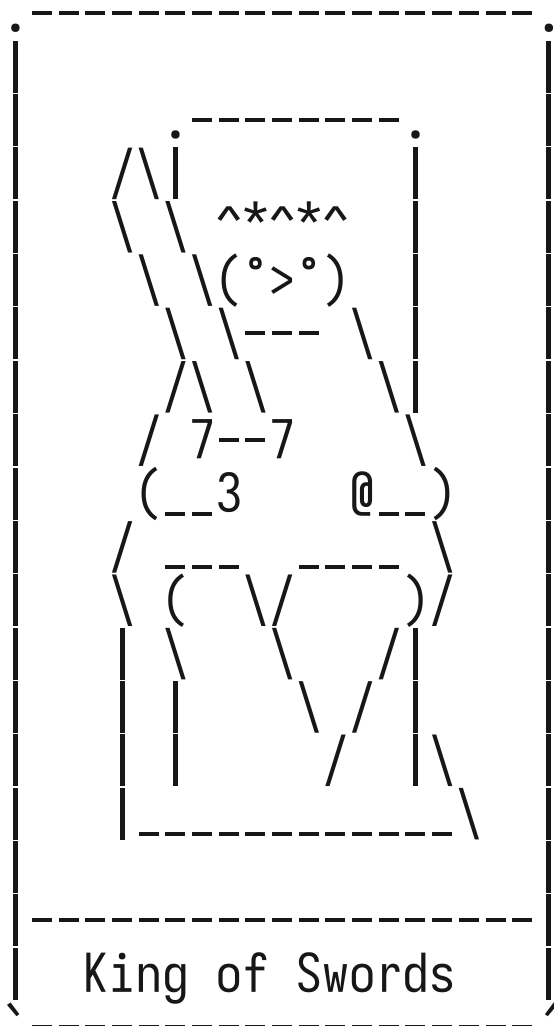


[night\_colors.png]



[sentinel.png]





Whatsoever arises out of the idea of judgment and all its connexions-power, command, authority, militant intelligence, law, offices of the crown, and so forth.

<https://github.com/lawreka/ascii-tarot>

# Practice Guide for COMPUTER

Before starting your daily practice routine, read and seriously consider the following:

## **A. DAILY AFFIRMATIONS**

1. How fortunate I am that in this life I am one who has been allowed to create beauty with COMPUTER.
2. It is my responsibility to create peace, beauty, and love with COMPUTER.

## **B. I WILL BE KIND TO MYSELF**

1. IT IS ONLY COMPUTER
2. No matter my level of development in COMPUTER, how good or bad I think I am, it is only COMPUTER and I am a beautiful person.
3. I will not compare myself with my colleagues. If they do COMPUTER beautifully, I will enjoy it and be thankful and proud that I live in fellowship with them.
4. There will always be someone with more abilities in COMPUTER than my own as there will be those with less.

## **C. REASONS TO DO COMPUTER**

1. To contribute to the world's spiritual growth.
2. To contribute to my own self-discovery and spiritual growth.
3. To pay homage to all the great practitioners of COMPUTER, past and present, who have added beauty to the world.

## **D. RID YOUR SELF OF THE FOLLOWING REASONS FOR BEING A PRACTITIONER OF COMPUTER**

1. To create self-esteem
2. To be hip
3. To manipulate
4. To get rich or famous

For more information on the origins of this piece, visit  
<https://git.tilde.town/dozens/practice>



# CORNQUEST!

or, a revelation

*dozens*





## 0

You wake up in the comfort of your own bed, in your own room. You open your eyes to see the golden sunlight come streaming in through your window. Golden like ears of corn. You suddenly remember what day it is. It is the day of the Harvest Festival! You throw back your favorite corn print bed covers and leap out of bed. You've been looking forward to this day all year, and you already know exactly what you're going to wear. If you wear a pretty corn dress, goto 38. If you wear rugged corn bib overalls, goto to 61.

