

The unremembered moments.

Inspired by Iris Murdoch in a passage in *Under the Net*.

THE LINE 4 outbound bus was late. Codell paced behind the bus bench with no place to go. On Woodward Avenue, cars blurred by, a stream of motion and colors.

A flag on a building across the street stopped fluttering, not drooping but stiffly suspended as if a bell jar sealed the whole scene.

In the street in front of the flag, black lettering on a yellow van proclaimed *A to Z Adhesives*. The van's exhaust hung in the air, the driver hitting the gas. *I'm going to make this light*. He clenched his teeth and the steering wheel.

Behind the adhesives van that did not want to get stuck at the light, the driver of a beige Colt turned her head toward Codell. Her windows were rolled down. In the back seat, a terrier thrust its head out the window and sniffed. *What smells*, they thought. The terrier and the woman wore red scarfs over stringy hair.

On the opposite side of the street, a silver Civic with purple wheel rims bounced to a deep beat. Behind tinted windows, the passengers passed a joint, their minds open. *Cause I'm on, I'm bad when I'm talking to you, there are four fly brothers who can do it, too.\** The car crawled forward.

Behind that thumping slow ride, a Caprice eased off, the driver tapping the brakes, imagining the naked body of a coworker.

Waiting to cross Woodward, a man in a suit grimaced. His wallet was missing. *She took it!* he thought, but he had dropped it. He wanted to strike back at the galactic Force that always brought him bad luck.

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*Hurry*, thought a bicyclist on a heavy-framed Kuwahara with time-warped wheels. On the handlebars hung an oversized basket; cloaked in the basket knelt a large faced, large eyed extra-terrestrial creature. They were pedaling to 1982.

On the sidewalk, a man in red and white plaid pants and a tee-shirt stood almost toe-to-toe with a petite, irritated woman in white questioning up at him. They'd seen each other before or would see each other again. *She's Brigitte Bardot*, he thought.

A young person with hair cropped like David Bowie's hunched on the bus bench, bewildered by genders, pronouns and names: *Robin, Pat, Chris, Kim, Terry, Casey, Tracy*.

Two seats away, an older woman sat legs together, purse on her lap, hands on her purse. Her mind was far away. *How long has the dent in the microwave oven been there?*

Catching a puff of breeze, the flag fluttered on the building across the street. The exhausted driver of the adhesives van ran the red light, the Colt ground to a halt, the Civic and the Caprice stopped, the bicycle left the pavement on a rising trajectory, the man in the suit sputtered, the man in plaid and the woman in white passed one another, the young person channeling Bowie ruminated like Rodin's Thinker, and a mysterious dent befuddled the older woman. Codell walked to nowhere, indifferent to the urgency of each moment, moments continually born, continually dying, ephemeral, trivial and vital - essential to this timed and timeless phenomenon we call life.

\* *Sha-Rock* of Funky 4 Plus 1, "That's The Joint" (1980).

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