

Returning.

I am returning to the bathroom floor.

Four of us are ritualizing in the bathroom with plastic and a clipper set. Old friends who know each other, gathering to exchange, lose, gain.

We are taking turns as Sunday night washes itself languidly against the window panes, time clocking in and out, static colored blue and orange metamorphosing in water droplets. We are kneeling on plastic borrowed from a healthy excess and our knees dip the floor. Indents of crosses from the tile remind us that we still engage with a higher power even though none of us are religious. A white towel drapes itself over our shoulders before it begins, and so we kneel: one hand a brooch for falling towel, the other holding hair in horns. Cross the white and devil horns, we remain neither, or perhaps we choose one and remain indifferent.

We take turns, bless the head, kneeling on the bathroom floor, below the mirror sightline.

A vibration, low G, arches through space as the outlet gets the plug. Clippers shudder and heat as one by one, each head given its time. Brown and black hair dance, stepping to the tune of throaty vibration, hairs falling gracefully from top to bottom. Blonde hair melts, becoming transparent superimpositions that refract the light when you twist your neck just so, squint, wipe a loose hair from your eyebrow.

A firm hand presses your head forwards, clippers slide upwards, and you feel absence. You realize you are feeling, adjusting to this absence, this willing absence as air slides over, breathes up and down your scalp, growing familiar and you with it. Hair falls as it is cut, lands on oily necks under fluorescent lights, leaving traces of what once was. Hair decorates the mountains and valleys of the towel, the aerial of black and brown people on ice caps, waving at helicopters to come get them as clippers float near, blades churning, and more people fall, land, then are lost.

In finishing, we become sanctified. Undoing the brooch of a hand, we shake the towel off before handing it to the next person, our knees crossed.

We are returning to the bathroom floor. To hairlines.

I am returning to remembering how they like their head shaved. They the singular and plural. To thinking about hair, how it reflects a semi-permanent state of our inner-self; our expression, our guilt, our power, our shame.

I am returning to hairlines that write contrast lines and hard-start-stop borders of definitions, ambiguities against the distinct lines of long and short.

I perform sermons with the clippers. Feeling the vibration through skulls, spirits taking root within brain canals, sanctification becomes achieved. I do not take offense, I do not care for insane liberal or conservative notions. I do not need approval from a Ghost written about in a book.

I am returning to the secular exploration of the Self, my indifference to My Self. And that is a contradiction. Although, I am never sure.

We are returning to multitudes: saving, falling, metamorphosing.