

Goldwater

— “...was never intended to drive people crazy, but to save people from being driven crazy, + it worked.”—Charlotte Perkins Gilman

T-robot
 processing all the data in the robot
 as it is for the robot to be
 able to move the robot to the
 location of the robot in the

3402 JEE

[illegible]

Today
protestors howl in the grimy rain
as I wait in line for monthly rations: 1 lb.
whale meat, 3 coffee filters. They throw leeches as
the unemployed drip in the queue. The signs read
FEEL SHAME.

We feel it for them + they approve of us. Leeches pool around
our feet, puddling + drowning. The line barely moves. The man
in front of me does not pull the leeches from his skin + they suck
his nutrients. He doesn't have many nutrients, it seems, colorless skin
sagging off his bones, but the leeches don't care. They suck + suck
away. I say | | Sir, the leeches have you. | | He turns, a brown
teethed smile, says | | Don't worry, I'll get back whatever they take
from me | | + plops a leech into his mouth. I have never tried
eating the vermin, that would be too far gone. It is so
interesting to watch developments. I will tell my wife I
dropped one of the coffee filters in the rain. I will
sweeten the news by making her a cup
that is 33% stronger than
usual



sweating, like the other damp-pitted boys. He beams his shy smile @ his mother + me as Troop 73-Columbus passes the crowd of reservedly proud parents on 9th Street. I watch his straight back, the rise + fall of his small black boots as a foot goes out from the crowd to tangle in his. He falls on his face w/out a yelp. The other boys pay no attention, march on, trampling my son's legs + back.

They smile @ their parents. My son pushes himself to his feet, glances a red smile @ his mother + me: blood + a broken front tooth. When he rejoins the marchers,

straight back + lockstep strides once again, the other parents nod + approval. My son is perfect, he is everything the State wants him to be.

ARIZHIO
PROPAGANDA OF
OFFICIAL

ADVERTISEMENT

DOG FOR SALE

Type: Cocker Spaniel (?)

Color: Black + White

Name: ?

Pros: Offers Companionship

Cons: Shits

Weight: Skinny

Price: 1 Lb. Whale meat OBO

555-2758

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I think I will buy my son a dog.
Not just any dog, but a medium
sized one. Too big + my son will be
scared. Too little + the neighbor boy
will make fun of his diminutive pet. Jim is the
neighbor boy's name, + he makes fun of my
son often, the way he slides down the blue
plastic slide in
our back
yard.
I've seen



Jim point + say || I saw your junk when
you slided down. It looks weird. ||

I think I'll get my son a cocker
spaniel because I used to have one when I

REPORT SUSPICIOUS
TRANSACTIONS TO
THE BARRY GOLDWATER
ADVERTISING AGENCY
555-1112
BUYING AND SELLING OF
CONTRABAND
IS PUNISHABLE AS
THE LEADER
SEES FIT.

was a boy until my father shot him.

His name was Shadow.

Official Stationary of
THE LAW OFFICES OF BARRY GOLDWATER

There is a dearth of structure, a rebelliousness

MEMORANDUM of rule, that is a continuous

DATE: aggravation to a standard mind. These are

TO: the thoughts that break us: the Leader

FROM:

Re: warned of them. You think you have mastered
it until it tramples upon you, + you wonder what is
my purpose in our grand mechanics? You begin to get
cynical. You do; not me, never me. I talk w/ my boss.
He tells me || Mitch, you are tired. Go home. Rest ||

WARNING:

This stationary is only
for the use of official
memoranda. Any
unauthorized function
is punishable as
THE LEADER sees
fit.