## 1

You start to sneak sneakily around the web, and do so successfully, the spider none the wiser to your passage through its lair. Good job! You trek deeper and deeper into the forest, losing track of the path behind you. Eventually you come across a small clearing, in the middle of which is a small cottage on tall wooden legs. Goto 31.

## 2

You sneak up behind a couple of the old aunties and drop some eaves on them. You are super stealthy! They are whisper arguing about whether the Corn Mother has abandoned us, and whether that means the cornbeast will leave. Leave! It can't leave! Without the cornbeast, there will be nobody to protect the fields! We'll be totally defenseless! Goto 27.

## 3

You get out your trusty corn knife and start slashing at the web with reckless abandon! The giant spider swoops down and puts a quick stop to such unsanctioned buffoonery. You are paralyzed and cocooned and don't even feel it when the spider's venom jellifies your insides. THE END.

## 4

You step off the worn path and push your way through dense growth. Twigs and brambles snatch at your ankles and elbows and brush none too gently against your cheeks. One such brush of the cheek is especially sticky and grabby. You swat at your cheek and your hand comes away sticky. You look up and find that you have nearly walked right smack dab into an enormous messy spider web. It spans tree trunk to tree trunk, connecting half a dozen large trees in a sloppy woven tapestry. Up above you, a large black and yellow spider appears to be dozing. Back to the path! Goto 68. Cautiously walk around the web, goto 1. Get out your corn butter knife and start hacking and slashing! Goto 3.

## 5

You jump up and wave your arms over head and yell at the giant. It stops playing its double flute and turns its keen eyesight in your direction, spotting you instantly. It walks across the backs of its flock of clouds, and in just a couple strides is close



enough to pluck you from your cloud. You grow dizzy as it lifts you up to roughly shoulder height. It speaks softly but its voice still booms, "What are you doing here, small folk?" Be direct and ask about the Corn Mother's talisman: goto 30. Be a little sneaky and try to soften the giant up first: goto 37.

## 6

When you look around, when you search your mind and your feelings, you know the giant's story to be true. The crop dictates almost every facet of your life: where to live, when to plant, when to harvest. Working the earth is back breaking work. It drives a wedge between you and the crows and the other creatures that threaten the crop. It tethers you in place, for the crops must be tended to. Destroy the talisman: goto 50. Return the talisman to the village: goto 51.

## 7

You have a fantastic time playing tag. Three Fingered Gerald plays a little too rough, tagging the other kids too hard and knocking them over. But you are too fast for Three Fingered Gerald. They never catch you. You all have a great time, and then you decide to scurry along. Goto 12.

## 8

You grab the steel and crawl out of the pouch. You greedily eye the shears. Cloud shepherds alone are able to speak the language of clouds, and possess the ability to

shear them and harvest their cloudstuff, and to shape and harden the cloudstuff into a material harder than stone. There are stories that the giants of old used to live in great floating castles. You wonder whether you could collect cloudstuff if you had the giant's shears.. Yes, grab them: goto 64. Let's not be too greedy now: 60.

## 9

You tuck yourself into a crevice in the rocks to get out of the blistering wind, and wrap your arms around yourself for warmth, and wait. Where there's a flock of clouds, there's guaranteed to be a cloud shepherd nearby. Eventually. Against all odds, you start to doze off. Goto 46.

## 10

You scoop the little fella up! You laugh with delight as it flips and jumps and rolls around in your hand like a little jumping bean! It finally settles down, stands up, and points to a spot at the treeline, commanding you forward like George Washington crossing the Delaware. You shrug and start walking that direction, and the whelp impatiently hops down to lead you forward. Goto 47.

## 11

The cloud is moving faster than it looked like, and your arm tugs painfully in its socket as you refuse to let go and are dragged across the peak and then into the air. The trees of the forest far below look like a miniature painting as you haul

yourself up and grab another handful of cloudstuff. Hand over hand, you clamber scramble up onto the top of the cloud. You roll onto your back and try to catch your breath. Eventually, with nothing else to do, and quite comfortable nestled in the cloudstuff, you drift off to sleep. Goto 41.

