

Multiple-Vignette Stories

College Bound 1

Begin with birth, watch through walking, words, wondering. Learning forced and desired, leading to success as some measure. Back patting, hand shaking, an inscribed diploma, a high check to an unknown distant future. Labeled boxes neatly circumscribe years, bellied up to the new years: suitcases, packed full. College bound.

College Bound 2

Winging without flapping, the move afar traced circles within squares below. Lakes, oceans, land: a vast continent spreading beneath, 500 miles in an hour. Swallowed in an undigesting metallic belly, two black bags (“Warning: Heavy”) hold future within themselves. Shirts, books, pants, hopes, dreams. New life, new person: College bound.

College Bound 3

Water rushes up below, a disjunction to extended wheels. Yet extended landing gear grip solid ground—solid ground than the next months. A flurry of spending, a briefly organized desk counterpoint to the confusion of new faces, names, details. Next door, across and down the hall, layers of people.

College Bound 4

What once was sure became unknown. Loyalties shift among rooms, up and down the hall. Laundry piles, quarters’ value increasing disproportionately. Same food, swiftly, uncaringly prepared—hardly home cooking. Instantaneous forced adaptation, learned through painful errors, begins the changing process. New experiences molding new persons, young adults maturing: College life.

My Life as a Drop of Water 1

Floating down, the temperature drops. I begin stiffening; my companions stiffen too. We see the ground for the first time. Above, we lived in light, but lower, wells of light punctuate darkness. We settle silently, millions-strong, smoothing roughness, hiding ugliness. Gleeful children throw us whirling upwards again. First snowfall.

My Life as a Drop of Water 2

Deeply buried now, I feel safe, companion-surrounded. We pile, muscular plows mounding us into dazzling landscapes. Sand, salt grit us; yet we whitely endure elsewhere, sun and shadow dappling. The sled runners’ pressure energizes us—a moment of liquid freedom, paused by sunset and cold, starlit darkness. Midwinter snow.

My Life as a Drop of Water 3

Glories of winter passing away in rivulets. First a trickle, nightly caged; then a rush, sheets of my companions rushing, pausing, rushing again. The glory of our host diminishing daily as we sweep down, circular whirling. We bear winter’s filth, doubly cleansing: first hiding, then carrying away. Springtime melt.

My Life as a Drop of Water 4

Our mighty host, freer, energetic, gathers downhill. I hasten, leaping obstacles, carrying burdens lightly, flying from light into echoing darkness. My companions and I hurtle through dark tunnels,

carrying a noxious load—rotting leaves, stinking human waste, ragged winter-worn trash. I slip through meshing, abandoning my load. Water processing plant.

My Life as a Drop of Water 5

Battered but whole, I escape chemical cleansing. I shun nearby chlorine, attaching to companions. In a mass, we hurl through one last dark tube; finally sunlight, eternally faithful, brushes across me. Warmth! Pouring through me, strengthening me. I gather strength, dashing through similarly excited companions. Summertime's liquid lake at last!

My Life as a Drop of Water 6

Under the sun's power I feel my energy returning. Wind brushes across my back; I circle in a dance, cresting and sinking in time with millions of others. As we move we bond, attracted tightly. Then, at a crest, sun ray hits, breaks me free. I soar, gaseous once more.

Karl 1

Walking down the street, Karl's eyes sparkled. Everything looked new: brightly shining sun, joyfully singing birds, glowingly green grass, smiling passers-by. Each encounter rejoiced Karl's heart. All new, yet all familiar—known.

"Subject responding normally." Hidden in a following van, Lab-coat dictates notes. "Transfer appears complete; let's initiate phase two."

Karl 2

Pedestrians stream by, brushing Karl. His life—secure, high-paying job, wife waiting at home with two beautiful children, no crimes, no phobias, no concerns—brighten his outlook.