I say, || Tired? Me? || || Yes, you || || Do I look

MEMORANDUM ETTIQUETÈ

- 1) Memos should not exceed 50 words.
- 2) Use standard abbreviations.
- 3) Be concise and get to the point! (We all have work to do)
- 4) Memos are not an excuse, nor the proper forum, to complain. (Take all concerns to your supervisor in person)

FAILURE TO CONFORM TO PROPER MEMORANDUM
ETTIQUETTE CAN RESULT IN REFUCNTIONING!

it? | | | Certainly, the darkness in your eyes, lack of
fiber in your muscles. I know you are concerned for
your son. We are all concerned for your son. This
can lead to doubts, doubting the Leader's plan, I
know. We have all felt doubts. From time to time. It
is normal to doubt. | | | Yes, it is certainly normal
to doubt, though I do not admit to doubting. | |
| Nor should you. I would never ask you to admit to
doubting. It is simply a normal reaction to your son. | |
| | Yes, it is normal. | | | Quite normal, + you should
rest. | | | I should rest. | | So we went, my boss +
I—round + round + round—+ found consensus. I am
tired. I must rest. Concern for my son does not =
doubt. Agreed. I am taking some time off.

USING MEMORANDUM PAPER FOR ANY PURPOSE
OTHER THAN OFFICE COMMUNICATION IS
PUNISHABLE AS THE LEADER SEES FIT.

Barry Goldwater Elementary School

Report Card: Fall, 19

While watching television, a knock @ the door. My wife looks @ me + says, || Who

Bruising: 9.5/10 could that be? || perfectly, w/out expression, performing surprised-yet-pleased hostess-role.

Crying: 4/10 (generous) I am expecting no one.

Tattling: N/A My son keeps eyes on television, his favorite show, *The Explosions* (mushroom clouds, fiery bursts, cars

Air of superiority: 9/10 engulfed, an elephant doused in kerosene + lit,

Stamina: 8/10 flying whales barging into skyscrapers).

Reported My wife lets in the school counsellor.

satisfaction: 7/10 (generous) || Hello, I am Dr. O'Leary. ||

Math: ✓ || Hello, Dr. O'Leary. ||: parent-role-unison-response.

Science: ✓

English: ✓

Temperment: Satisfactory She carries a manila envelope. Her hair tied back into tight black pony-tail. She smiles

Overall [what a privilege! What extravagance!]

Assessment: Unsatisfactory

(Lots of room for improvement!)

professional-yet-concerned-role.

|| I am here to drop off your son's report card. This is not to alarm you, I don't

want to alarm you. I simply thought it would be best if I spoke to you in person.

Your son is on the verge of the

Parent Signature:

Mitch Brend

Date: satisfactory/unsatisfactory

_____/_____/_____

margin, however, we @ the school are quite confident we can press your son a little harder + place him firmly in the functioning satisfactorily category. I personally believe that he is having the hardest time making the adjustment from 3rd to 4th grade function. As you know—do you know, Mr. Burns? Did you perform his function during your elementary? ||

|| No, ma'am. I performed the function of invisible-underfoot-unacknowledged. ||

|| Ah, I see, Mr. Burns. Still, a function akin to your son's, so perhaps you can offer guidance. As I was saying, he is a 3rd grader, showing no rev peers. Perhaps he inherited a bit Mr. Burns? Well, the 4th grade is the time for your son to been in + just let it out. He will peers will certainly feel better as well + on another note, your former role, you should be interested to know, was discontinued years ago. Too dangerous: the performers would dissociate, lose themselves in doubt, doubt in themselves, doubt in the Leader. But they are all listed, I assure you, those who formerly held that role you described. It is good to see they didn't all turn out rotten! Haha! ||

For use in the rating of students at Barry Goldwater Elementary
Any overgenerous scoring is punishable as
THE LEADER sees fit.

still behaving as if he were ely in the violence of his of your stoicism, did he not is no time for stoicism. Now break out of this shell he's feel better if he does, + all of his

She hands me a paper, but takes the envelope w/ her. I eye enviously the blank, yellow face of the envelope, cradled in Dr. O'Leary's hand as she walks away from our door toward her car.

Lost Dog
Please Help
Name: Shadow II

There is a single manifest uniqueness to this paper, a thing no one marks but myself, + that is that it deviates as the light varies.