## 12

You run through the streets of Eerievale toward the plaza. Every year during the harvest, the village sets aside a portion of the harvest for the Corn Mother. And on the night of Harvest Festival Eve, the Corn Mother comes and takes the offering, and in the morning everybody wakes up and there are lots of presents and feasting and dancing! It's the best! Goto 34.

## 13

You eventually find your way back to Eerievale, to the woods, and to the Corn Mother's hut. You return the talisman to her, and she is powers are restored. She summons the Corn Beast who fights off the dire crows, and peace is restored. The corn festival continues every year as it always for the rest of your days, and for your children and your children's children. In fact, one of your grandchildren is about to awaken right now on the morning of the corn festival. They are terribly excited. Goto 0.

## 14

No. You should never play Lava Monster. Go back to 16.

## 15

You decide to try to get closer to the clouds. You climb the bald rocky spire, occasionally slipping and backsliding, but making progress overall, and eventually you make it to the top of the spire at the top of Mount Char. The living clouds are now so close that you can almost reach out and grab them. In fact, one drifts close by and you're able to reach out and grab a fistful of cloudstuff. Goto 11.

## 16

You join in the games. A bunch of your friends are here: Three Fingered Gerald, Eccentric Kevin, Dale. Even Standard Ed has come out to play! It's the Harvest Festival after all! The best day of the year! If you choose to play tag, goto 7. If you play hide-and-seek, goto 32. If you play Lava Monster, goto 14.

## 17

The giant tells you of an ancient war between the small folk (you) and the corn mother. In this story, it calls her the Maize Witch. And in this story, she won and enslaved the small folk, forcing them give up their nomadic, hunter-gatherer ways and instead live in villages, where they are cursed to ever work the earth and grow corn. The Maize Witch was able to work her magic such that the small folk forgot the war, and were unable to concieve of themselves as enslaved by agriculture. Indeed, they imagine themselves masters of the earth. The giant tells you that you now

know the truth: that the corn mother is your protector in the same way that a jailer protects their prisoner. It gives you the talisman and offers to return you to the ground. Return the talisman to the corn mother: goto 13. Accept the giant's story as truth: goto 6.

## 18

"Insolent little whelp." The Corn Mother turns you into fertilizer for her crops. THE END.

## 19

You leave the plaza and run down Corn Street through the Golden Gate out into the fields. Almost all of the corn has been harvested already so you have clear sight all the way to the forest edge. Unbelieving, you spin around in circles three times just to be sure it's true: the cornbeast is gone. You sink to the ground in despair. Goto 44.

## 20

The dire crow caws loudly and beats its wings and lunges at you, its razor sharp beak as long as you are tall. You run away! Goto 56.

## 21

You grab your lucky lapel pin from under your pillow. It is small and pointy, in the shape of a corn cob. There are even little ridges and grooves all over the pin so that it feels like it has corn kernels! Very lucky indeed. You pin it by your collar. There, now you're ready for anything. ...Just

to be sure you also slip your lucky corn-shaped rock into your pocket. Okay now you're ready! You run to the kitchen. (You never go anywhere at anything less than a full run.) Breakfast is corn grits and cornbread. You eat quickly. It's the Harvest Festival after all! The best day of the year! You run outside and down the street, away from your house at 144 Cobb Lane. There are a bunch of kids playing games out in the corn fields. They call your name, and you're tempted to join them. But you also want to go see the goings on down at the corn altar! The altar can wait, time to play: goto 16. Games are for stupid babies! Time to visit the altar! Goto 12.

## 22

You acquiesce to the crow's demands, and pluck your lucky corn pin from your collar. You hold it up so that the light glints off it, and the crow scrutinizes the shiny. It nods. You hold it out, and the dire crow gently takes the pin from your hand. Phew! It lays down and extends a wing and you climb up onto its back. Soon you are flying through the air toward Mount Char. Goto 54.

