

THE PUPPET POETS SERIES

GROWL

AND OTHER POEMS

FILIP NOTERDAEME

Introduction by

Lisa Jarnot

NUMBER ONE



GROWL

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

FILIP NOTERDAEME

‘ Unscrew the locks from the doors!
Unscrew the doors themselves from their jambs!’



antoine lefevre editions

Paris

I fervently admire Filip Noterdaeme's nomadic provocations, his pungent iconoclasm, his Duchampian refusals and backflips. Growl applies topical intellectual ointment exactly where the wounds are; we find ourselves salved by his fugitive shenanigans and rigorous coqueties. May the Noterdaeme carnival keep touring the world and entertaining all readers hungry for high-wire manifestos!

–Wayne Koestenbaum

Filip Noterdaeme has done it again! Clearly he will leave no tome unturned in his quest to reignite the passionate power of art. Total appropriation can only lead to revolution in the hands of someone so fearless and reckless!

–Penny Arcade

The wonder of the thing is not that Noterdaeme has found a fellowship with Ginsberg, but that he, from the very depths, seems to have illuminated the terminus of the Whitmanic line.

–Lisa Jarnot

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DEDICATION

To—

Daniel Isengart, precursor of New York's Nouveau Cabaret scene, who exuded sophistication in fourteen cabaret shows produced in as many years (1997-2011)—*The Importance of Being Elvis*, *Cabaret Artistique*, *Foreign Affairs*, *The Boulevard of Berlin Dreams*, *Do You Nomi Now*, *Rouge*, *Liederabend*, *The Seven Deadly Sins*, *Now More Than Ever*, *Starlight*, *Because I'm Worth It*, *Drama*, *Tender is the Night*, *Kulturshock*, and *Mind and Matter*—creating a multilingual Kleinkunst act and original modern cabaret. Several phrases of *Growl* are taken from him.

Rick Whitaker, author of *An Honest Ghost*, a mosaic novel which will get everybody guessing.

Rich Benjamin, author of *Searching for Whitopia*, a work of non-fiction (2009) which delighted me.

Their distinct voices should be heard in this world.



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GROWL FOR ANDREW SOLOMON

When he was forty-eight and I was forty-six I got to know Filip Noterdaeme, the author of *The Autobiography of Daniel J. Isengart* and the director of the Homeless Museum of Art. He was living in Brooklyn Heights, New York, where he, son of a Belgian diplomat, had moved in 1996. I was much intrigued by the life he had created about him during those first years after having been expelled from graduate school where he had exhibited *The Pussy Painting*, an unholy marriage of Magritte's *La Trahison des images* [*Ceci n'est pas une pipe*] and Courbet's *L'Origine du monde*. He was always on the point of being told to go away, where, it didn't matter; he much disturbed professors, curators, gallerists, and museum directors who thought he'd never "grow up". His ability to survive and go on agitating astonishes them. That he has gone on developing and perfecting his art is no less amazing to them.

Now he turns up two years later with an arresting poem. This time it is *Howl* by Allen Ginsberg that has gone, line by line, through the experience of Noterdaeme's "homoplagiarism." The wonder of the thing is not that Noterdaeme has found a fellowship with Ginsberg, but that he, from the very depths, seems to have illuminated the terminus of the Whitmanic line. Say what you will, Noterdaeme proves to us that the most debasing experiences that life can offer us, from Twitter to the Nespresso machine, are here to stay, heralding the homo sapiens' decline into oblivion.

But is there a place where the spirit of love survives to ennoble our lives if we have the wit and the courage and the faith—and the art to persist? It is the belief in everyday creativity that has gone hand-in-hand with Noterdaeme into his Golgotha, the Guggenheim Museum, where he is some-

times employed as a gallery lecturer. He sees through and all around the horrors he partakes of in that charnel house and on the streets of his metropolis. He avoids nothing but experiences it to the hilt. He documents the turning point from *Howl* to *Growl*, the advent of the digital age and the victory of global capitalism—perhaps the very end of the world. And yet, there is a place he claims as his own, with those artists he believes in, and laughs with, who have also had the time and effrontery to love that which is not phony, and to record their own genius in their well-made designs.

Lisa Jarnot

GROWL

for
Andrew Solomon

I

I am seeing the worst minds of my generation redeemed by money,
 eager ambitious loaded,
 working their way up the career path at Yale looking for a fast
 shortcut,
 square-headed bankers vying for the urgent timely connection to
 the star-studded club in the machinery of might,
 who orderly and pampered and manicured and demanding speak
 ill texting in the overachieving glow of skyscraper digs ris-
 ing above the fray of downtown contemplating golf,
 who flash their dicks in selfies in the shower and stalk meat-packing
 interns staggering on cobblestones polished,
 who fall up the ladder with hungry cold eyes guzzling Red Bull and
 neon-light travesty among the colonels of economics,
 who are nominated Least Likely to Succeed & make out like a ban-
 dit on the heels of Steve Jobs,
 who lean back in executive offices in suspenders, pooling their money
 in laundry baskets and hopping to the beat of the Dow,
 who cruise around Saint Tropez returning through Mykonos with
 a pillbox hat for Mother's Day,
 who chew burgers in first class or drink Coke in French vineyards,
 Diet, or educate their six-packs squat after squat
 with bills, with cash, with friendly deceptions, Twit-ter tweets and
 stocks and trusty funds,
 impervious blind spots of calculating minds and action on the
 screen zooming in on landmarks of Detroit and Baltimore,

anticipating all the unbearable lightness of leisure,
 Superfluous amenities of lofts, Brooklyn Two Trees Management
 condos, blond ADD on the terrace, boutique boroughs of
 doorstep deliveries Freon chilling muggy night, Fiji Water
 and car vibrations in the soaring summer heat of Montauk,
 Facebook postings and compulsive glib comments,
 who swipe complimentary metrocards for the handy ride from
 Wall Street to Fulton on caffeine until the cloying proofread
 Poetry in Motion makes them feel squeaky clean refreshed
 and inspired wide awake all ready for success in the T-Mo-
 bile LED light,
 who drink all night in Mojito haze in South Beach pass out and
 sleep through the hot rum monsoon in resplendent jacuzzis,
 swinging to the beat of Spotify on the candy pink iPod,
 who text continuously seventeen hours from iPhone to iPad to lap-
 top to Lapland to shot glass to Google Glass,
 a new generation of neocon democrats crawling up the ranks of
 Whitehall of deregulation of free market enterprise out of
 1984,
 high high-jacking faking omitting incriminating facts and memos
 and binders full of women and stacks of shareholders and
 stats and slots,
 overachievers engaged in total control for seven years and
 decades with clenched jaws, cash for the charity wasted on
 the tab,
 who appear out of nowhere Paris Texas forwarding a trail of blurry
 cellphone pictures of the busy Brooklyn Bridge,
 enjoying Thai massage and Korean Bar-becues and blowjobs of
 Russia under leave of absence in Kuwait's slick hotel rooms,
 who squander again and again at midnight in the headquarters
 wondering where to hide, and hide, avoiding Occupy pro-
 testers,