It's hard to attain, this warning-stamped construction paper. We are out of whale. Two weeks until we get more. I will not resort

to vermin, yet the paper. I bite off a little piece

@ one corner—but it hurts my teeth. Not for

Call Bo Burns

555-5477
555-5477
555-5477
555-5477
555-5477
555-5477

Wart
Only for re...
© Barry Gold
Elementary Scho
Unauthorized fun...
Publishable as THE
LEADER sees fit.

nourishment, that is not its function. I will have to find something else. The neighbor boy, Jim, has a new dog. A black + white Grading notes cocker spaniel. He calls it Weir djunk, + plays w/ it in his back yard. He Class: throws rocks + the dog returns them. He thwacks Weir djunk w/ a branch, says || take that, shithead || as my son watches from atop his blue plastic slide. He is uneasy w/ reinterpretation, but recognizes the importance of ^{Pros:} refunctioning. Does he hope for refunctioning for himself? It cannot be. The dog returns to Jim for thwacking every time. Jim's laughter fills the backyard, reaches my son who watches, tightlipped, the dog-boy catharsis play out. @ night, Jim ties the dog to a Cons: post + it whines. I watch at the kitchen window from within my family's increasing hunger.

I worry for my son; too much loss of blood can

Aberrations: lead to iron deficiency.

I need my job back. I call my boss.

|| Hello, Mitch. ||

|| Hello. ||

|| To what do I owe the pleasure, Mitch? ||

|| I feel much better. I would like to return to work. ||

Grade Recommendation:

|| Return to work here? ||

|| Yes, please. I feel much better. ||

|| That is great news, Mitch, I am so glad to hear that. I really am. I

am so glad to hear that you are feeling better. If anyone I know

deserves to feel better, it is certainly you. You perform such an

important father-role. How has your father-role progressed since you

began your rest period? || /CONTINUED/

|| Good. ||

Grading notes

Class: art

Pros:

*Shows a good understanding of role/purpose/function, embraces personal
excision, neutrality of expression.*

Cons:

Two dimensional, lacks sunlight.

|| Good. I had hoped you would
delve deeper into that role. We
all did. Not that you didn't
function well here. + as for
that, I'm sorry to say that your
function here is no longer
available. We all had to tighten up a little since you
left us, + now we have all accustomed ourselves to
our new, tighter functions here. It is sad, I know I am
sad for you. ||

|| Thank you for your sadness for me. I feel it. ||

Aberrations:

*Though the other children produced art perfunctorily, finishing early
(recommended), student took entire five minutes allotted for recreation
function. Performed creation of art mindfully and with effort. Also of
note is the presence of a (possibly) unauthorized companion animal. Make
a note to check with the parents.*

Grade Recommendation:

*Despite normal amount of aberration, art achieves no level of offense.
Recommend student receive highest possible grade per function.*

|| You're very welcome, Mitch.
Again, I am so sorry to tell you
this, especially this way, but, really,
it is all for the best. You can
delve even deeper into your father-role until you are
assigned a new function. Refunctioning can often be
a positive experience. I have heard
so many success stories. ||

|| I have heard those stories as well. ||

|| Thank you for all of your years @
our firm, Mitch, they have been positive years.
May the State reinterpret you favorably. ||



Today I bring home meat.

It is greasy, stringy.

My wife prepares

it in the oven +

places cuts on plates in

front of us. My son, wife, + I partake.

My son, far too thin to perform

his function @ school, eats, +

I hope that the meat will help.

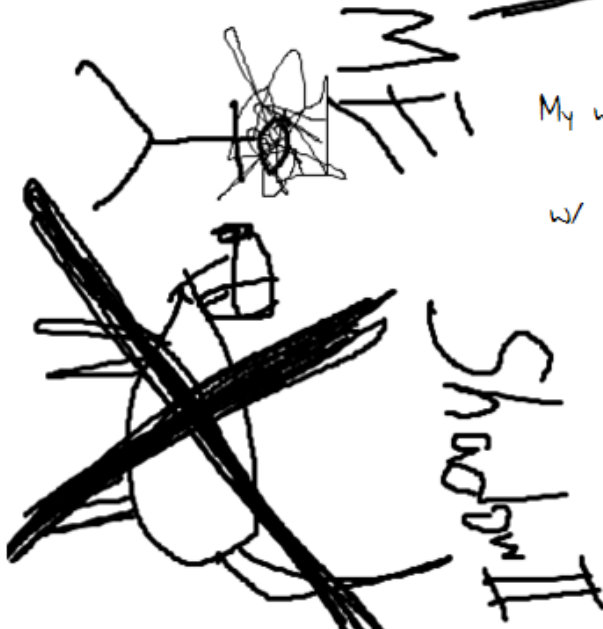
He needs fat, muscle to cushion his bones. He doesn't

look up. Outside, we hear

a howl: the neighbor boy, Jim is crying.