## 23

The dire crow stares at you with its black alien eye and then clucks, scratches in the soil, and crooks one wing: it saw a flock of clouds grazing at the top of Mount Char, and will take you there. For a price. To offer the crow your favorite, lucky corn pin, goto 22. To refuse, goto 33.

**24**

You tell the whelp to get lost. Shoo! Skedaddle, you rotten little crabapple! You gently nudge the corn whelp away with your foot, and it topples over. It jumps up and pulls out a long thorn and stabs you in the foot. Ouch! You little rascal! You bend down to scoop the whelp up and give it what for, but it skitters away and scampers off toward the treeline. Follow that whelp! Your honor demands it! Goto 47.

**25**

You decide to not push your luck by going bushwhacking in the undergrowth. Good thing, orienteering was never your strongest activity in Corn Scouts. Eventually you catch a whiff of fresh baked bread on the breeze. You follow the scent to a small clearing. The smell is coming from the chimney of a small hut stood up on wooden legs. Goto 31.

**26**

You notice some movement inside one of the eggs through its thin translucent shell. You lean in to take a closer look. The shell cracks and a hatchling dire crow bursts out and flies through the air right toward your face! It collides into you and you both fall over. It sits on your chest chirping pitifully and flapping its tiny wings. Try to sooth and placate it before it wakes anybody up: goto 28. There's no time! Grab the bird and run! Goto 43.

**27**

You scream and panic and run around in circles until you trip and fall down. You have dirtied up your clothes and skinned you knee. One of the old aunties nearby clucks at you disapprovingly. You pick yourself up and dust yourself off, patting yourself down. You straighten up your lucky lapel pin. You squeeze it tight between your fingers and squeeze your eyes shut. Okay this is not the time to panic after all. This is the time for decisive action. If you decide to go look for the cornbeast goto 19. If you go home and hide under your bed goto 62.

**28**

Shhhhhh. SHHHHHH. Shhh. You coddle and comfort the dire crow hatchling which, although merely a couple of minutes old, is already almost as big as you are. You stroke its feathers and pat its beak and it slowly calms down and stops making a fuss. It looks at you and cocks its head and coos softly. Looks like you made a friend! Let's get out of here. Goto 36.

**30**

You tell the giant about your village and the corn mother and the dire crow, and you ask if it knows where the talisman is. "Yes, I have your necklace," the shepherd says. "I bought it from a crow for a small amount of wool. Would you now buy it back from me? I will sell it you. The price is that you shall know the truth. Do you accept?" Accept the trade offer: goto 17.

Refuse: goto 66.

### 31

You approach the hut. It smells of fresh baked bread, and your stomach rumbles. You knock on the door. A weak, reedy voice inside beckons you inside. You cross the threshold and see an old woman, as tall as three humans, and as thin as a blade of grass. She bends over almost double but still takes up nearly all the space inside the hut. Her fine golden hair falls in curtains, covering most of her face. Though you've never seen her before, you know this is her: the Corn Mother. She stares at you intensely, her thin lips pressed together in a straight line. If you cry out, "What the hell Corn Mother! Why did you abandon us!" goto 18. You drop to your knee and kneel in respect. "Corn Mother! How can I serve you?" Goto 65.

### 32

You play hide and seek. You are so good at hiding that the other kids never find you. You eventually get tired and fall asleep, but not for too long: your snoring wakes you up. You decide to leave and seek out other Harvest Festival festivities. Goto 12.

### 33

"No way, Jose!" You shout at the crow. It shrugs flies away. Probably to go destroy Eerievale, your home, and all your friends. You retreat back to the treeline and watch the giant groundhogs scurry to and fro betwixt the many mounds. Goto 56.