Flashback: child's contorted face, screaming, crying. Her yellow hair tangled, a web across the ground. Her tiny fists pounding Karl's chest as he—

Karl 3

Lab coat: "Subject has stopped walking. He looks distressed. Pause phase two, we need to observe." Assistant adds, "He's anxious." Lab coat: "I'd say concerned."

Assistant: "Yes... Afraid?"

Lab coat: "Get somebody out there. Talk to him, see what's going on." "A stranger?" "No, somebody we let him know. Hurry."

Karl 4

"Hey, Karl, what's up?" Karl recognizes Jesse, childhood friend. Relief! A bulwark! "Hey, uh, fine. You? What're you doing here?" "Getting coffee. Want to come and talk? You look upset." "No, thanks, I'm fine. I just thought of something and I need to walk it through. See ya."

Assistant: "Failure."

Karl 5

He kept walking. Jesse... familiar, but who was he? The girl—he could remember penetrating her young vagina, could feel her bites and clawing fingernails. But he had never done that. His daughter's age; he couldn't imagine... He had never harmed anyone. Conflicting memories surged, battled. Another person's life mentally formed—

Karl 6

Assistant: "He didn't want to talk. Couldn't force him."

Lab coat: "You should've!"

"He's upset. He knows. You know he knows."

"We need to reinforce his new memories, not let him remember!" "What if it doesn't work?" Lab coat: "It works. We wouldn't've tested humans if it didn't." Assistant wonders.

Karl 7

—a rapist. A child murderer. How many young faces had howled beneath his body?

Karl shuddered, huddled in wall's protection. Sinking despite its solidity, two lives battle in his mind. Wife! Children! Children, oh, god. Surely not him. Which memories to trust? Hands hold head, knuckles white. How to know?

Karl 8

"Child killer!" Above him, hateful woman. Foot connects, pain blossoms. "No—" "It's him! I saw him in the paper!" Crowd looms overhead, mien dangerous.

Karl curls, arms around head. "I'm innocent," but was he?

"Courts let him go—" "—should've died—" "—evil—" Very dangerous crowd.

Karl 9

Lab coat: "Time to move in. Get him out of there."

Assistant: "It's too late... Call the cops."

"No, they can't know. This isn't exactly legal yet, you know." "He'll die." "He'd've died anyway."

Lab coat restrains assistant.

Mob tightens, grows. First blow, second blow. Karl's grip loosens. Well-deserved pain.

Karl 10

How? Karl wondered, under blows. His first life, too evil. Now he atones, unfolding arms, splaying across pavement. Blood splatters: atonement. Never asked for new memories, new life. Hardly new life; too notorious.

Pain. Atonement.

Fifty-Word Vignettes

Fertilization

Creakingly opened, scales awaited expected guests. Wind blew, specks flew—three cells with a sticky landing. Long they heaved through dense wood. Promise floated on chemical signals, siren call beckoning onwards to one; two followed blindly, trusting. Seasons pass unmarked until genes mingling fulfill the promise. All for seed formation.

Growing Pains

May rains trickled through soil, infiltrating gaps with the promise of warmth and light. The cue sparks life, metabolism. The fullness of time brought forth struggle, the battle between gravity and

growth. Strong growth triumphs, heaving aside nurturing humus to extrude shootlets. Greening with time, a new generation emerges, triumphant.

Fall in New England

Yellows, reds, golds litter sidewalks. Greens from pale to deep cling precariously, rustling. Trees aflame yet not afire brightened beneath sunny rays; sparks flicker, flying with the wind's gusts. They swirl, unextinguished, burning brightly in bonfires gathered in walls' lees, cyclically transient beauty. Break out the leafblowers.

Freedom

The patient suffered grievously. Family clustered about, invisible to his vacant eyes, untouchable to his clutching hands. The patient's mouth opens. Heads lean, ears strain to catch, "Let me die." A decision, quietly made, brings forth the means. One shot, neatly administered. The patient flew free while his liberator stood trial.