Bo Burns



My wife looks @ me

w/ something like approval



Today, the He speaks to us in the town square. I perch my son on my shoulders so he can see His face. I hold my wife's hand, huddled together amid the swollen crowd, so many pustular faces pointed upward, toward that kind, white face. Today, he is angry, + that is just what we require. He is wise. He shouts

|| THE ENEMY! ||

+ pictures of the THE ENEMY come to our mind.
We picture the face of THE ENEMY, our individual version of it,
choosing our subjective enemy. The crowd, myself, my wife, my son on my

shoulders, boil the hate
All those asphyxiated
eyes + wobbling
screech w/ anguish!

I wonder whose
Next to me, she



in us until it spews
crania + globular
mildew tumors just
Catharsis.

face my wife pictures
presses her eyes shut,

making pigeon-foot lines @ the corners, tightens the blackness around her.

She doesn't move her mouth. I never close my eyes. I need not visualize.

I look up + up, into the His face, watch the
black frame glasses magnify his eyes as he watches us
back.



I hope I am beyond judgement, dead, moved on, already a nonfactor in the life of my son. A statue in the desert w/ arms broken off, covered in salt. I have so carefully kept my wife away from me, away from my thoughts, + she has done the same. It is really admirable how well she keeps her thoughts from me. Dr. O'Leary would give her a 10/10. I see her face, unmoving, when our son comes home, blood dripping from his eye. She lifts the towel from

