



FOUND POLAROIDS

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Flash Fiction as a Creative Process

This booklet is the result of a workshop exploring the material turn and its antagonistic position to prevailing digital modes of creation. Situated within the turn back to analogue processes and aesthetics, the workshop explored issues of nostalgia, the relic, object journey, collaborative creation, and the interplay between the digital and the analogue. The discussion of the above themes culminated in a flash-fiction exercise, using images from The Found Polaroids project. Participants chose a Polaroid, and writing on the back of a postcard created a short narrative inspired by the image. Here, the collected stories have been compiled, resulting in a narrative collection of subjective responses to relics from the past. This book is a tangible remnant of the workshop's discussion, with print acting as an antidote to digital ubiquity, and its contents reflecting the nostalgia we often imbue our material objects with.

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Nuvango Gallery.

Workshop facilitated by Jenny Lugar and Kyler Zeleny.
Images graciously supplied by the Found Polaroids Project
www.foundpolaroids.com



It was tequila night. The disco was in full force, and we were all having a great time. Before we knew it, Marco was really 'feelin it', and started taking his clothes off to "Jive Talkin" by the Bee Gees. It was fun at first, and then he went all the way to his briefs. When the laughing ceased, Marco realized he had gone too far and sheepishly leaned up against the wall.



I'D THROWN MYSELF IN THE CHAIR IN PROTEST.

All my friends knew how to ride a bike and I still had training wheels. I wanted – no, needed – to learn how to ride and all he would do is sit in that chair trying to sound important on the phone. But now, holding his clammy hand looking at the tears rolling from my daughter's eyes, I understand what he was really trying to do. I love ya, Dad.



DAD PROMISED IT WOULDN'T BE SCARY

– he said the new house would feel like home in no time. “No time at all.” Well Dad's a liar. He always told me to follow-through when swinging a bat, when throwing a punch, but I don't want to this time, I don't want a new school or a new house or new friends. I want my old room, my old teacher, and my old park. Well, at least the curtains are familiar. I guess we'll see, in “no time at all”.



I stayed up late the night before, planning for all of the ways that Dad could ruin my birthday. Mom assured me that the invitations has been delivered weeks in advance, the piñata was hidden well out of reach, and she would personally stand guard over my pile of presents. We were certain that this year would finally be free of any of the pranks that only Dad found hilarious. Neither of us thought he could cause any trouble if we just let him pick up the cake.



THIS WAS THE LAST TIME I REMEMBER KENZIE.

I had looked forward to seeing her because we'd both been so busy with school, and she was supposed to be at bible camp that summer. It's still hard for me to think about it. They found that cross necklace beside some rocks. I never did get a chance to talk with her at the party. I wish I'd known it would be the last time I'd see her. I miss her a lot.



MAN SHE STUNNED.

I knew she was a tough one but she stunned on and off the stage. Our tour was crumbling before our eyes. Donna bailed and I can tell you first-hand it ain't easy to find a female drummer outside of Oregon on short notice. But Lacey stunned. She stunned me right off my feet.



FATHER'S DAY NEVER MEANT MUCH TO ME.

My dad was her. The crazy, silly, fun, loving, hippie dressing, and terrible cook that she is.



WE MET ON THE BOARDWALK ON A WARM SUMMER NIGHT.

She held a pink balloon and I held a yellow one. This is where we fell in love. This is now the place I say goodbye. Today I scatter her ashes at the place our lives began.



I WASN'T YOURS BUT YOU WERE MINE.

There isn't much I remember and there's even less that she tells me about you, but I'm still holding out. You have your own life and I respect that, but who am I without you?

YOUR HAND WAS OVER MY SHOULDER CASUALLY, BUT WITH WEIGHT.

I didn't feel frustrated at your efforts to protect me – I loved your strength, I loved holding your one hand with both of mine. Running my small fingers across your calloused palm. It was reassuring. It was home.

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POLAROIDS**

How It Works

FOUND POLAROIDS

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

1. We invite you to write a short story, or a number of stories (30-50 words each) based on one of the images. The story must be relevant to an event, or based on the life of those in the photo—a story essential to the individual's character, a defining moment—or must explain, beyond what we can observe, is happening in the image.