who store their data on Dropbox Dropbox Dropbox inflating
through smoke towards Ponzi schemes in secret delight,
who study Adam Smith Milton Friedman probability and pop psy-
chology because that bullshit definitively vibrates with the
boys in Chelsea,
who surf through the pages of Grindr seeking dominant alpha
males who are dominant alpha males,
who only think they've been had when Obama declines the Ice
Bucket Challenge,
who interrupt conversations with the chairman of BP Oil on the
impulse of competitive conspicuous shopping sprees,
who stroll lazy and blasé through Paris seeking bling or fun or
poop, and cheer the lippy barman waxing poetics about
America and freedom, a generous tip, and so take hold of
Africa,
who disappear into the casinos of Mexico leaving behind nothing
but the smell of clean sheets and the drama and flash of Net-
flix projected in 3D surround sound,
who reappear on the front News explaining the deficit in stars and
stripes with big emphatic smiles spotless in their pinstripe
suits broadcasting birthday wishes,
who burn through bonuses on weekends celebrating the addictive
chocolate glaze of real estate,
who hand out superfluous advice on Salon dot com preening and
prancing while the singers of American Idol bring down the
house, and bring down Cher, and the economy is also going
down,
who break into smiles in white galleries ecstatic and rambling
before the miracle of floating basketballs,
who kiss buddies on the cheek and sigh with relief in limousines for
denouncing all crimes but their own manic social travesty
and anal fixation,

who bemoan the fate of the bees and the trees and then board a
plane carrying babies and Gucci bags,
who get their homes purged of all sass by saintly immigrants, and
beam with pride,
who screw and get screwed by those smart contortionists, the lob-
byists, heroes of American and European business,
who feel good in the morning in the evenings in fitting rooms and
the seats of private planes and penthouses scattering their
brains compulsively to whatever come what may,
who google themselves trying to giggle but wind up with a sob
about indiscretion on HuffPo when the tall & tired butler
comes to feed them with a macaroon,
who lost their bids to the three buddies from law school the law
school buddy of the heterosexual persuasion the law school
buddy that wanks under his desk and the law school buddy
that does nothing but snack on Goldfish and pop the virtual
bubble wrap of the Amazon's doom,
who negotiate erratic and obstinate with a list of trades a manager a
package of incentives a profit margin and close the deal, and
continue along the lines and past the fine print and end up
writing on the wall with conclusions of ultimate gains and
feign including the last gizmos of social consciousness,
who mark up the pitches of a million sales brimming in the file cab-
inet, on the red-eye in the morning but prepared to sweeten
the deal with the White House, squishing earmarks under-
cover and splendid in the grass,
who get into hoarding at Walmart with myriad gadgets on sale,
M. Z., poster child for these poems, entrepreneur and nerd
of Harvard—here's to the memory of the forgotten days of
real friendships with real faces & real books in real life, in
studios filled with junk, on fire escapes of lofts or with per-
fect strangers in spontaneous playful courting games & espe-

cially cozy kitchen talks of dreamers, & nightclub dance floors too,
who flock to see the latest indie movie, practice yoga in teams, work on a speeding air train, and think themselves out of the ordinary jogging with delish Kombucha and tremors of Union Square farmer stands & bemoan their compromised orifices,
who work out all day with their heart in their pants on the Elliptical looking for the remote for the flat screen to find the channel full of steaming food porn,
who create fake psychodramas at intimate dinner parties in the Hamptons under the red alert flickering of scented candlelight & their tantrum shall be rewarded with cupcakes in heaven,
who eat the Kobe beef of the procrastination or order Apple-tinis at the lobby bar of the Bowery Hotel,
who sleep through the premiere at the Met with their iPhones full of emails and bad music,
who sit in boxes gloating in their coolness in Madison Square Garden, and rise up to build recognition on Pinterest,
who golf on the windy hills of the DR lined with lampions under the neon sky surrounded by sunbleached relics of ecology,
who eBay all night bidding and pouring over vintage reproductions which in the early morning are promptly delivered by FedEx,
who eat kaiseki-style blowfish tuna sushi salmon sashimi & shawarma talking of their pure vegetable diet,
who elbow themselves to the top looking for Jesus,
who grow their beards extra long to be with the “in” crowd for eternity in Williamsburg, & style guides clutter their mailbox every day ever since,
who cut their losses three times without regret regretfully, move on

and decide to start startup companies that are thought to be growing fast and die,
who burn several calories in their elegant workout suits at Equinox gyms amid blasts of nonstop news and the tank-top clad iron trainers of moguls & the never-ending chitchat of the hedge fund fudgepackers & the laughing gas of hyperventilating yogis, or binge-watch catty dogfights on the Real Housewives of Wherever,
who join a progressive church this actually happens and walk away applauded and celebrated into the admiring gaze of Stumptown coffee baristas and waitresses, make that a double shot,
who log into Windows in anticipation, move to Eurotrash Cobble Hill, swim in a saltwater pool, rip off Mexicans, love the cheese at Trader Joe's, prance in vintage Manolo Blahniks download MP3 files of celebrated French 1990's DeeJay remixes order takeout and spew Chia seeds shouting into their bloody cellphone, beeps in their ears and the blast of colossal leafblowers,
who cajole up the Highline in Chelsea journeying to each other's post-modern post-structural fix or Jeff Koons's train wreck,
who wait in line seventy-two hours to find out if I have a password or you have a password or he has a password to get the last Cronut,
who journey to St. Barth's, who lunch in St. Barth's, who come back to St. Barth's & sunbathe in vain, who talk about St. Barth's & shop and drop in St. Barth's and finally go away to find out about Dubai, & now St. Barth's is longing for their dollars,
who climb up the stairs in spineless museums vying for each other's art collection and lovers and assets, until the Duchamp interrupts their glow for a second, who fight their boredom with cocaine paid for through popular non-profits with