drying the dishes, kneels, + wipes him clean; the red + the black of dirt

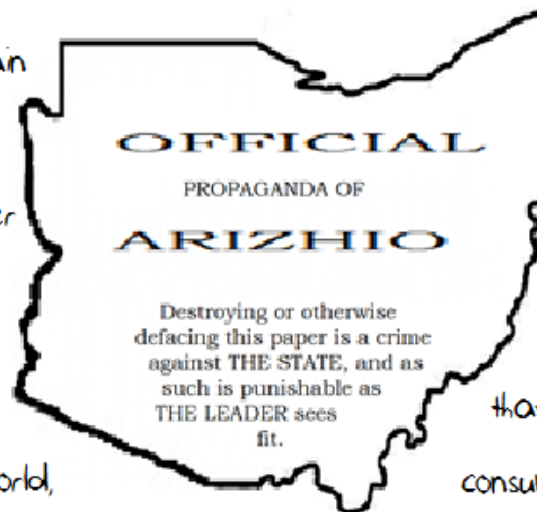
smear his cheek, stain
mouth is a line,

smile. She just is, her

exuding mother-role,

that, + I can see

our son into the world,



the towel. Her

w/out possibility of

life-force-demeanor

+ our son can see

that. We exist to bring

consummate, + now the

world's interpretation of our son is no longer up to us. He was recreated

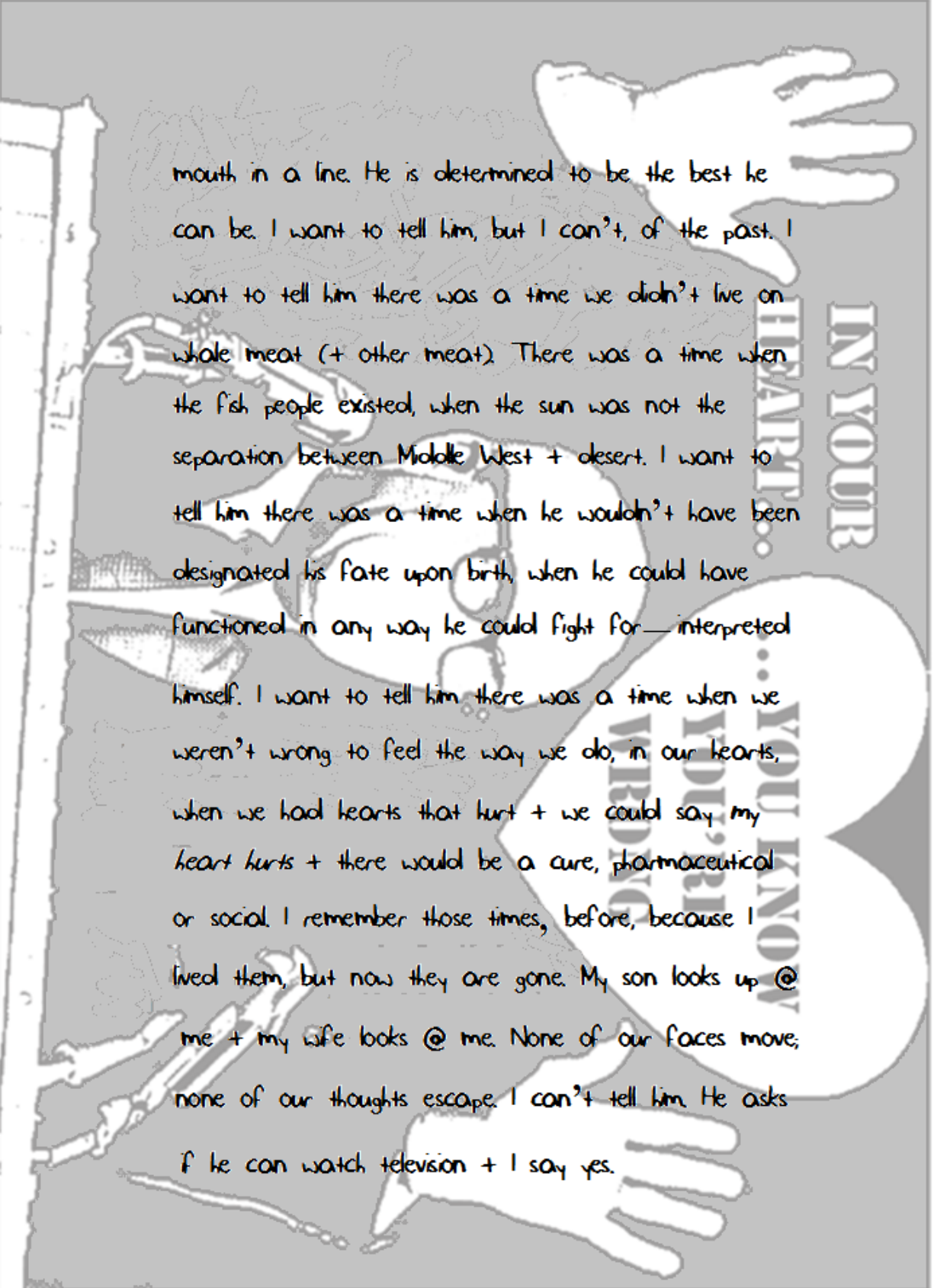
into an object of derision, the class wimp, punching bag, so it is exorted,

so it is done. He functions. He is. He brings joy to the world by sponging

pain, just as my wife performs her function, wipes the pain away. Just as I

perform father-role-protector-provider-occupational function. I see his face, so

like his mother's, now clean from the daily bloodying, + he too sets his



mouth in a line. He is determined to be the best he can be. I want to tell him, but I can't, of the past. I want to tell him there was a time we didn't live on whole meat (+ other meat). There was a time when the fish people existed, when the sun was not the separation between Middle West + desert. I want to tell him there was a time when he wouldn't have been designated his fate upon birth, when he could have functioned in any way he could fight for—interpreted himself. I want to tell him there was a time when we weren't wrong to feel the way we do, in our hearts, when we had hearts that hurt + we could say my heart hurts + there would be a cure, pharmaceutical or social. I remember those times, before, because I lived them, but now they are gone. My son looks up @ me + my wife looks @ me. None of our faces move, none of our thoughts escape. I can't tell him. He asks if he can watch television + I say yes.