

DEAR SAUL WILLIAMS

By Marya Sea Kaminski

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Introduction

Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen.

My name is Marya Sea Kaminski and I am a work in progress.

Before I begin tonight, I want to let you know that I only came here for two reasons : to chew bubblegum and to kick some ass. And I’m all outta bubble gum.

No, seriously folks, I want you to know that usually when I find myself in a room full of people such as yourselves

with some words to say out loud,

I try to serve up equal parts humor and bitter truth.

But I must tell you my friends,

these have been some dark days

I’ve been making my way through.

So, nothing I have to say to you

is all that funny.

So, in homage to the gods of balance and joy,

I thought I’d start with a little joke:

What did the goldfish say when she swam into the brick wall?

Dam!

Thank you, thank you. Tip your barista.
Alright folks, calm down now.

I wrote this piece last December
after seeing Saul Williams perform downtown at Chop Suey.
Anybody else catch that show?
Anyways. That was about two months after my little brother committed suicide.
And after Saul inspired me with all of his truth and philosophy,
I went home and wrote him a letter.
This is that.

Dear Saul Williams

dear saul williams
in the name of
one love
and a pot of tea
and the part of me
longing to speak a truth
that i cannot tell
you said tonight
only those who believe in death shall die
and that some things must fall
for others to rise.
and i am only a pupil.
with only two eyes.
in the name of
me.
of the i.
of the ego that must die
to make way for
what?
is my question.
my quest. young
but wise.

dear saul williams,
you've named your book
a shotgun to the head.
another
fucking reminder of my brother
adam
and i am
wrapped up in him
and in bibles i skim
job and peter, mary and paul
i don't fall
asleep

i weep
my way into dreams
that i hope will contain
a name or a face
some sort of trace
of adam
atom
the building block of all that matters.
i scatter
vague memories
and insist THERE MUST BE A REASON.

i try to recollect the name
of one more degenerate
who'll bum me one more last cigarette
while i live
to regret
all the years i have spent
indulging in these soft sciences
while my days get harder
and harder and harder
i've been having lungs
full of RAGE
tightly wound mercurial
punctuated with small, dull
headaches
violent tendencies traced
to no consistent motive
until some afternoon
softly calls me
bitch.
asking, why so mad?
what's you itch?
and then it blows in.
sad. ness.
like an all-night thunderstorm.
the pounding of rain
on the roof
leaking through eyes, nose, mouth
the moisture
only makes me want to
sleep more.
and wake up to some other day
long ago and far before
this rich man's war.
will the world be enough
to fill his pockets
or stop him

from pulling said trigger
on said morning
without so much as a warning
said.

while i lay in my bed
and pull out my hair,
already dead,
over a phone call last week
or a promise to keep or
a misplaced receipt
or a thousand heavy fleet
ing pasts
that do not last
and don't add up
to much of anything at all.

dear saul,
i put my television in the closet today.
it was making a mess
of my character.
carefuller of what i ingest.
but i cannot rest
in all of your truths.
or all of the youths
that lined round the block
to talk
through you set
about politics they won't vote on
quoting authors who wrote on
pages they'll never read
hopes they'll never heed.
a shotgun to the head.
i heard what you said.
and i'll hear it again on mtv.

i understand these tales you weave
the tools you wield
trying to uncover the sedative shield
of the local evening news.
but i can't say that you know.
or are able to show
the reason for
all this blood on my mother's kitchen floor.
forgive me,
but there is no precedent for
death when she invites herself to breakfast
at eight in the morning
without so much as a warning.

i'll tell you
about a shotgun to the head.
i wasn't even out of bed.
and i can't believe
that THE EARTH DIDN'T OPEN AND SWALLOW ME
recklessly
that the birds didn't come crashing
down out of the sky smashing
windshields and still waters.
i can't believe tidal waves
didn't sweep through the midwest.
i can't believe i could rest
and breathe easily
through the tremor of my brother's spirit leaving his body.
and i can't believe the tide still comes in
without him
or his innocence.

i just don't see much sense
in fighting
for mighty truths
that would allow me to lose
so much everything.

i crown me king
and perch on my thrown
away letters and pages and loves.
i cannot be here
where i cannot see above
all this awfulness.

dear saul, tell me this
have you ever lived through a shotgun to the head?
and had to crawl back into bed
knowing
THERE'S NO GOING BACK
and there's nobody gonna rack
the points that you've earned
or the lessons you'll learn
overandoverandoverandoverandover
again.

oh, saul, my friend,
bring me a prophet.
and a thumb to stop it.
the flood
that's on its way.

i'm already sinking under its weight.
and i anticipate
a great escape.
maybe i'll migrate with the birds
somewhere warmer.
or maybe i'll turn a corner
and disappear
long gone and outta here
hitch-hiking backwards
hoping FAITH might be going my way.