Atomic Movement

Trace my trajectory: A starry arc beneath black skies? A fiery comet, here a moment and flown a thousand years? What attraction charges me? What repulsion breaks me away? I dance, an elaborate dance demanding rigorous steps and a thousand partners, breaking away with energy. The submicroscopic universe, my ballroom.

Choose Your Partner

Six scrutinized complete genomes, fine-tooth-combed. "Best of Class" award to one; the prize: implantation. Living dream of perfection, more costly than a car, the embryo grows. Parents have high hopes, because "No parents [...] will have a right to burden society with a malformed or a mentally incompetent child."*

*Bentley Glass, "Science: Endless Horizons or Golden Age," *Science* 171:23-29, 1971, pg. 28

Dream Children

Two sixth-graders pause from dashing around the playground. A leaden sky overhead threatens rain. Jeremy: "Why'd your parents choose you?"

Kyle: "Best of the bunch."

"Me, too. I'm smart."

"I'm fast."

"No major problems?"

"Just my parents' expectations."

The drops begin falling as they obediently heed the recess bell.

Growing Up in a Perfect World

Careful sorting at the blastosphere stage produces exciting athletic games. Students focus hours on end, tirelessly, effortlessly absorbing knowledge. The \$30,000 babies, disease free, dull tacks in comparison. Cut above, endowed by their parents the gift of perfection, they travel elite roads.

Roads built by the children of love. Imperfect.

Amnesia

Missing. Absolutely, positively gone. No clue.
No, not on my bedside table. Nor my desk, either.
Not my pockets—who would put it *there*? Linty!
What was I doing before I took it out, set it down?
Where was I?
How can I remember that?
I've lost my external memory.

Knowing You

Entwined, sweat-slick, two lovers breathed.

She felt secure, hearing his heartbeat. Perhaps the time had come to trust him completely.

Lassitude settled in his limbs, postcoital closeness encouraging him to the final intimate act.

Yes, each decided. They exchanged memory chips; two lives downloaded to one another, to become one.

Food Poisoning

She dined finely. Would've paid \$20 at a nice restaurant. The nuances, blossoming of taste, delicate texture, scent—wonderful. She finished every bite.

Later, nausea. Surely not the dinner? Yet ominous urges mounted, increasingly demanding. Grass didn't help. Suddenly it poured forth, a wash of vomit and undigested dog shit.

Futility

Phone rang, lights blinked. Rang again. Blinked again. Echoed against bare walls, ricocheting from nearly bare floors. Soulless windows looked into blue daylight sky; counterpoint reflecting red. Rang. Blinked. Golden squares on hardwood floor dimmed phone's blinking. No matter; no ringing or blinking could raise her sun-warmed, lifeless body. Hopeless.

Giants of the Earth

A million years they ruled the earth, great lizards' thunderous steps and mighty claws dominating. They would continue; the pinnacle of evolution, none could supplant their might. Who could challenge their greatness, their strength, their utter *massiveness*? What could destroy razor-sharp weapons backed by immense power?

Is that a meteor?

Determination

She clung to the slick, vertical cliff tenaciously. Historically, this face defeated her; not today. She felt surety of success in her exoskeleton. Then came the flood, water sweeping away grip, washing her down. Wet, dripping, she waited. Light shone. And the itty bitsy spider climbed up the wall again.

Yesterday's Superpower, Today's History Lesson

“Rome: the world’s greatest power for a thousand years. They governed, enforced laws, built roads, spread Latin. Roman citizens enjoyed a republican government similar to ours. Thus, the fall and sacking of Rome, a result of decadent, weakening years and army overextension...”

Bell, thankfully. Roman history—pointless for America, 2005.

April 20, 1999. Jefferson County, Colorado.

The young high-school student felt refreshed after praying with fellow Christians during break. They affirmed claiming Christ. Think Stephen. *Could I do that?*

Notes, friends, normal day. Then chaos, fright, Eric and Dylan with—*guns?* Pointing at her. “Do you believe in God?”

