

GOOD GRIEF

a wail of plenitude and excess on a delirious ouija board of things, little things, *Colors and Shapes*, objects and images. 🍷 Silly pom-poms and glitter are the binding agents in a layout of cartoons that, like the tambourines in a Wall of Sound composition—*BAM CLANK BOOM WHAM BANG BEEP BUZZ* (Phil's specter) ✨—sublimate what was once a body, now missing (missed) into a material gas, a soup of stuff, a dissolution of everything, that throws us forward from a past loss into a future that isn't and maybe can't ever be known, so my therapist said, speaking of grief. It's a necessary propulsive state of discomposition. Like a caterpillar I said, building a safehouse for itself in which to become mush, the fluid state of an unknowable future-butterfly which will hold onto its past only in a deeply cellular way of memory-keeping. "Your old stance is changed, not by melancholy but by the shattering of that underlying intuition of moving in time, which you can't register until its collapse. If time was once flowing, extended, elongated—a river, a road, a ribbon—now the river is dammed, the road blocked, the ribbon slashed. Well-worn metaphors all shot to pieces", said Denise Riley speaking of the immeasurable loss of her son. 💧 *Let's Go To Before Again*. But to become a body (again) you have to let go of a body, and you have to be so close to the next body that, ecstatically, you become displaced, abandon sovereignty, abandon the self. Body without body. The cinema of slapstick, crashing into the world, into each other—*Green and blue, pick and choose the tail you're chasin'*—and melodrama, dissolving in warm tears—*You got angels weepin', see them drippin' from the sky*—the "co-presence of building and unbuilding the relations of subject and object (other persons, things, worlds) can be funny, tragicomic, anxious and pleasurable all at once", said Lauren Berlant, speaking of comedy. 🍷 Mari Ruti said Jacques Lacan said "his friend has hung a colorful, decorative ribbon made of used matchboxes around his mantelpiece: It was the kind of collection that it was easy to afford at that time; it was perhaps the only kind of collection possible. Only the match boxes appeared as follows: they were all the same and were laid out in an extremely agreeable way that involved each one being so close to the one next to it that the little drawer was slightly displaced. As a result, they were all threaded together so as to form a continuous ribbon that ran along the mantelpiece, climbed the wall, extended to the molding, and climbed down again next to the door. I don't say that it went on to infinity, but it was extremely satisfying from an ornamental point of view... In other words, this arrangement demonstrated that a match box isn't simply something that has a certain utility, that it isn't even a type in the Platonic sense, an abstract match box, that the matchbox all by itself is a thing with all its coherence of being. The wholly gratuitous, proliferating, superfluous and quasi absurd character of this collection pointed to its thingness as a match box. Thus the collector found his motive in this form of apprehension that concerns less the matchbox than the Thing that subsists in a match box... It makes the sublime appear in the most commonplace of objects." 🍷 It's exhaustive, that sublime string, exhausting, exhausted: *Infinite Exhaustion 001, Infinite Exhaustion 002, Infinite Exhaustion 003*, and so on, and so on—*The wallpaper peels to reveal the same print—Infinite Exhaustion 029, Infinite Exhaustion 030*... Infinite Exhaustion infinity. Say it over and over again 'til it sticks, or slides, or fills, fills an unfillable crack, a crevasse of loss, a break in the ice opening to the mountain's cavern of lack that can only be filled by the act of filling. To exhaust absence with exhaustive presence. This cacophony of grief is

🍷 “In one way or another Gabriel Madan’s work has these past years been a seance of sorts: in particular for his older sister Rebecca who died in 2015, and in general for a contemporary figure of loss.”

Olivia Mole, *Tell-Tale Hearts*, 2023

🌟 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wall_of_Sound

💧 Denise Riley, *Time Lived Without its Flow*, 2019

👉 Can’t Take a Joke, An interview with Lauren Berlant <https://thenewinquiry.com/cant-take-a-joke/>

📖 Mari Ruti, *The Singularity of Being*, 2012

Text by Olivia Mole