noble mission statements and the charm of do-gooders up their noses singing “Sweet Home Alabama,”
 who move to Florida to avoid taxes, or Lake Como to meet George Clooney or Portland for latte’s or southern California for wetback rednecks or Sag Harbor to the Rockies to Aspen to the baggage claim or spa,
 who demand monthly promotions accusing HR of nepotism & give in to their insanity & their hobbies & a hung masseur,
 who blow air kisses at CNN presenters on Labor Day and subsequently present themselves on the marble steps of the courthouse with ascot ties and stump speeches of equal opportunity, demanding in-stantaneous autonomy,
 and who instead marry the collective comfort of Ritalin Prozac TV Guide paleo diet vegan diet gluten-free diet pilates & Viagra,
 who in feisty ambition finance their own private chamber orchestra, filling concert halls with their friends
 discovering years later the exceptional joys of gay fatherhood thanks to *in vitro* fertilization, surrogate moms pedigreed egg donors and the peer pressure of the Village,
 Empire State’s Citicorp’s and Time Warner’s gilded halls, echoing with the bickerings of consumerism, sparkling and glowing in the midnight twenty-four seven sadness of minimum wage, American dream a nightmare, souls turned to ice as cold as Ben & Jerry’s,
 with Maddoff finally ***** , and the new bestselling eBookflung out of the cab’s window, and the new bar closed before it could open and the new smartphone jammed between buns by mistake and the new cabaret room closed but for a handful of nostalgic fans, a pink slip handed on a silver tray in the lobby, and even that a wakeup call, just another grim little piece of reality—

ah, Andrew, while you're sitting pretty I am not safe, and now
you're really in the total animal soup of fame—
and who forever run through their bullet points obsessed with the
sudden rise of the tipping point of the use of tablets the fire-
wall the iCloud & the Nespresso machine,
who skype and make intricate deals at Saxon & Parole through
brokers competing, and flip the transaction of the day
between 2 power breakfasts and join the young collectors'
club and set the price and value of mid-career artists higher
jumping with giddiness of omnipotent Larry Gagosian
to imitate the style and lifestyle of real New Yorkers and stand
before you self-conscious and diligent and burning with zeal,
hesitant yet purging out the soul to conform to the laws of
money in their splendid little heads,
the trust fund babies and fashion brats at Condé Nast, witless, yet
putting in print what might be left to say in time before the
deadline,
and rise dolled up in goth T-shirts from Urban Outfitters in the
golden mall of midtown and blow the desire of America's
collective mind for earnestness into "clap along if you feel
like that's what you wanna do" ringtones that crashed the
internet down to the last laptop
with the utmost importance of the business of art hammered into
their own brains good to last until the last lonelylaugh.

II

What swine of shiny alluring gold is twisting their heads around
and dilutes their brains and imagination?

Money! Ecstasy! Greed! Corruptness! Bitcoins and endless dol-
lars! Brokers dealing behind a smoke screen! Girls danc-
ing at the Grammys! White sharks swimming in formal-
dehyde!

Money! Money! Nightmare of Money! Money the priceless!
Crazy Money! Money the sexy seducer of men!

Money the voluntary prison! Money the wishbone jailhouse rock
and win win situations! Money whose fantasies are myr-
iad!

Money the obscene reason for war! Money the puppet govern-
ments!

Money whose mind is sheer math! Money whose sweat is running
pearls! Money whose fingers are blood-smeared! Money
whose face is a corporate cannibal! Money whose ears are for-
ever dumb!

Money whose eyes are a thousand blind lawyers! Money whose
skyscrapers rise along the Hudson like early morning
erections! Money whose sweatshops smoke and croak in
China! Money whose fossil fuel and fracking pollute the
cities!

Money whose lure is an endless easy street! Money whose fuel
is big hopes and dreams! Money whose abundance is the
sphincter of genius! Money whose legs are a pair of fat
Havanas! Money whose mind is the wind!

Money in whom I trust! Money in which I take refuge! Mad
about money! A sucker for Money! Loved and admired for
money!

Money that fulfills all my dreams! Money that makes me feel like I am somebody! Money that pushes me into ecstatic stupidity! Money that I depend on! Plunge into money! Numbers lining up on the lottery draw!

Money! Money! Luxury penthouses! gentrified neighborhoods! pilfered social security! unlimited capital! outsourced productions! preemptive wars! overcrowded state prisons! loaded guns! looming drones!

They raised the rent citing money as ransom! Mom and pop stores, families, evicted! Building a city for tourists who move in and are everywhere around us!

Options! shares! evaluations! portfolios! investments! Piling up in landfills!

Lies! excuses! intimidations! charities! the whole shebang of incomprehensible legalese!

Breakdowns! Over the hill! trips and cancellations! gone with the wind! Upgrades! Tiffany's! Bulls and bears! Ten years' unlimited calls and hotlines! Fines! New products! No education! Down in the nick of Time!

Hollow phony laughter on the street! I see it all! The wild lies! the phony smiles! They're here to stay! They're living it up! to plenitude! spending! buying towers! Down by the river! and on the moon!

III

Andrew Solomon! I'm not with you in Gotham
 where you're better than I am
I'm not with you in Gotham
 where you must feel very posh
I'm not with you in Gotham
 where you stand in the shade of your father
I'm not with you in Gotham
 where you're hiring twelve assistants
I'm not with you in Gotham
 where you groan at this biting sarcasm
I'm not with you in Gotham
 where you are a great writer backed up by the same old
 machine
I'm not with you in Gotham
 where your life has become an ad and is photographed for the
 Times
I'm not with you in Gotham
 where the members of your staff no longer admit the rem-
 nants of Bohemia
I'm not with you in Gotham
 where you drink the tea of her majesty the Queen of England
I'm not with you in Gotham
 where you spy on the bodies of your trainers the hotties of the
 'burbs
I'm not with you in Gotham
 where you gloat in a tweed jacket that you're winning the
 game of the Pulitzer pingpong of the press
I'm not with you in Gotham
 where you talk on National Public Radio the apple is innocent
 and noble it will sometimes fall oddly into another orchard

- I'm not with you in Gotham
 where fifty more awards will always furnish your soul to its
 body again from its pilgrimage to a place in the dark
- I'm not with you in Gotham
 where you advise all gays with psychiatry and plot the PC
 LGBT revolution against the fairy queens of the Disco era
- I'm not with you in Gotham
 where you donate the profits of bake sales and invent gay
 family values and the gay family tree
- I'm not with you in Gotham
 where there are fifty-five-thousand mad homeless all
 together chanting the famous stanzas of Emma Lazarus
- I'm not with you in Gotham
 where you hug and kiss the New Colossus under your bed-
 sheets the New Colossus that hums all night and rocks you
 to sleep
- I'm not with you in Gotham
 where you rise up emboldened out of the trauma by your
 own soul's epiphanies advertising themselves they've come
 to make you famous the prophecy fulfills itself imaginary
 worlds collide O dandy writer do not hide O star-
 ryeyed fans of Judy the best-seller is here O Mary forget
 your underwear you're queer
- I'm not with you in Gotham
 in my dreams you walk limping from a long journey on
 the highway across America in tatters to the door of my
 museum in Brooklyn Heights

Brooklyn 2014

FOOTNOTE TO GROWL

Phony! Phony! Phony! Phony! Phony! Phony! Phony! Phony! Phony!
 Phony! Phony! Phony! Phony! Phony! Phony!