### 34

Eerievale's five major roads all converge at the village plaza: High, Broad, Church, Corn, and Wine Streets. You come tearing up Broad Street at a full sprint. The closer you get to the plaza, the more you get the feeling something is wrong. The decorations are all up but nobody is singing or hollering or laughing or doing the Corn Chant. Or talking, really. You arrive at the Corn Altar, and then gasp out loud and skid to a stop before it. The offering, the pile of ears of corn, is still lying on the altar where it was placed last night! People are milling about, whispering and casting quick, fearful glances at the spurned corn. Go checkout the corn at the altar: Goto 40. Listen in on some of the adults: Goto 2.

### 35

You wisely decide not to mess around with the dire crow eggs. You back out of the hatchery and descend deeper into the dire crow warrens. Up ahead you hear one of the giant groundhogs snuffling about, and you dart down a narrow branching tunnel to avoid it. Good news: you avoided the groundhog sentry. Bad news: you retreated directly into the chambers of a very irate dire crow. It pecks you to pieces. THE END.

### 36

You backtrack as quickly and as quietly as is possible while carrying / dragging a baby dire crow. Soon you are back at the entrance to the warrens. You abscond into

the night and back to the relative safety of the treeline. Well that was a bust! You snuck into the warrens to find the corn talisman, but all you got was this dumb giant baby bird! Goto 45.

**37**

You tell the giant you were out cloud gazing! And then you heard its beautiful music! And you were so captivated you just had to know who could produce such melodies! The shepherd narrows its eyes at you. "I don't believe you. Are you telling me the truth?" Double down on your story: goto 63. Admit the truth: goto 30.

**38**

You slip on a lovely corn pattern dress. Yes, you look awesome. It twirls when you spin around. And it has pockets! Which reminds you... Goto 21.

**39**

The giant herds the clouds for hours upon hours without ever noticing you. Eventually it stops and makes bedding out of a bunch of clouds. It eats a crust of bread and some cheese, and then plays softly on its double flute until it falls asleep. This is your chance to go see if it has the talisman: goto 42. You're not keen on trying to steal from the giant, but you are hungry enough to go see if there are any bread or cheese crumbs: goto 52.

**40**

omg it's just lying there! Why has the Corn Mother forsaken us? What does it mean? What will we do? To go into a panic goto 27. To remain calm goto 58.

**41**

Later, just as the sun is setting, you hear a mournful sound: carried by the wind, the droning melody of a low, sorrowful double flute. You sit up and look around in time to see the clouds, stirred by the music, start to flock toward its source. In the distance you can see it: a mountainous shepherd astride a large cloud, as tall as twelve men, its flute the size of a small tree. Its shears hang at its side and glint in the moonlight. If you try to get the giant's attention goto 5. If you attempt to hide from the giant goto 57.

**42**

You sneak up close to the giant. It wears a large pouch on its belt next to its shears. You lift the flap and peer inside. It's full of bread and cheese and flint and steel and a tinderbox. And a necklace of strung glass beads resembling popcorn. The Corn Mother's talisman! You crawl all the way inside the pouch to fetch it. Might as well nick a few more things while you're here: goto 8. You got what you came for, let's get out of here: goto 60.

**43**

Argh, there's no time for this unsanctioned tomfoolery! You snap the bird's beak shut



with one hand, and awkwardly scoop it up with both arms (although just freshly hatched, it is already almost as big as you are!) and drag it out of the hatchery. Goto 36.

**44**

You feel something brush against your ankle. You look down to see a corn whelp. A kernel sprite. A sort of golem made of dried kernels and corn husk tied together with golden cornsilk. There's only one cornbeast as far as anyone knows. But there are dozens of these little fellas. This one is pawing and scratching at you. Goto 10 to pick the little guy up. To tell the whelp to scram goto 24.