Moment of truth.

“Yes.”

Could. Did. Died.

A Definition of Death

A machine drew each breath. Another pumped each heartbeat. Food flowed through limp vessels, bypassing the unconscious body’s mouth. Five years it lived, breathing, metabolizing, defecating. The wife wept seeing Harry thus—alive, trapped. The children begged his release—dad’s long gone. Yet warm hands, breath, blood: alive? Mindless: dead?

A New Try

Whipping rain, howling wind, flashing lightning, pounding thunder: call down the elements in fury. Watch darkening skies open, releasing sheer power. Wash away black snow, rainbow gleaming oil, grippy sand, crinkled grocery bags, tired out shoes, ragged clothes, civilization’s tatters. Greedy gutters swallow, hide all. With time, perhaps, cleanliness returns.

Failure of Calculus

A brutal environment, the competitors showed no mercy. Every advantage seized, no quarter given, all resources exploited fully. Individuals battle viciously, claws raking; strongest survive, weak fall by the wayside. Females claim males, territory, in no-holds-barred contests. No ecological equation could describe the interactions between high school students.

Never Again

The pain of its abrasive surface—unrivalled. Cheaper, true. Longer-lasting, yes. Yet its indescribable texture begs the question of value. Like sandpaper on a baby’s cheek? Razor blades on rose petals? Unweathered rock against virgin grass? Surely none to extreme to describe one-ply paper on tender gluteal flesh.

The Pursuit of Knowledge

Expanding borders, pushing boundaries, humankind extends itself. The frontiers of understanding retreat before atomic, quantum physical, evolutionary, metaphysical theories. Conquering disease,

surmounting physical limitations, overcoming technological barriers—interior and exterior exploration broadening knowledge. What can man not know?

Expanding universe, expanding knowledge. The final frontier: over the Universe's edge.

Last Great Exploration

Approaching the edge. To ten eyes, it looks like space: black, ahead and behind. Ship's sensors stutter. Two women, three men, five years preparing and years asleep, traveling. Awakened, *Magellan's* crew waits, watches.

Inching forward. Closer. Closer. Vanishing stars, everything known. Readouts blanking. Finally—Light? Dark? Life? Death? Silence? Crescendo?

Earth's Perspective

Voices from *Magellan*:

“Approaching...Sensors unresponsive...Looks blank...”

Long delay: words travel millions of lightyears.

Flight director requests go/no go.

“Go.” One voice. Sacrificing five lives on science's altar?

“Roger, go for entry.”

Data vanishing—a moment there, voices, numbers, technology's heartbeat. Then—

“*Magellan*, flight control. Do you read?”

Endless silence.

Trade-Offs

“Would you trade, if you could?” Two young women, prime of life.

“No...”

“I'd like to live as long as you will.”

“If you eat right, exercise, take vitamins, maybe you could.” Both knew she couldn't. No vitamins tripled human lifespan. “I'd like children, though.”

Longevity or children? Eternal tradeoff.

Under Fire

Huddled together, life leaching away in tandem, husband and wife murmured. Lifetime together attunement shortened sentences.

“Afraid?”

“No.”

“I am.”

“Why?”

“It's unknown. And separating from you.”

Wrinkled hands quested, linked in familiarity, reassurance.

“Eternity together, perhaps.”

“Or...”

Beyond technology's grasp, they weathered the [silent artillery of time](#).

* Kass, *Beyond Therapy*, 161

Embankment Tube Station

Fresh from the plane, American confident, bright tourist's eyes absorb London. Confident: through the stile, reading the angular map, platform choosing, cryptic arrow following.

"You sure you'll be alright, mate?"

"Sure." Confident!

Train whooshes up, doors open, bodies press forward. The American steps—catches—falls—zaps. Didn't mind the gap.