The world is phony! The soul is phony! The skin is phony! The nose
 is phony! The tongue and cock and hand and asshole phony!

Everything is phony! everybody's phony! everywhere is phony!
 everyday is an eternity! Everyman's a robot!

The bum's as phony as the CEO! the middleman is as phony as you
 my soul are phony!

The computer is phony the music is phony the voice is phony the
 listeners are phony the applause is phony!

Phony Oprah phony Abramovic phony Solomon phony Hillary
 phony Obama phony Michelle phony Patti phony Gladwell
 phony the famous pampered and bestselling authors phony
 the cosmetically enhanced superstars!

Phony my father in the United Nations! Phony the locks of the tran-
 nies of RuPaul's Drag Race!

Phony the soothing radio host! Phony the hip-hop revolution!
 Phony the pop stars Lady Gaga Justin Bieber & Pharrell &
 Beyoncé!

Phony the galas at museums and Lincoln Center! Phony the chat
 rooms filled with the needy! Phony the mysterious flow of
 cash in the street!

Phony the suffering poet! Phony the last cry of Bohemia! Phony the
 socially engaged artists! Who digs New York I HEART New
 York!

Phony Brooklyn Phony San Francisco Phony Portland & Seattle
 Phony Berlin Phony Basel Phony Miami Phony Abu Dhabi!

Phony life in serenity phony serenity in life phony the universal cov-
 erage phony the social contract phony the peace talks phony
 the agents of change!

Phony the city phony the country phony the unions phony the low
emission car phony the image phony the congratulations
phony the “likes” phony the camera phony the progress!

Phony forgiveness! mercy! charity! faith! Phony! Ours! Vanity! Pre-
tense! Egomania!

Phony the profitable extra manipulative advertised kindness of the
soul!

MALL OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK

What thoughts I have of you tonight, Allen Ginsberg, for I walked up the staircase under the atrium with a heartache self-conscious looking at the banners.

In my desperate need, and hoping for enlightenment, I went into the neon-lit Museum of Modern Art, dreaming of your illuminations!

What blockbusters and what flurries! Whole busloads pushing for a glimpse! Galleries full of tourists! Wives by the Pissarros, bullies by the Picassos!—and you, Wayne Koestenbaum, what were you doing up by the Brancusis?

I saw you, Allan Ginsberg, joyful, horny old pervert, cruising the tour guides in the lavatory and eyeing the security guards.

I heard you asking questions of each: Who drilled the glory hole? Touch my banana? Are you my Devil?

I wandered along and past the surveyed rows of silkscreens following you, and followed with indignation by the chief of security.

We strode down the open atrium together in our solid hilarity mimicking brushstrokes, caressing every frozen gesture, and never breaking the veneer.

Where are we going, Allen Ginsberg? The doors close in an hour. Which way does your dick point tonight?

(I tip my hat and dream of our immodesty in the museum and feel restored.)

Will we chat all night in solidary strength? Our steps add sound to sound, lights out in the museum, we'll both be cozy.

Will we drool dreaming of the loved America of lust past sex saunas in dark alleys, home to our stealthy frottage?

Ah, dear brother, gay bard, horny old provocateur, what America did you leave when Reagan kept poking his Nancy and you got out on the fire escape and sat watching the Pepsi sign shine beyond the black waters of East River?

Brooklyn 2014

TRANSCRIPTION OF OVAL MEDITATION

The egg in the porcelain cup formerly inside the chicken poised to reveal its bright yoke,
 the toaster popped, because I used it before, it kindly presented a golden toast for me, its owner.

I began to feel my appetite at breakfast table, listening to chicks peep,
 my appetite, that's why I want to eat.
 The ceiling opened up to me, I expected the presence of the chicken,
 I saw the white clouds and blue sky, they brightened my room,
 they lifted me
 as the floor turned into pastures,
 I cracked the egg

The rooster climbed up the chicken coop, the feed in the trough still where the boy had placed it, the fluffy bodies of the chicks where they had awoken
 to bask in the sun

Can I inhabit the egg? Will thoughts of ovulation crack open my mental shell?

The secret search for perfection, the curious desire to lay an egg, my ultimate fantasy of roosting among the hens
 The privilege to share their existence—I too must exhibit myself..

My jams lined up before me for my delectation
 waiting in jars where I stored them, they haven't disappeared, time's left their bounty and sweetness for me to savor—the berries confected, the peached, the apricots, the cherries.

I had a moment of clarity, saw the perfection in the shape of things, ran to the deli beaming.

Saw the egg cartons in the neon light, closing time, they had all expired, that very day, and were waiting still good to use for a cook to come and take them....

Eggs which as in a dream in the morning I boiled carefully unable to decide for how long.

I am so hungry in my robe — except they too in the coop — I peered at them, those sharp orange beaks pecking and peaking out the window waiting in desperate hope, their wings too have aspirations but are tragically too small for the sky — not all birds being created equal — to receive their plump little bodies.

The sun descends, as do the grey window shades of the bedroom, because I want them to, to be cosy, to cherish every moment of the night.

The world loves the warmth that's in the bed as in the down feather, the soft plush bounty.

This comforter is fluffy.

The light sockets are safely attached to the ceiling, after the coop was built, to receive infrared heat lamps which shed a warm light, and keep the chicks happily toasty all night...

The bedroom window is open for air, the way I like it, since I left it ajar, it has graciously stayed open.

My bed is a king-size, the second half will admit anyone should I wish to invite someone.

I remember when I first got laid, J.P. greedily took my cherry, I sat on the cock of Providence, age 19, scared, petrified in fear of the plague, the slab to the tomb was open to admit me if he came inside.

There are unread cookbooks all over my house if you ever need them.

The chicken coop door is locked, to be safe...

The cellphone — happy to admit — sits on the shelf — I never bother to pick up —

I want people to bow when they see an egg and say it is cheer perfection, it puts poetry into poultry.

And the chicken laid another egg to gratify my wish, so as not to cheat me of my yearning for it.

Brooklyn 2014

FOIE GRAS SUTRA

I walked around the suburbs of Langley Virginia and sat down across from the Central Intelligence Agency's headquarters to look at the sunset over the modern edifice and think.

Daniel Isengart sat beside me on a foldable camping chair, companion, we thought the same thoughts of the soul, joyful and happy and blue-eyed, surrounded by the tidy red fields of planted tulips.

The blue glass on the building mirrored the red sky, sun sank on top of sloping Fairfax County hills, no cars on that parking lot, no agents in those towers, just ourselves, bright-eyed and rested like an old couple on their anniversary, pensive and peaceful.