**45**

You spend a couple of days moping around the woods next to the warrens. Because of its dire crow physiology, the hatchling doubles in size and grows its adult feathers, and is soon attempting short flights on its own. You spend the nights curled up on a bit of cloudstuff fluff that came with the no-longer-quite-so-small hatchling. On the twelfth day, Baby (What? It needed a name!) returns from a longer solo flight and seems to abruptly make up its mind about something. It grabs the cloud fluff in its beak, and stoops down and extends a wing, inviting you onto its back. You shrug and climb aboard. And then you are flying through the air high above the ground! The warrens and the misty lake fall away and quite some time later, you are flying towards a

mountain peak that juts up out of the ground like a pole. A thick rolling knot of thick clouds gather around its peak. Goto 54.

**46**

The rumble of thunder jolts you from sleep, whatever dreams you were having scattering. You peer from your crevice and see two living clouds fighting. Both dark and heavy with rain, rumbling deeply. They crash into each other, merge into one, and separate again. Their bellies flash with lightning as they posture aggressively at each other. A couple of other clouds drift by watching, including a small fluffly white cloud that floats nearby. You think it might be within your grasp. You reach out to grab it and... goto 11.

**47**

The treeline is thick and overgrown. Usually there's hardly any way into the woods unless you can find a small game trail. Except now there is a rather large, perfectly round circular opening cut through the trees, bushes, grass, and vines. A perfectly round portal into the forbidden forest. Goto 62 to nope away back home. To venture through the weird round hole into the forest, goto 68.

**48**

The Corn Mother draws you toward a looking glass hanging in the corner. She describes for you how to get to the crows warren, tracing the path with one long

talon of a finger. As she speaks, you can almost see the hazy path she describes for you. The mountains, the bog, the tall spruce. Her words become a hum as the vision fills your head. You pitch forward as the looking glass widens into a glassy lake and you fall in. Goto 53.

#### 49

The dire crow pins you down with one black shiny eye as you delicately broach the subject of the Corn Mother's talisman. It blinks. And it bobs its head. Yes, it knows of the talisman you seek. You know very little Crow. It is a very complex language with verbal and somatic components consisting of caws, clicks, chirps, and whirring; and also hops and bobs and flapping of wings. Finally there is a rudimentary written component of the language that the crow scratches out on the ground. After several false starts and more than a couple embarrassing misunderstandings, you finally understand that the crow traded the talisman to one of the cloud shepherds for a large bundle of soft cloudstuff for its hatchery. To return to the Corn Mother in defeat, goto 18. Ask the dire crow how to find the cloud shepherd: goto 23.

#### 50

You destroy the talisman, and the power the Corn Mother has over you and your village. The dire crows do arrive and lay waste to the fields. But then they leave. You teach and preach the truth. Some of the villagers return to the forests to hunt

and gather. Others remain behind and tend the earth, but without the rule of any monocrop. The earth heals and its bounty is varied and plentiful. THE END.

#### 51

You can no longer take part in this life yourself. You will be a slave no more. But you cannot free those who will not allow themselves to be free. You return the talisman to the village and give them the choice. In the meantime you teach and preach, and gather a following. And you part ways, leaving the village, never to return. THE END.

#### 52

You sneak up close to the shepherd and search the clouds for any crumbs. You find a few hunks of bread and cheese the size of your fist and are able to eat until you're full. Then you sneak back to your cloud and burrow down deep inside and wait until the giant wakes up... goto 39.

#### 53

You kick, and the frigid air burns your lungs when you break the surface of the misty lake. It's hard to see through the fog, but you swim toward what you think is the closest bank and crawl up onto the muddy grass. After you catch your breath, you look around and recognize where you are from the Corn Mother's directions. The sun is a pale white disc, barely able to penetrate the heavy clouds. You walk away from the lake towards the crow warrens.

Goto 59.

## 54

As you get closer you can see a flock of living clouds grazing around the mountain peak. They look like they've been sheared relatively recently, and look rather docile at the moment. So it's not likely that there will be any storms any time soon. The dire crow lands on the peak and you dismount. It bobs its head at you twice and then leaves you. The wind is screaming up here. It is barren and cold, and there's no corn ANYWHERE. The clouds roll around lazily in the air currents. Try to get closer to the clouds: goto 15. Wait and see if the cloud shepherd shows up: goto 9.

