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Memory is to Forgetting

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MEMORY IS TO FORGETTING

These things are kept without detail, abbreviated in the margins of memory, like the communes of old, sooner than later forgot. —Josh Davis

Memory is to forgetting like a purse taken, in accident, from the lightness of dark to the darkness of light. I remember green carpet under church pews, while my hand scribbling in a notebook of so many notebooks to come (and go). But there are no details and never dates, only periods, those rough brackets by which the history of my days has been self-demarcated. Emotions are denoted in the suggestion of time remembered, days unto months unto years, elapsed. A kiss recollected from a day long forgot. For me, all is evoked in the enumeration of my sins, sins catalogued in contrast to my traumas, long expunged and repressed. For my traumas are buried beneath the weight of thrust, a rush that speaks nothing save its promise of death.

The purse is not remembered, but it came from a table in a club and was deposited in a dumpster in an alley nearby. Neither alley nor dumpster nor purse is borne in memory, but it is known that the purse was taken. I confess to myself and I remember to know that the purse was first taken then deposited, in a dumpster that was found in an alley nearby. In an alley not unlike the alley that is remembered, leading from my house and by the high-rise to the station and toward the Methodist church at the top of the hill where choices are made, turning upward at times toward a house without conviction yet full of confliction. The house of a boyhood friend, with whom I grew up and with whom I still hold commune, and the house of his nephew-who-is-not-his-nephew, his brother, with whom I still hold commune.

Yesterday, I thought of my unborn son, not yet conceived, and I thought to say, "Masculinity is about strength." I thought to say, "yes, masculinity is about strength, but so is humanity, and, moreover, there are many ways to be strong, many of which involve no physical strength whatsoever." And then I thought to say, "humanity is about courage." Meanwhile, my son, who is not yet born, not yet conceived, would sit, listening, poised and ready, face calm, shoulders erect. And in his clear deep eyes I would witness the resonations of my spirit become beautified, the reflection of light all a dance—the reverberations of my heart in concert with his.