It's A Girl

Gloved, masked, white coats combine basic ingredients and manipulate building blocks. Down the line, nutrient soup fills vats in which workers tend products. Line's end, months after the first pieces bond, an inspector checks each item—ten fingers, ten toes, nose, mouth, two eyes, gender. Genes match parents' specs. Next.

The Worst Week

Rushing wind buffeted the base jumper. He peered at traffic below. Highest leap yet, perfect timing. Let him momentarily forget agony of breakup and job loss. Horrible week. Jump to clear his head.

Steeling himself—stepping up—falling—arms, legs air splayed. Adrenaline rushing. Ground nearing. This time, no parachute.

A Sobering Experience (Not Coffee or Cold Air)

Great night. BAC sky-high, euphoria higher. Twenty new best friends crowd around, waiting for keys to fumble from puzzling pockets (pockets weren't puzzling before).

Around the city, howling hilarity whirls. Perfectly in control.

Pedestrian? Where? Unexpected meaty thump. Blood. Hilarity dying. An arm beneath the wheel twitches once, stills.

Talk the Talk, Walk the Walk

Women screaming, picketed across streets, waving warring signs:

PRO-CHOICE, PRO-FAMILY
ABORTION KILLS CHILDREN

Behind one line, a medical building looms: Women's Health Centre. Doctors slip patients out rear doors. Shades drawn, doors locked despite business hours.

Sign-waving escalates: sticks, rocks, a gun. Bam. Pro-life behind bars for murder.

Chemical Personality

An empty slate, the body lay devoid of thought and history, totally lacking a future. Fully functional, it awaited the final key-turn: memory. Washed clean of its previous life—hideous murder? Traumatized soldier? Hopeless amnesiac?—a new life dawns with the input of memory. Synthesized chemical personality, artificially created future.

Millbrook Restaurant Experience

Buick yachts populate dark parking lot. Foyer: faded featureless wallpaper, handwritten sign adorned. Dark floor to ceiling faux-wood paneling accompanies worn red vinyl booths. Mismatched silverware, paper napkins, green fluted placemat beneath. Half-height room dividers, balustrade atop. Unchanged thirty years. Median customer age: 70. Underage, outgunned, beating a hasty retreat.

Armies of Color

Gleaming rows stood to attention. Soldiers, divided into units, individually primed, anticipating immediate action. They waited. Uniforms identical yet unique, perfectly pressed, wrinkle-free and pristine. Names identify each individual, drawing out speculation. Light glints across multitude of heads, sorted according to color.

A new box of crayons.

But Does He Do It?

“What’s on the other side?” His finger, reaching for the trigger. Shrug. Girl looked fearful. Didn’t know; didn’t want to. “Don’t.” “I’m not scared. I think it’s nice over there.” Bold gunsight face. “Don’t. It’s not.” “You know?” Muzzle to temple. No; but she knew death was a fatal disease.

You Are What You Remember

Sadness. Loss. Yet Sean’s mother still lived—look, her chest, rising and falling. Her carotid throbbing, strong arterial pulse. Peaceful eyes closed, unlikelike serenity.

“You never looked peaceful,” he told her. No response; he expected none. Her memory gone, she was no longer Sean’s mother. She was a living corpse.

Not Exactly the Hound of the Baskervilles

Children yelling and screaming, dashing in playful abandon about a large brick building. Grass trampled, wood structures hand-polished. Ringing bell recalls chaos; children file in, sit down, open desks, find pencils, attend.

“What is it?” Across the street, Holmes’ companion queries. Wry look from pipe-smoking Holmes.

“Elementary, my dear Watson.”

Be Careful What You Wish For

Professor droning on: “Do we thus become a society of Smurfs, rubbing one another’s tummies?”

Students: eyes closing, heads nodding, pens limp in slack fingers, unresponsive. “If only something *interesting* would happen,”—listless wish.

Suddenly an enormous carillon plummets through the ceiling, squarely atop Professor Dull.

Saved by the bell.