2. The idea is to try to glimpse into the life of this person, who they are, what they did, what motivated them, etc. The short stories should be fictional and should express some intimacy towards the individual in the image. They can be written from the perspective of the individual, a friend or family member, or an impartial observer.



IT WAS MY DAUGHTER'S GRADUATION DAY,

how could I not be proud of her? My only daughter, so smart and funny and ambitious. I still hear from her on occasion, she sounds happy. I think.



MARGARET LOOKED AROUND NERVOUSLY,

hoping no one had noticed she'd been sucking on the ends of her ponytail for the better part of the last hour. She also hoped no one had noticed she'd started to do so after already chewing through the top of her pen, leaving a glob of ink on her chin and all over her right palm. She hadn't noticed the ink on her palm or face. She was too focused, willing the phone to ring. "FUCK!" she screamed in her heard, "Why won't you just fucking call?"



I don't care if Melissa refuses to acknowledge this "pagan holiday."
She needs to take a chill pill. We are the raddest pirates ever. Turns
out Darryl thought we were gonna be wrestlers but nuts to that, man.
Pirates! Yar!



Look at you stuffing your face! I called shotty on that drumstick. But since you're the youngest you always get what you want don't you, and me the oldest, I get all the responsibility. I don't mind it though, what are big brothers for!

PLACE
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LOOK AT YOU, STUFFING
YOUR FACE! I CALLED
SHOTTY ON THAT DRUMSTICK.
BUT WITHIN YOUR THE YOUNGEST YOU
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ALL THE RESPONSIBILITY. I DON'T
MIND IT THOUGH, WHAT ARE BIG
BROTHERS FOR!

NICOLAS LAIRD

BC



I sit in my speedo to feel the part. If they ask “what are you wearing?” I don’t want to lie and create a false image in their mind that they cherish. These are the struggles of a sex phone operator.



THIS IS THE THIRD TIME THE PINATA HAS BROKEN

before I've ever had the chance to take a swing. Aunt Patty swings and hits like Babe Ruth. She says she gets her practice swatting those pesky houseflies hanging around the back porch. I'd hate to be a horse fly she hits based on how those donkey piñatas explode with her epic force. Love you Aunt Patty.



ROGER NEVER MET A CAR HE COULDN'T SELL.

Or a woman he couldn't tame. Trish was no exception. The minute she stumbled into his Chrysler dealership he was already pulling out the registration paperwork and thinking about where they'd have dinner that night. Trish walked out the dealership door an hour later with the keys to a used LEBAKON with unusually low mileage, and a rumbling stomach, thinking about the Red Lobster dinner that awaited her. She smiled as she turned the key in the ignition and the engine came to life. Today was a good day.



WHEN YOU POINTED THE CAMERA IN HER DIRECTION

she always looked at it like it was on fire. Most people would hide or carry on with what they were doing. For her, a moment in front of the lens captured the time of her life, and as the life of the party, the moment couldn't be anything but bold.



HE WAS ONLY ONE,

and technically he wasn't even one yet – I'd had him at 11:08pm on the night of a giant storm that coated our path home in a silent sheet of white. He was only one, but he already looked worn out – exhausted with the monotony of his life.



I HAVE A PHOBIA OF EATING ALONE.

I've always been like this. Here's a picture of me... age 4. When it all starts. 8 of my teddy bears, all enthralled with my brownies and coffee bean flavoured pudding. The attention of their beady eyes was intoxicating... and that is why today you see me here as the main in a glass box at the Experimental Eating Exhibition.



THE VALENCES ARE DUSTY.

Grandma has a skirt in the same pattern and the basement couch isn't too far off.



MY PARENTS CAUGHT ON VERY EARLY

that I was born for Broadway. Or the runway. Or something equally amazing. My opportunism got the best of me that day – Aunt Hilda’s birthday balloons didn’t stand a chance – I got that money shot. There I was, destined for greatness...

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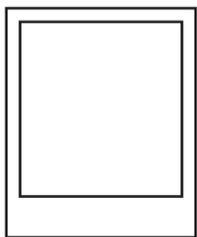
Robin Scott, page 19 (top)

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