## 55

You wait and watch as the giant rodents scurry around, digging and laboring. After a while of observation, you notice a pattern in the rotation of the rodents, and are confident that you can approach now without being seen. Goto 56.

## 56

You wait and approach the warrens under the cover of darkness. You hear nary a peep from giant rodent nor dire crow as you sneak up to the looming entrance to one of the warrens. You check to make sure the coast is clear and then duck inside. The entrance is hard earth, packed by countless groundhog and dire crow crossings. It slopes downward deeper into the warrens. You eventually creep into a large

room insulated with cloud stuff. There are dire crow eggs all over the floor. There is nobody around. To check out the eggs, goto 26. Better leave those eggs alone! Goto 35.

## 57

That thing is the size of a small mountain! What were you thinking trying? You make yourself small and sink into the soft fluffy cloudstuff and hide from the shepherd's gaze. Goto 39.

## 58

Okay you got this. Take a couple of deep breaths. There you go. This doesn't necessarily mean that the Corn Mother has turned her back on Eerievale. She probably hasn't withdrawn her protection from you, leaving you open to attack from the dire crows, right? Right? RIGHT?? Goto 27.

## 59

Enormous mounds jut out of the earth like a wave of goosebumps: entrances to the warrens below, dug out by the giant rodents that the crows keep as pets. To attempt a direct approach, go to 67. To wait and observe, and attempt an indirect approach, go to 55.

## 60

You feel as though you have indulged your greediness enough. You have the talisman and a valuable length of steel. You retreat to your cloud and gentle coax it away from

the herd. You can't get it to land on the ground, but you are able to steer it close enough to a tree canopy that you are able to climb off of it. The cloud lazily floats away to rejoin the others as you climb down to the tree to the ground. Goto 13.

**61**

You pull on your overalls. They have a really nice looking corn pattern on them, and the bib pocket in the front is perfect for holding all kinds of things. Speaking of which... Goto 21.

**62**

You run back home and hide under your bed. Eventually you hear throaty, gurgling caws and the thundering beating of wings as the dire crows descend on the town. Without the cornbeast to scare them away, they rip most of the village to pieces. THE END

**63**

The giant frowns at you. "You vex me, small folk." It flings you off the cloud. You have a little over a minute of freefall to regret your tactics before being dashed to pieces on the ground below. THE END.

**64**

You start to untie the shears from the shepherd's belt when the giant stirs and claps a giant hand down over you. It pinches you between two fingers and lifts you to its face, and it peers angrily at you. Goto 63.

**65**

"The crows stole my talisman. A necklace of strung glass beads. I am powerless without it. And with it, they hold power over me. You must fetch it for me if I am to protect you and your village once again." Agree to help the Corn Mother: goto 48. Tough luck! Sucks to suck! Goto 18.

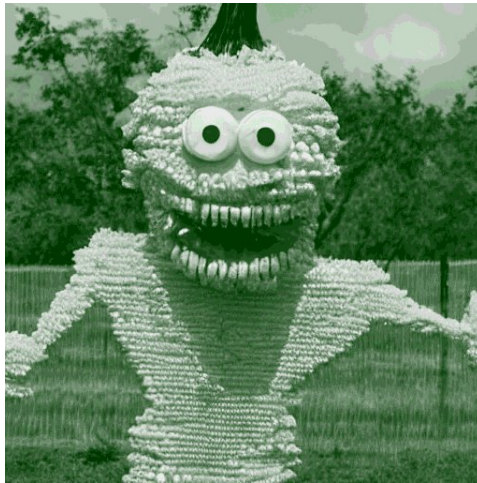
**66**

The giant shrugs and sets you down. "If you refuse the pay the price, then there is no deal to be made, small folk." It remains indifferent to you until it is time to set out again. Goto 39.