Have some foie gras, he said, there was a tasty pink slab in his palm, thick as a brick, sitting moist on top of a slice of toasted brioche —

— I grabbed it enchanted — it was my first foie gras, visions of Stein — her intellectualized fat — mother goose of Montparnasse and Heavens of the Shenandoah river, bridges arching, Joes crunchy crabcakes, old-fashioned horse carriages, shiny undulating George Washington Memorial Parkway paved and repaved, the poem of agriculture, farmers & ranchers, boiled peanuts, always fresh, nothing but the blissful haze and laid-back days passing by one by one —

and the pink foie gras gleaming in the sunset, softly plump and delicious with the texture and taste and aroma of gastronomic traditions in its heart —

pounds of fattening grains pushed down and digested by the battered goose, feathers ruffled out of place, soon-to-be-liverless body of delicate flesh, humane treatment obliterated on its dire existence like a yellow rubber duck,

wings spread out like arms of a scarecrow, feeding tube in its sore

throat, electric fence of wire singeing the waddling feet, a desperate plea on dumb ears,
 Holy classic French dish you were, my foie gras O my craving, I refuted you then!
 The culinary crime was no legal crime but gavage brings to my mind the CIA,
 all that stress of danger, that veil of darkened committed secrecy, that smug arrogance, that boot of dark righteousness, that bloody hand or waterboarding or use of rectal rehydration — sadistic — ineffective — all that horror staining your crazy American flag —
 And those bleak threats of death and cloudy lifeless eyes and minds and wounded feet below, in the Cuban backdrop of sand and palm trees, surgical rubber gloves, thick-skinned guards, the guts and innards of the weeping coughing detainees, the hired smart psychologists with their monkish ingenuity in torture, what more could I name, the smokescreen of persistent lies, the denial of human rights and the mad posturing of politicians, repeated phrases out of pulp fiction & appeals to national security — all these
 involved in the Detention and Interrogation Program — and you there resting in the palm of my hand, all your glory in your fat!
 A perfect lobe of foie gras! A perfect excellent lovely foie gras dish! a silk sweet morsel for the discerning culinary aficionados, marinated in Armagnac and slow-cooked in the bain-marie white terrine glowing electric oven!
 How many gluttons praised you indifferent of your plight, while you cursed the heavens of your holding pen and your goose soul?
 Poor foie gras? when did I forget that you were a goose? when did I taste your flesh and neglect you were a delicious horrid product of cruelty? the result of cruelty? the pinnacle and beacon of a once ruthless mad French gastronomy?

You too are a victim, foie gras, just like a detainee!
And you, CIA, you are a government agency, remember that!
So I took the delicate fragrant foie gras and threw it at the building
like a stone,
and deliver my sermon to my soul, and Daniel's soul, too, and anyone
who'll listen,
—We'll stop eating foie gras, we won't tolerate the CIA's dreadful
bleak enhanced interrogation technique, we'll chose chopped
chicken liver instead, blessed by our own ethical beliefs & rad-
ical raw complicated minds growing into mad cynical bohe-
mians in the city, spied on by the government under the guise
of the mad national security twilight American hilly Langley
evening sitdown vision.

France 2015

LGBT

LGBT I used to belong and now I'm alone.
 LGBT three point eight percent (3.8%)
 April 2011.
 I'm trying to wrap my mind around this.
 LGBT when will you end the pronoun war?
 Go fuck yourself with your political correctness.
 I don't need you don't police me.
 I won't write my poem till I get this right.
 LGBT when will you be queer again?
 When will you stop wearing suits?
 When will you look at yourself in the mirror?
 When will you be worthy of your millions of pansies?
 LGBT why are your smartphones full of hookup apps?
 LGBT when will you stop breeding?
 I'm sick of your family values.
 When can I meet someone in the real world and not
 worry about my look?
 LGBT after all it is them who are square not you and I.
 Your gender identity politics are too much for me.
 You make me want to be straight.
 There must be some other way to settle this argument.
 RuPaul is being censored and forced to change his language it's
 sinister.
 Are you being sinister or is this some form of witch hunt?
 I'm trying to come to the point.
 I refuse to give up my queerness.
 LGBT stop patronizing me I'm not the enemy.
 LGBT the fake eyelashes are falling.
 I haven't stepped into a gay bar in years, everybody's home watching
 porn online for free.

LGBT I feel sentimental about the drag queens.
 LGBT I used to be a bottom when I was in my twenties I'm not sorry.
 I go to the opera every chance I get.
 I sit in my apartment for days on end and listen to Maria Callas
 on the toilet.
 When I go to Hell's Kitchen I get fed-up and never stay long.
 You made up your mind you are asking for trouble.
 You should have seen me reading Ginsberg.
 My gay dentist thinks I'm perfectly nuts.
 I won't use the pronoun v.
 I have operatic fantasies and musical epiphanies.
 LGBT I still haven't told you what you did to my friend Rick after he
 was barred from adopting a four-year old.

I'm addressing you.
 Are you going to let your intellectual life be run by Out Magazine?
 I'm obsessed by Out Magazine.
 I read it every month.
 Its cover stares at me every time I slink past the magazine rack at
 Barnes & Noble.
 I read it in the waiting room of my dentist's office.
 It's always telling me about new HIV drugs. Fashion designers are
 happy. Out actors are happy. Everybody's happy but me.
 It occurs to me that I am LGBT.
 I am talking to myself again.

Trans activists are taking over
 I haven't got a faggot's chance.
 I'd better consider my inner queendom.
 My inner queendom consists of two hits of poppers countless cocked
 eyebrows an outrageous patterned wardrobe that burns 1400
 calories per meal and twenty-five-thousand flaming creatures.

I say nothing about my back rooms nor the millions of effeminate queers who prance in front of Saks Fifth under the flash of Bill Cunningham.

I have abolished the Gaiety in Times Square, the Fire Island Pines is next to go.

My ambition is to become a priest despite the fact that I'm a homo.

LGBT how can I write a sassy parody in your earnest mood?

I will continue like James Franco my strophes are as individual as his selfies more so they're all full frontal.

LGBT I will post my strophes on Twitter 30 characters over the 140 character limit

LGBT lock up Ellen Degeneres

LGBT save the Cockettes

LGBT Sir Elton John & *David Furnish* must stop procreating

LGBT I am the Golden Girls.

LGBT when I was 30 Joey Arias took me to Mother the club in the meatpacking district we cabbled there from Bar d'O a cocktail was \$5 and the show was free everybody was sexy and insouciant about gender identity it was all so liberating you have no idea what a good thing that party was in 1995 Johnny Donnell was a real hunk a total sweetheart ChiChi Valenti made me blush I once saw Lady Bunny naked. Joey Arias tongue-kissed everybody.

LGBT you don't really want to be radical.