You'd Think a Ferrari Would Be More Satisfying

Four sweat and blood years. First year: no prob, Bob. Second year: this is *real* college. Third year: do I want to do this still? Fourth year: let it end soon.

Springtime, Anywheresville University. Proud teary-eyed, light-pocketed parents applaud offspring. Provost handing off the \$100,000 investment. One single-sided sheet. Congrats.

One True Companion

I've smacked her, yelled at her, called her names, ignored her, berated her. I've hugged her, kissed her, tickled her, played with her hair, cleaned up after her. I've walked with her, talked to her, listened to her, tricked her, photographed her. She loves me regardless. My golden retriever.

The Choice of a Lifetime

Standing on the edge, precipitous moment. Sweaty palms, locked knees, stammering voice—betrayals. He walked through that door. No turning back.

Boldly looking her in the face, taking a deep breath: he wants this more than anything else. The turkey sub on rye, with American cheese, lettuce, pickles, and mayonnaise.

Magic Eye, How I Loathe Thee

Staring intently. Colors swirl, shifting as retinal sensors tire. Is that a mermaid? No; I'm supposed to see flowers. Holding the paper still—a minimum of unwonted frustration induced shaking—unfocusing eyes. Look beyond the paper. Let its 3D come out.

Disgustedly tossing aside. Probably nothing in darned patterns anyway.

A Moment Too Soon, a Moment Too Late

Don't want to get there too early. It's embarrassing to show up fifteen minutes early. Get strange looks. Check watch. Killing time—browse newspaper, wash a dish or two.

Check watch; still too early. Wander around, move items (later, can't find them). Read another article. Interesting, absorbing.

Check watch. Late!

Wash Behind His Ears

Beaten, battered, thrown about as no more than a rag. What did Mommy think he was, to treat him this way? A mere toy?

The little boy cried as he watched his dearest companion treated so unjustly. “Stop it, mommy!”

“A little longer, Jason. The laundry will be done soon.”

Gardens

Their seductive scents drifted afar, sensuously drawing suitors. Closer, lured inexplicably, suitors perceive dazzling dress. Dazzles paraded, thrusting away competitors. Crowds of color jostling for attention, spreading, swirling beneath glowing sunlight: yellow, red, pink, white. Life and death balanced on almost-gaudy displays. Springtime the flowers bloomed, vying for bumblebees’ attention.

Christmas Eve

Crouching ragged against icy brick wall, feet hustle. No heads turn, no hands reach from warm woolen pockets. Downcast eyes; another hopeless day. Outstretched fingers frozen, empty icy palm.

“Merry Christmas.” Coins pressed hand to hand. Shined shoes, black coat, briefcase hastening away.

Wide eyes, stammered “thank you.” Dinner tonight.

Irony

“Before or after Thanksgiving?”

“Before, definitely. I remember it snowing before at least a couple years.”

“After. Thanksgiving’s tomorrow—what’re the odds?”

“Seventy percent chance of snow tonight. Checked the weather.”

“We’ll see...”

Next morning, the silence of muffled, floating snowfall greets them. Neither before nor after. The day of.

The Things You Take for Granted

She enjoyed leftover pumpkin pie. Relatives benevolently watching, dirty plates stacked, used forks atop.

“Have some,” they tell her husband. “Try the one with mincemeat.”

“Oh I will,” the husband agreed; “I’m waiting to use her utensils.”

Gasps! “Why?!”

“Usually no dishwasher.”

“We have one! Splurge and dirty two sets.”

How a Good Career Plummets

Speed-typist, his skills called upon by executives, CEOs, high-ups of every sort. His portable setup: keyboard above lap, micro-monitor above, flying fingers, eyes face-locked. Seeing's optional; 100% accuracy his guarantee.

Then long-feared: shooting nerve pain, wrists aching afterwards. Fingers stiffen, cramping. Diagnosis: carpal tunnel from overuse. Heralding his end's beginning.

