

*When You Die, Someone Will Rip Off
Your Head and Place it Apathetically
Onto an Altar Dedicated to Your
Ripped-off Head*



I built a rocket ship out of old tires and gasoline. I tried following some guides on the internet but I couldn't really afford all the real stuff. I talked to people on the internet about it and eventually got confirmation that the tires and gasoline would work. I had a lot of tires and I could easily buy a lot of gasoline. The rocket ship seemed fully functional. It was getting positive feedback on Instagram. I wanted to fly to the upper atmosphere and look. I had a lot of tires and nothing else to do. And I wanted to see space. I started the rocket ship and held onto the steering wheel while everything rumbled. It was loud. I was worried about not being able to get back home. But it was fine, everything worked out perfectly. Space looked beautiful. I can't really describe it. It was blue, and black, and other colors, and big. But I landed in California, which is, like, six states away. When I got home, I had to take the recycling out. I was listening to a news podcast about my rocket ship. I carried an armload of cardboard and an empty gallon jug down the driveway but the

wind blew the jug out of the crook of my arm before I could put it in the bin. The wind made the jug continue to roll up the driveway at a constant speed. I could hear the sound of the jug rolling on the concrete through my earbuds. I chased it at almost the same speed it was rolling. I wasn't catching up. I felt like I would always be chasing the jug. I laughed at how loud and stupid everything was.

What a Disaster!



I was a bank teller at a bank and one day I forgot why anything mattered and I said, “What a disaster!” I spent ten minutes throwing twenty-dollar bills at the clients until armed security grabbed me and made me pick up all the twenties while they watched angrily and I said, “What a disaster!” I was fired and escorted off of the premises and I said, “What a disaster!”

When I got home, my wife was in bed with another woman, and she told me that I had never adequately fulfilled her in terms of romance, sex, conversation, understanding, and financial security, and I said, “What a disaster!”

She filed for divorce and the judge gave me limited weekend visits with my giant son and I said, “What a disaster!” I spent a year trying to get in shape and improve myself and become a better person so that my family would love me again but instead I put on fifty pounds and got shin splints and I said, “What a disaster!”

I walked in on my son playing with his Legos during one of my limited weekend visits. His mother and her lover were in Naples, drinking wine and making love in the sun. He was building a castle and it was enormous and covered in intricate details. It was the most beautiful castle I had ever seen. I saw in

that moment that he was a child imbued with unending potential. I saw in him the beginnings of a world-famous architect worth millions of dollars, able to find and pursue intellectual passions and travel the world and make love to beautiful people in Naples. I walked over to him to kiss him on the head because of how good his Lego castle was but I accidentally kicked the Lego castle and it broke apart and all of its pieces scattered across the floor.

I stepped on all the loose pieces with my bare feet and they all stung the bottoms of my soft, supple feet and I hopped around in pain. My son stood up and punched me in the face. My lip split open and blood came out. My son punched me in the face again and I cried and sobbed silently and blood and drool and tears merged on my swelling face. My son punched me in the face again and I put my hands onto my face and I hunched my shoulders and my body convulsed with pain. My son punched me in the face again and I said, "What a disaster!"

My son sat down and started playing with his Legos. I watched him rebuild the castle. It was identical to the first castle. It was perfect.

Basketball Men



There was a man and he was named Douglas, and he had a cellphone with applications installed on it. The applications showed him content that he often despaired over for hours on end. When he coughed, it scared his dogs, and they hid under the bed. When his wife came home from work, she sighed deeply while looking at him and left to take a shower.

Douglas liked to imagine himself a basketball man, one of the guys on the courts, who could hoop balls with ease and frivolity. Every basketball man had over a million dollars, used the cell phone applications in an evocative and irreverent way, and drove a large car with no care for the cost of gasoline. Every basketball man went to interesting parties, as well, and was in a loving, sustaining relationship with someone for whom love came easily and thoroughly.

The day his wife didn't come home after work was like every other day. Douglas used his cell phone to look up basketball men. He used his cell phone to look up fifty-day cardio workout regimens. He used his cell phone to read about war crimes; the country he lived in was using its military to commit war crimes. "We're going to commit war crimes," the president had said, and then, after some bombs blew up somewhere, the president said, "We did it, and

doing it kicked ass.” Douglas texted his wife and she texted back that she had found a new life to live.

Things happened in the world and the people in the world continued to grapple with these things in frustratingly ineffective ways. Douglas woke up every morning with the realization that he was alive until he wouldn't be, and every evening he forgot. He practiced throwing a ball into a hoop. He understood that people were in charge or they weren't, or something. They eventually put lead back into gasoline. They made suicide illegal. They stopped paying the basketball men so much money to do dunks, and the sport fell into disarray, so Douglas stopped working on his dunks. His wife eventually came home, too, and acted like nothing had happened.

They also redefined what a war crime was so that people wouldn't worry so much, and people stopped worrying so much. It was good.

*I'd keep going on it. There's something
to this.*



I put trash bags up on the walls for decoration. It looks good, like there are trash bags on the walls, which is good, to me. It feels festive. I wanted it to feel different and festive, like, festive in a different way, being in the room, and the trash bags on the walls is making that happen. Some people came in and walked around slowly. I watched them look around and walk and talk and eat snacks and stuff. Some of them touched the trash bags while speaking quietly. I enjoyed the sound of the rustling of the trash bags over them speaking quietly or just walking around. I haven't really attached the trash bags that securely so they're rustling, like, a lot. They're pretty loose. I used, like, maybe two pieces of tape per trash bag, for a few of the trash bags, for example. Some of the people talked quietly in one of the corners near the bar and I assume they were talking about how good the trash bags look. It felt good to see them talking about how the trash bags look. This is just a normal kind of party, you know, but just a little bit different, because of the trash bags. I asked my friend Suzanne what she thought of the trash bags and she smiled and said they looked pretty good. Suzanne is really solid. You'll like her, I think. Here, come over here, I'll introduce you.