LGBT it's them nasty she-males.

Them she-males them she-males and them tranny ho's. And them she-males.

The she-male won't go away. The she-male's not really trans. She wants to have her titties and cock too.

She wants to move into Chelsea. She demands a float on Gay Pride. She wants our sperm banks in Canada. Him truck-driving

dyke running our public schools.

I don't think so. Puh-leeze. Orange is the new black. Transparent on Amazon Originals. Hah. We protest non-trans actors playing trans characters. Help.

LGBT this is ridiculous.

LGBT this is the impression I get from looking in the blogosphere.

LGBT is this correct?

I'd better get right down to the job.

It's true I don't want to join your cause to become the new normal or a law-abiding homo Christian, I'm too devious and perverted for you.

LGBT I'm opting my queer ass out of your new-fangled bigotry.

IN THE TEACHERS LOUNGE AT LOYOLA

I

In the depths of the Loyola School
correcting numbly a language test looking at the ceiling waiting
for the spring semester to end
thinking about purgatory inside the Renaissance Revival build-
ing in the midday fancy Upper East Side hell,
bitting my nails I realized shuddering these thoughts were purga-
tory, as the monotony of our lives, miserable school teach-
ers,
as the hundreds of tired students mumbling the pledge of alle-
giance stifling yawns,
as other hundreds of tired minds dragged around from class to
class to stare at blackboards,
as a Jesuit closeted for life talking to a handsome sophomore by
the water cooler,
as this sinister old secretary with rosalia typing the same memo
all her life,
as the red-nosed alcoholic librarian collecting his paycheck and
cursing about the tax deductions,
as me looking around at the horrifying reality,
as illiterate black Headmaster named Dr. Caesar, commenting
with his labored solemnity on the tragedy of thousands of
7/11 victims,
as Father Mike in the chapel farting from celestial hymn to
hymn
as Ms. Kusk at the desk with her nervous breakdown smiling
cowardly at the Headmistress,
as the yellowed cavernous General Electric fridge where the
teachers keep their lunch in hideous stacks,

dozens of plastic containers full of leftovers rotting by the minute waiting to be consumed,
 as the teachers who are fired, as anorexic students, report cards filed,
 ancient computers & sluggish Internet, whole lives corroded for the sake of a salary,
 as satchels emptied onto the desk in a sudden panic attack.

II

Yet Dr. Caesar reminded me of Brent, unraveling a speech,
 dressed in a JC Penny Suit, New York Times writer Brent's editorial rap,
 asking with his loud voice for contributions for Loyola's Annual
 Canned Food Drive,
 beaming with pride as he passed the altar of the St. Ignatius Church
 and holding high over his head a box filled with soup cans.

III

It was the staff, I realized, sitting down at the communal table as is
 my fate at lunchtime to endure their tired talk
 it was the staff, militant soldiers of Jesus and secretaries teachers and
 administrators mingling under one roof loaded with emotional
 baggage
 — the math teacher's revolting snack of canned tuna assiduously
 microwaved and eaten with Hellman's Mayo,
 one Spanish Jesuit Father with a heavy accent wearing a clerical collar
 for identification,
 playing charades all at once for distraction,
 dreams of Hawaiian getaways,
 cliques of colleagues pining for happy hour, desperate for booze,
 one heinous nun for drama,

a stout box of a man for gym class
 and a mousy red-haired heap of misery for history —
 it was the faculty and each member's wretched story I saw clearly in
 neon light the day before I quit,
 the staff was assembled to hear the sermon, to keep us in check, a
 conditioning of the mind,
 St. Ignatius's only way of building the obedient Society of Jesus,
 to prep the students to go forth and set the world afire, to do our job
 day after day
 living for a lottery ticket to deliver us from a life in purgatory where
 the heart was empty and aspirations withered.

IV

A swarm of students streaming into the building as the recess bell
 reigns them in.
 The clock registering 12:15 P.M., June 9, 2002, the second hand mov-
 ing forward, red.
 Getting ready to teach my last class.— Farewell, French grammar les-
 sons tests corrections gradings faculty meetings
 Flat-footed Sister Nora, master of tyranny.
 One last stack of grading papers sits at 5 PM balancing on a pile of
 trash atop a soggy Folgers coffee filter.

The wage they pay us is enough to drown your sorrows. Dependency
 created by numbers.
 This for the poor mentors. I am an aristocrat.

Farewell ye Loyola School where I suffered so much,
 nearly lost my mind and developed an ulcer and learned to knot a tie
 tight as a pussy.

COBBLE HILL TOURETTE

You know what the woman
said to me
...on the beach of Tel Aviv,
you know what the
woman told me, you
wanna guess...

I wanna tell
you — I want you
to remember this
and shove it up
your vagina...
shove it up
tight your va-
gi-
na...

You're fucking sick,
even Hitler knew how
to do it —
Ah, my pussy stinks...
my dogs have diarrhea.

LAMENT

The curse of the day
 is pruritis ani.
Under the agony
 of madness,
under the agony
 of debilitation

 the curse,
the curse I suffer
 is pruritis ani.

Who can deny?
 In daylight
it itches
 the body,
in darkness
 reaches
a climax,
 in imagination
anguishes
 till seen
on anus—

looks out of the ass
 burning with impunity—
for the agony of life
 is the pinworm,

but I fight the curse
 desperately,

and so will face
 the armies of pinworms
 at last,
 will face the armies
 of pinworms.

No rest
 with the pinworm,
 no sleep
 without nightmares
 of the pinworm —
 be mad or scream
 obsessed with cures
 or remedies,
 the final wish
 is death
 — cannot be merry,
 can't even try,
 cannot relax
 if tried:

the curse is too absurd
 — must suffer
 without reprieve
 as pain
 is suffered
 in shame
 in all the viciousness
 of its excess.

The tiny bodies
 move together
in the darkness,
 the eggs deposited
just off center
 of the anus,
the skin trembles
 in horror
and the itch comes
 vengeful to the ass—

no, no,
 that's what
I feared,
 I always feared,
I always feared,
 to be one
with the body
 where hell is born.

KENNETH GOLDSMITH'S CLOSE SHAVE

Blindly readers
 applaud his posturing
 on camera and in the White House
 — he's the first poet laureate of the
 Museum of Modern Art —
 and he fancies beards
 and combs them in his dreams,

so bushy sprouting willy-nilly among
 the barbed prophecies
 and long-haired tales of UBU

 to fabricate
 out of his own machination
 the quicksilver wit of noble
 Whitman — a legacy
 he cannot inherit.

Will he ever assume
 readership? Tending
 to the wounded with
 a solemn mien
 of gravitas?

 The recognition —
 something so glib
 on his lip,
 begat only in schemes
 — dilemmas
 of postmodern strife.