Don't Forget the Standard Miracles

Near hibernation. Muscles lax, occasionally jerking. Comatose, silent. Rhythmic chest rising, soft inhalation, exhalation. Hair strewn, face line-imprinted, guard utterly dropped. Restoration of innocence to world-hardened features. Such a delicate state, balancing between life and death: one edge, dark endless plummet. Other edge, waking, yawning, stretching, standing, conscious. Daily miracle.

Moms Can't Stop Worrying

"Surely he would have called by now." Karen's fingers twined. Stubborn silent phone. Long trip; he'd never traveled beyond town's borders. Now tens of miles separated them.

"I'm sure he'll be fine. He's not a child anymore." Words of wisdom fall on deaf ears.

"What if—" Phone snatched; relief.

Waiting for Harry

She slowly rocks, hair sunlit through lace curtains to white halo. Back, forth. Sixty years' rhythm engrained. Rhythm soothed countless children. Quiet house settles, creaks familiar friends. Waiting for Harry. His presence lingers, photographic eyes tracing—back, forth. Veined arthritic hand stroking Peaches, last cat. Peaceful matter of time.

Things Mom Remembers

First step. Shaky. Finger around Daddy's hand, eyes bright.

Playground running, hollering, laughing. Skinned knees, Superman band-aids. Summer popsicles. Book-bowed, pack straps straining. Trudging upstairs. Tearful shouted disagreements. Late-night discussions: God, universe, boys.

Long phone calls, dorm sounds. Exam talk, lonely, friends. Enormous check-writing. A certain boy. Joy, pain, love.

Water Wars

Apartment 1: Finished working out—rather sweaty. Put off washing until after breakfast. About 8:00, the time has come. Grabs towels, steps into the bathtub, and closes shower curtain.

Apartment 2: Rolled out of bed at 7:45 as usual. Just time for a quick, hot wake-me-up shower.

Apartment 1: "AAAAUUUUUGGGGHHHHH!!!"

No, I Won't Buy Your Japanese Cialis Offer

Dear Spammer:

I can understand your desire to sell me Rolex watches at 1/10th the usual price, and I appreciate your willingness to share the priceless opportunity to purchase Viagra cheaply and anonymously. Yet when you send me spam in Japanese, I cannot utilize your generous offers. Leave me alone!

Straight from the Very Sincere Horse's Mouth

“People aren’t objective. They’ll believe what they want, but believing doesn’t make it true.”

“Right, like for a long time people thought the earth was flat, and the universe circled around the earth.”

“Or that evolution is true, when creationism has disproved it so many times.”

Very awkward, confused silence.

So Much for My Blue Skies

Waiting days with bated breath. Checking mailbox every day, twice, thrice. Wrong polarizer last time; sent it back, no-go on my little camera. Nothing but blue skies do I see. Right one this time, winging its way. Gorgeous, sunny days slip by.

It’s here! Forecast: cloudy, snowy, overcast.

G

Gleaming, gorgeous, glittering. Gloriously golden-age, gaining glamorous grins. Given giggles, gains good graphics. Goggle-eyed geeks glance greedily, gingerly Googling “gorgeous graphic,” “godlike gif” (good Googling? Gad golly, no). Gimme great, gaudy, glamorous lenses!

If human beings were merely self absorbed, all good and lasting things would wither. – Kass, *Beyond Therapy*, 266

Is the purpose of medicine to make us perfect, or to make us whole? And, medicine’s purpose aside, would we really be better off as individuals (happier and more fulfilled) and as a society (more cultivated, more accomplished, more just) if we had more perfect and more ageless bodies? – Kass, *Beyond Therapy*, 201

But there is a danger that our new pharmacological remedies will keep us “bright” or impassive in the face of things that ought to trouble, sadden, outrage, or inspire us—that our medicated souls will stay flat no matter what happens to us or around us. – Kass, *Beyond Therapy*, 255