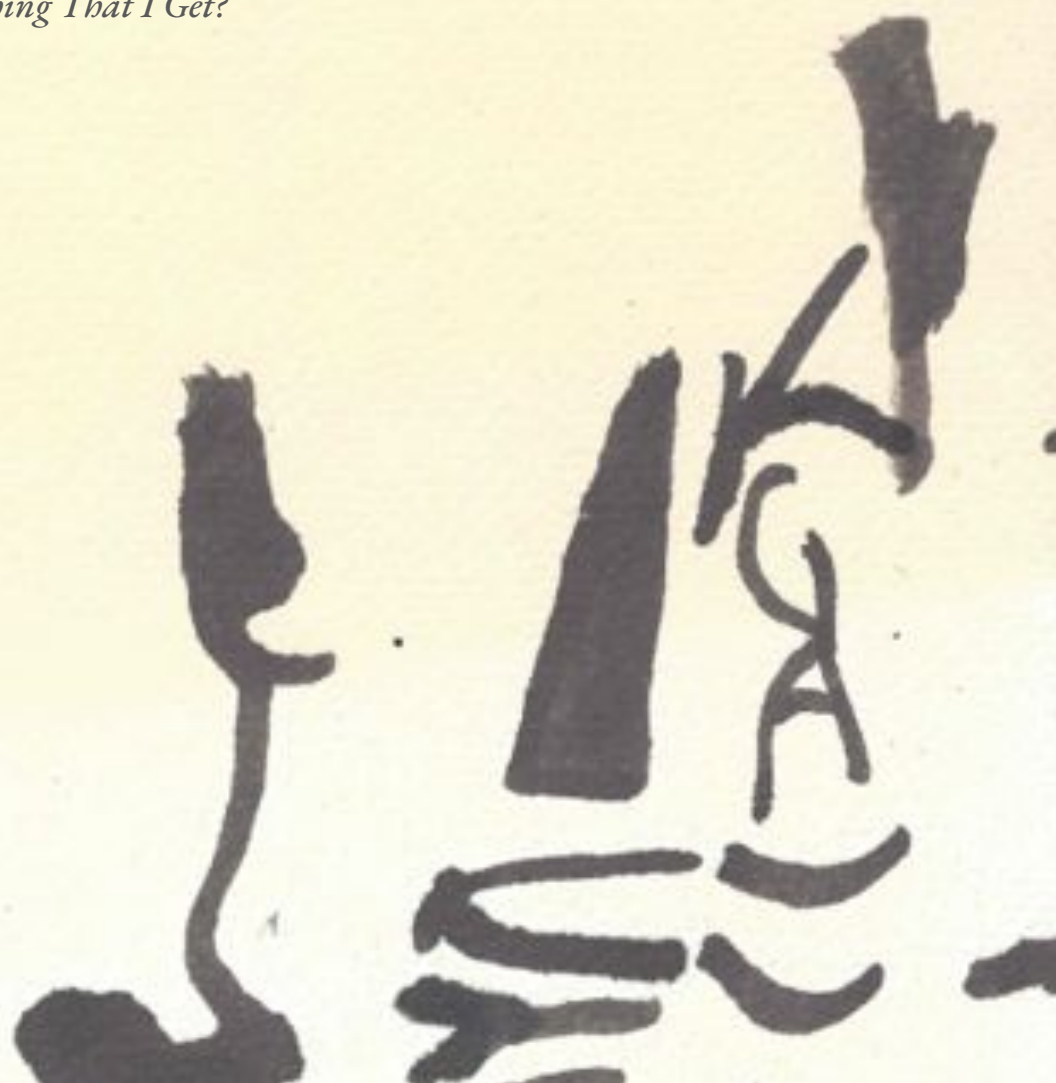




When's My Next Thing That I Get?
April, 2025



There's me as a child trying to fill some kind of hole inside myself with carbs, salt, sugar. Waiting until my parents are asleep, eating an entire sleeve of saltines with a couple of generic lemon-lime sodas.