A question of the honor.
 And the laureates
losing their laurels
 in their immodesty
— a lock, a crest,
 a coquetry of glory.

And the barber basks
 in parlor
chitchats of routine
 a thousand compliments
ahead, welcoming
 of the Bandholz-
bearded poseur
 asking for a trim.

In front of the faux

French bistro in Cobble Hill
I walked famished
behind a soccer mom group
and sat on a stool
near the busboy's station.

Two eggs lay on a plate on
the zinc counter
— the touted heirloom eggs
I thought — they were
soft white rings and
orbs of golden shiny
yolks like baby Jesus' sacrosanct
bottom, and a toasted
crunchy English muffin half
like a lonely cow pie
that's been lying under
the sun for a week.

Golden, golden eggs, and
eggs of divinity,
poached pretty pricey eggs,
eggs Benedict,
with the recipe of the thick yellow
Hollandaise in your brain!
These are the eggs of the Pope.

Brooklyn, 2014

HOWLING AND GROWLING

The following essay tells the story of how I came up with the idea to appropriate the famous 1955 Beat poem and turn it into a stark reflection of the present. It was first published by the British online magazine *Queen Mobs Tea House*.

In the spring of 2014, curator Joseph Quintela invited me to take part in a reading he was going to host at the Undercurrent Project, a small venue in the East Village. Each participant was asked to write and bring an original haiku, a sonnet, and an elegy. I readily accepted the invitation but, ever the procrastinator, didn't get around to even begin working on the three pieces until the day before the event. I managed to compose a whimsical haiku and a sonnet that mimicked the coiled prose and sardonic tone of Gertrude Stein but got nowhere when it came to writing an elegy. After several hapless fits and starts, I scanned my books in search of inspiration. On a whim, I pulled out my old copy of Allen Ginsberg's *Howl and Other Poems*. Perusing the title poem, it hit me that I was in effect looking at an elegy. Pressed for time, I decided to lift some key phrases from *Howl* and base my elegy on them. The famous opening line, "I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness" became "I saw the worst minds of my generation redeemed by money." This decisive alteration was my breakthrough—I had finally found a directive.

At the reading on the following evening, the audience's response to my elegy was so enthusiastic that I felt compelled to tackle rewriting *Howl* in its entirety, line by line. In the following months, I completely immersed myself in *Howl*. I wanted to find out for myself if this poem, still in print nearly sixty years after its first publication and supposedly rooted deeply in America's collective consciousness, had stood the test of time. After reading up

on its history, delving into manifold academic interpretations of it and listening to recordings of Ginsberg reciting it, I wondered if *Howl*, like many other classics of American literature (Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* comes to mind), had not become the victim of its own success.

I decided to conduct a test run with a group of students from The New School. Not very surprisingly, none of them had ever really read *Howl*, although all of them claimed to have heard of it, mostly via the recent Hollywood biopic starring James Franco as Ginsberg. Reading the poem in class, I realized that many of Ginsberg's vintage references — the jukebox, the boxcars, the El, Benzedrine — carried little meaning for the students, while their own notion of a “hipster” was a far cry from Ginsberg's free spirits and political radicals. *Howl*'s romantic final mantra (“Holy the supernatural extra brilliant intelligent kindness of the soul!”) felt especially antiquated to them, accustomed as they are to the new thrills of revolutionary technology and its supposedly endless possibilities. What's more, they found it hard to believe that this old sex-and-drugs anthem had once been considered enough of a threat to social mores to be tried for obscenity. All this confirmed that *Howl*, with its “platonic conversationalists,” “saintly motorists” and “human seraphim,” rings hollow to the ears of young adults today.

Ginsberg himself recognized that there might be a need to write an update to *Howl*. During a lecture at Naropa University in 1989, he confessed: “I keep thinking I would like to be able to write another ‘Howl.’ You know like taking the problems of the eighties, like ecology and the Moral Majority, and all that.” He continued: “But you know you can't do that deliberately, it has to come accidentally almost.” I, however, had no qualms or apprehensions about writing “another” *Howl* — I have a long history of producing works that closely reference pre-existing paintings or

texts: my notorious *Pussy Painting* is a grotesque mash-up of Gustave Courbet's *L'Origine du monde* and René Magritte's *La trahison des images*, and my first book, *The Autobiography of Daniel J. Isengart*, is a postmodern adaptation of Gertrude Stein's memoir, *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*. I rolled up my sleeves and set to work. The revamped, or, rather, re-invented poem became my *J'accuse*, my open letter to a radically changed New York, a city that I dearly love and have called my home for nearly thirty years. I simply called it *Growl*.

I began by making a crucial modification to my original rewrite of the poem's opening line by changing its past tense to the present tense. This placed the entire Part One of *Growl* in the here and now. Next, I pushed the directive I had already devised for my elegy even further: whereas *Howl* had celebrated the anarchistic ethos of the romantic beatnik, *Growl* would denounce the epidemic spread of a cold-hearted value system created by a corrupt financial elite. In Part Two of *Growl*, I got down to the root of the problem and spelled it out by replacing Ginsberg's biblical *Moloch* with another, no less dangerous monster: *Money*.

Since all of Part Three of *Howl* is addressed to the poem's dedicatee, fellow writer and mentor Carl Solomon, I had to choose my own dedicatee before tackling the third part of *Growl*. Unwittingly, I thought of the only Solomon I knew, award-winning author Andrew Solomon. As luck would have it, these two Solomons turned out to have more in common than just name and profession. Both men had not only been treated for clinical depression but also written about it in great detail: Carl had published an account of his shock-therapy treatment (*Report from the Asylum: Afterthoughts of a Shock Patient*) and Andrew is the author of *The Noonday Demon, An Atlas of Depression*, which became his first bestseller.

But I had another, more important reason for replacing Carl with Andrew. Heir to a pharmaceutical fortune, Andrew, whom I had first met in 1999 and who wrote a very nice blurb for my first book in 2013, is something of a modern-day Renaissance man: PEN President, high-society darling, progressive thinker, dandy, gay husband and devoted father, philanthropist and activist in LGBT rights, mental health and the arts—Andrew does it all. His status of a well-connected, privileged over-achiever made him a perfect candidate for Part Three, in which I intended to take a sharp turn and distance myself from my dedicatee—unlike Ginsberg, who had pledged his sympathy and empathy with Carl in his. By amending Ginsberg’s incantation of “I am with you in Rockland” to “I am not with you in Gotham,” I wanted to highlight the growing chasm I perceived between Andrew’s class and self-reliant, bohemian artists like myself. I was well aware that this admission of differences could jeopardize my friendship with Andrew, whom I admire very much as a writer and who has always treated me with kindness and benevolence. But I was hopeful that he would understand that it was not my intention to personally corner or attack him. Mustering all my courage, I sent him a copy of the finished poem, explaining that *Growl* was truly neither about him nor me but rather a satire and piece of social commentary that virtually called everybody, including myself, “phony.” To my great relief, Andrew graciously replied with a letter in which he not only thanked me for having dedicated *Growl* to him (although he candidly admitted to feeling both honored and insulted by it) but also found words of praise for its mix of irony and unbridled passion. Ginsberg himself had not been that lucky with his dedicatee: reportedly, Carl Solomon had some serious misgivings about Ginsberg’s unauthorized use of his name and personal history.

