

The Highlights - Easy Tacker

The problem of leisure/
What to do for pleasure.
-Gang of Four



All of the artists I used to work for had me convinced that their lives were hard. And I never told them - I never thanked them - but they were making my life so easy. Hours of work that were challenging and quantifiable. I knew that working for them was the right thing to do, that was the best part. They taught me so much. I rode my bike to Staten Island everyday for Donald, I thought it would be good for street cred and thin arms, it only made my calves huge. I made hours and hours of paintings that only abandoned me, incessant crates to London and Berlin. For Mat I painted a painting that said THANK YOU over and over again. It went to Belgium.

When these men left me in '08 for simpler lives I was heartbroken. Slept all day and waited tables all night. I would still be in that dark basement with a cocktail tray if MTV didn't save me, giving me a job making props for a Japanese game show. We made torture devices for the show. We stopped sleeping and one morning I had bags under my eyes, four years later they haven't gone away. We electroshocked ourselves, for a laugh and some energy, using

the same cattle-prod-like device that my wrist-and-hand doctor shocked me with a few months before, nerve damage in my fingers, too many hours stretching other people's paintings.

I don't mean to complain. Yet why is it so hard to remember having a boss, that daily offense of pulling yourself away from yourself? I'm taking a moment to be grateful. My yoga teacher said that gratitude is confidence in our collective future. I go to an hour-and-a-half yoga class every day. I now live a life of leisure. Nothing is good for thin arms like an hour-and-a-half of yoga every day. In fact we artists should all be athletes. We can run marathons and feel so much pain and exhaustion and want to stop but work our way through it. We can play soccer and think about how the first touch dictates everything and understand that the game can change in a moment. We can be vain about our thin arms and lavish eating habits as if those things arose spontaneously out of our artiness. We can lose and win. We can go to our yoga classes and our teachers will tell us to be comfortable with uncertainty, and we will believe them, because they are beautiful. There are a few other good options. But choosing one is imperative. This is fighting for our lives, and our lives are easy. We are lucky. We have so much. My yoga teacher also said: If we cannot be happy with all that we have, what chance is there for anybody? And Agnes Martin said: We need not die because of responsibility.

I accept this: one day there will be panic and boredom and no one to blame. But when I break a sweat at least that feeling will be familiar. Granted sometimes I feel as if the shower is the greatest labor of my life. The tedious toweling off, hours of damp head.

But if sports aren't your thing, maybe we could all have children. It sounds tough. Talk about a boss!