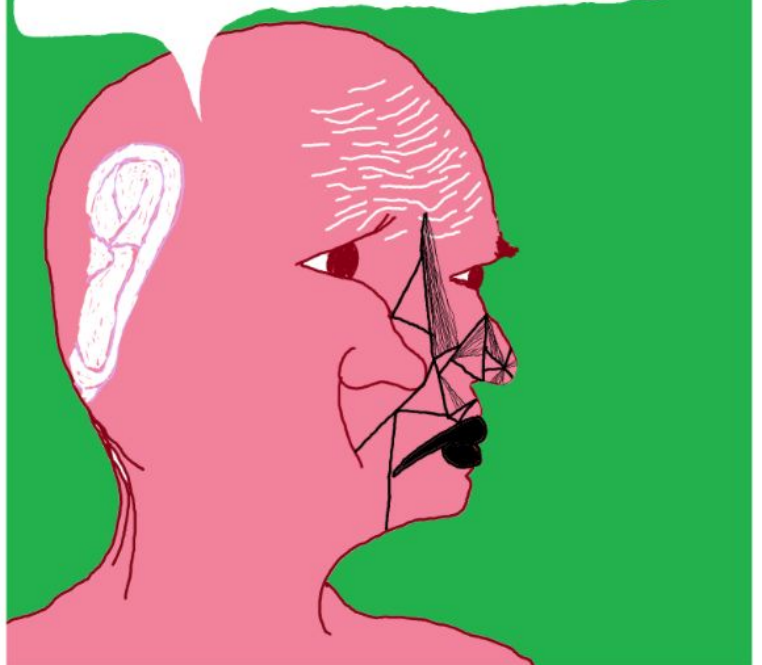
I can recall the sharp, pinching strain at my torso, the restricted range of motion in my waist and thighs. I started crying about how my pants hurt all of the sudden.



When I was about nineteen or twenty, I restricted my calorie intake to a pretty absurd degree, and over the course of maybe six months lost about eighty pounds. A lot of things changed very quickly.



There I am starving myself, obsessing over the number on the scale steadily plummeting, convincing myself that the less I consumed, the more love I would be rewarded with.



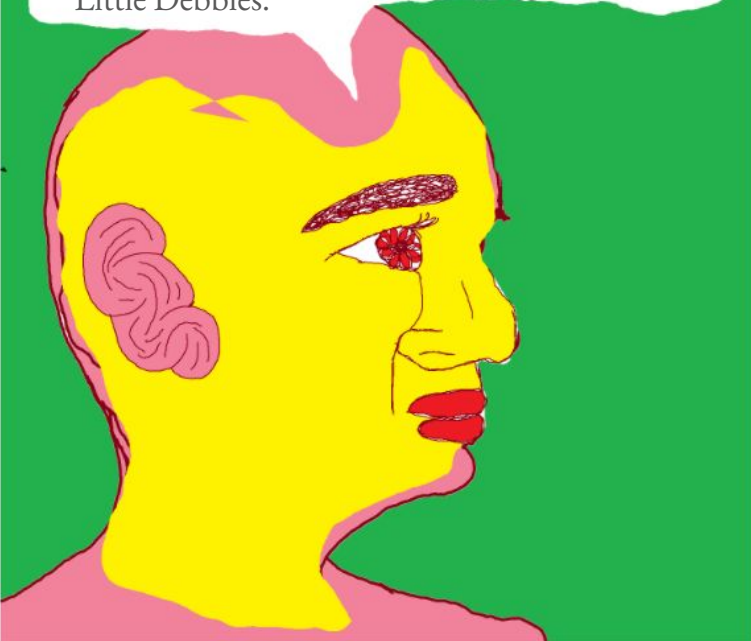
Once I got to a place where I thought my body was okay (clothed anyway, its naked presence has never exactly made sense) I discovered that alcohol was a pretty great meal replacement. It created the same dopamine explosions that food did, it increased confidence and social acceptance.



Alcohol and food were the response to every stressful situation I encountered. And obviously my malnourished, brain cell depleted, dehydrated, exhausted, confused, terrified body got less and less capable of handling stress, less able to heal itself, less able to handle its shit.



So every little thing made me feel worse and worse, and called for more shitty food in styrofoam containers, consumed behind closed bedroom doors on mattresses on floors in an ever revolving series of apartments. Consumed nightly with three to six cheap beers and some Little Debbies.



The empty containers, wrappers, and bottles were shoved back into the black plastic bodega bags they had come in, and furtively smuggled out of the building to a sidewalk trash can or dumpster. The weight I had lost returned.







I purchased this painting at an antique store in Des Moines, Iowa a couple weeks ago. I paid \$12.50. It is oil paint on particle board, fourteen inches high by eighteen inches across. It is signed on the back "Nondace Tuttle (Dick) 1930" in red felt marker. In much fainter pencil, we have the artist's signature and home address.

Not much to be found online about Nondace Tuttle. She would have been seventeen in 1930, when she painted this coyote contemplating the sleeping village in the vast, silent, winter night. She died in 2000 at the age of eighty-seven.