Emboldened by Andrew's generous response, I thought, "Why stop here?" and promptly rewrote the other ten poems included in the original 1956 City Lights edition of *Howl and Other Poems*. This time however, after having labored for months over *Growl*, I took a lighter approach and completely let loose, distorting and perverting Ginsberg's sometimes deadly earnest, early writings to my heart's content.

When it came to choosing an epigraph for *Growl and Other Poems* that could match Ginsberg's choice of Walt Whitman, I opted for the obvious and simply kept the original: ' Unscrew the locks from the doors! Unscrew the doors themselves from their jambs! ' After all, what else had I done if not follow Whitman's exhortation? Only by ripping each and every hallowed word from the cult poem could I hope to provoke my contemporaries with a jolt that would do justice to Ginsberg's historic, poetic outcry for humanity.

Filip Noterdaeme

Also published by antoine lefebvre editions:

ANR ABRIR POSTER 1.1

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ANR ABRIR, LES MEMBRES DU GROUPE VALORISATION...

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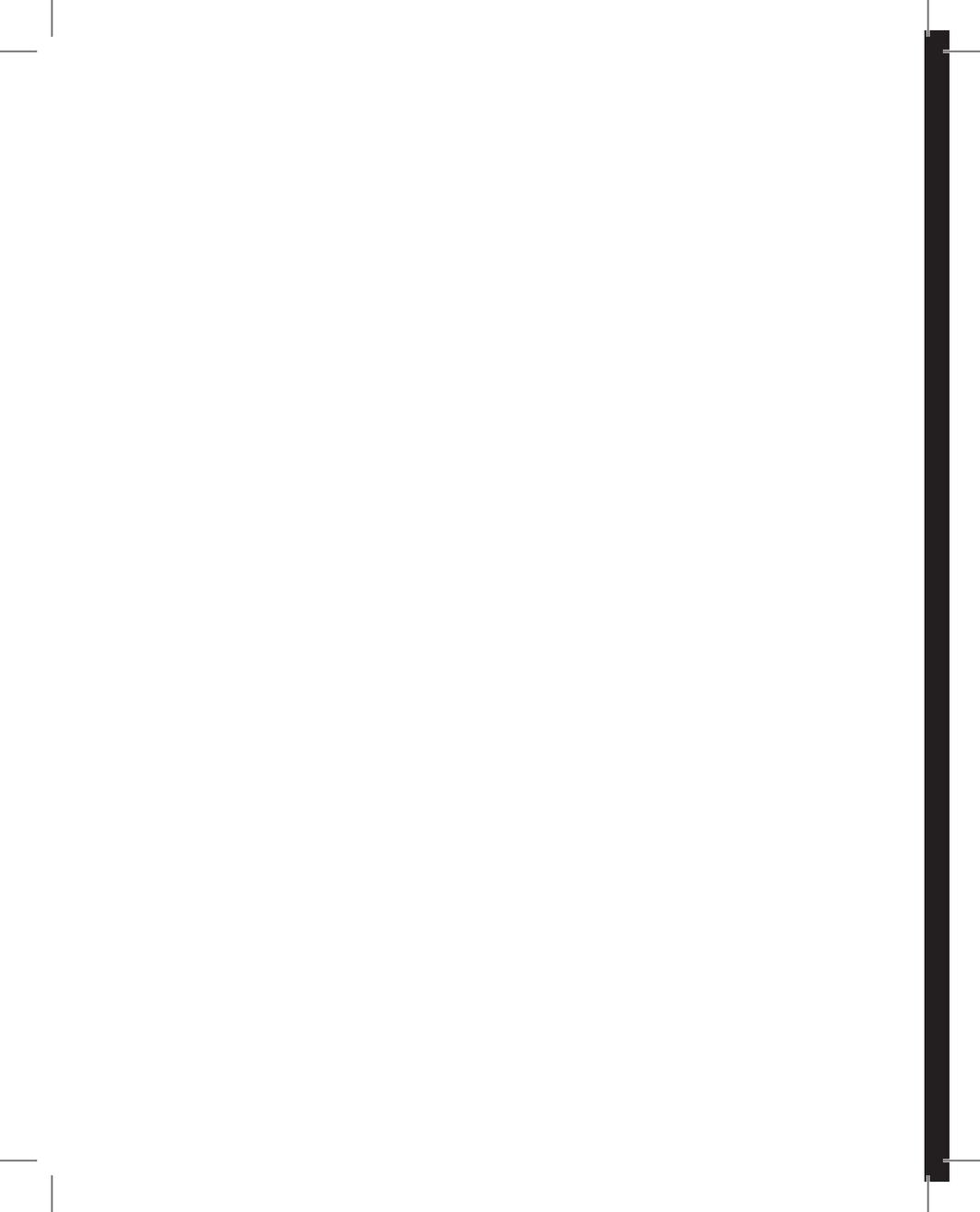
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[REDACTED]

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Filip Noterdaeme's *GROWL* was first presented by the author at a live reading at Dixon Place, New York, in the fall of 2014, in tandem with a reading of Allen Ginsberg's *HOWL* by Penny Arcade. *GROWL* was originally published in March 2015 by the British online magazine Berfrois.

Filip Noterdaeme was born March 3, 1965, the son of Ida D'Hooghe, Flemish radio host, and Paul Noterdaeme, Belgian diplomat and ambassador, in Brussels, Belgium. To these facts Noterdaeme adds: "Education in Europe till 22, School of Visual Arts, Met Opera supernumerary, Beekman Place and Williamsburg, boyfriend, East Harlem, studio assistant, painting, gallery lecturer, Brooklyn Heights, volunteer, the Pussy Painting, dismissed from Hunter College 1991, Met Museum 9 years. Later Guggenheim Museum, Master of Arts, adjunct professor at CUNY, NYU, the New School, taught French at Loyola School, quit, created The Homeless Museum of Art 2003, performed on the street to shock & awe the art world awhile. Andrew Solomon to whom *GROWL* is addressed, is a New York socialite and bestselling author."

Other books by Filip Noterdaeme: *THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF DANIEL J. ISENGART* (Outpost19) and *DEAR PROFESSOR: A CHRONICLE OF ABSENCES* (Punctum Books).



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