**67**

You march directly up to the warrens like you want to speak to the manager. A giant groundhog sentry stands up and yahoos, sending an alarm throughout the warrens that is picked up and echoed by more of the enormous rodents. Your approach has been noticed and announced! At the sound of the commotion, a dire crow crawls out of the earthen tunnels. It flaps its wings, shaking itself clean of the dust. It raises its beak toward the sky and its throat feathers bristle as it caws so loudly you can feel it reverberate in your chest bones. It flaps its wings and hops toward you, as tall as six men, and fixes you with one terrible inky black eye. Inquire delicately about the talisman: go to 49. Demand the crow return the talisman: go to 20.

You step into the forest. Gulp! You don't know anybody who has ever been in the forest. Nobody from Eerievale has ever been any farther than the corn fields as far as you know. You step carefully as the whelp dances around your feet, lunging and thrusting with its thorn, threatening to trip you up. You try not to worry too much about the ominous shapes and sounds coming from the pooling shadows to either side of the trail. To stay on the path, goto 25. To step off the path and explore, goto 4.



CORNQUEST is a choose your own adventure story written with recuttils, groff, and graphviz. The source can be found at <https://git.tilde.town/dozens/cornquest>



# NEW FREE CULTURE LICENSES

by Case Duckworth

Free culture licensing is its own special bugbear. While pioneers like the GPL, ISC, and WTFPL have served their purpose, with the advent of source-available but non-libre licenses and ensnaring of public works by corporate interests, it's time we take a new tack.

To that end, I propose a license from what I call the "Poison Pill" class. These are licenses that are so nonsensical that any entity with an actual legal department won't use them out of terror; however, normal, every day people have no such strict adherence to legalese and can enjoy them as the art they are in themselves. In this submission, I've included four such licenses.

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works unusable by corporate interests!

# Julia Odenweg

## Combat Medic in the Penitents of Rausch squad, 386th Regiment



Sometimes, things get wrong. For the Penitents, this happen more often than not. In such occasions, Julia intervenes. She moves fast to assess the victim's health. If they can be patched up, Julia will do what she can. Not because she cares about any life, but because all of them are assets to be used in the great fight. Victory is all that matters. Field dressings limit her ability to heal people though. If she's got no hope of getting the unfortunate back to a combat ready status, she will promptly end their suffering.

# TSS-002 - Circuit Rock



The Circuit Rock is a B66 TSS-class SYNTHETIC PICTURE. Circuit Rocks are commonly found in the Patterned Desert. They are the remnants of organisms long gone. Once the ferric chloride sea covered this area, and printed circuits thrived. Due to the geological activity, the sea receded, leaving only their harder structures. However, some say that if even a few bits were recovered, one could recreate these ancient electro-microbial mats.



# Colophon

This has been tilde.town zine #7. I hope you enjoyed your stay.

Layout was done in Scribus.

The title and body text is American Typewriter. Monospace font is Iosevka Fixed. Pieces that were submitted as images or PDFs use whatever fonts are embedded in the images.

Pieces submitted as markdown were formatted by the default Scribus markdown importer.

The table of contents is a groff table (``tbl``) populated by rec file. These are the lengths to which one is driven, so terrible are Scribus's own native tables.

The graph from the Foreword is made with groff using the ``grap`` preprocessor:

```
issues.g
.G1
frame invis ht 3 wid 4 left solid bot solid
label bot "Issue"
coord y 0, 80
grid left from 0 to 70 by 10
ticks bot from 1 to 7
draw pg solid
draw sb dashed
copy "issues.d" thru X
  next pg at $1,$2
  next sb at $1,$3
X
"Pages" size -3 at 6,60
"Submissions" size -3 at 6,20
.G2
```

```
issues.d
1 38 15
2 22 7
3 34 21
4 26 11
5 49 19
6 47 10
7 70 18
```



Figure 4: Pic duck 2.0.

