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Self-Discovery

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Phillip S. Mandel
Self-Discovery

I. Life

my journey of self-discovery began
with a jar of vaseline
and waded through pierced eyebrows,
blonde hair dye, and gravity bong hits
before settling on a gap credit card
and monthly car payments.

II. Music

although i was trained in classical piano
at thirteen, i've found that there is no music
more inspiring than christian punk rock.
i skip over the songs about jesus
and right-to-life and feed off of the faith
for a religion i don't even believe in.

III. Satire

i'm going to make some jokes about nazis,
it's in all the movies and all over tv,
the soup-nazi, the doughnut-nazi,
it's one big joke now, isn't it?
cancer still isn't funny, but racism is.
i'm afraid of the n-word,
afraid that someone will attach it to me
and think i'm a racist,
that i might say it
and mean it.

IV. Supplements

i'm addicted to legal additives

that are probably doing more harm
to my body than good.
one daily multiple vitamin at breakfast
with artificial sweetener stirred
in coffee; caffeine to stimulate heart rate,
creatine to stimulate muscle growth,
st. john's wort to curb depression,
advil cold and sinus to clear nasal passages,
and metamucil for ass traffic.

V. On Being In Love

the first time i fell in love i was five.
her name was lara vazquez she lived up the street
she was so incredibly beautiful
we played doctor a few times in my basement
we dug a hole in my front yard and kissed
she's a model now and would never ever
date a guy like me again.
the second time i fell in love was jessica levy
in fourth through sixth grade.
she was jewish but looked puerto rican
and went out with every guy in my elementary
school, i think, but me.
i started a fanclub for unrequited love,
currently i'm the only member
but i know there are more guys like me
out there, in love with some wonderful girl.
i'm in love with a wonderful girl
and she has no idea. i'm waiting
for the right time but most likely
i'll belch it out when i'm drunk.

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VI. On Being Gay

i'm not gay. but sometimes i wonder what it would be like
if i were.

VII. Asphyxiation

applying to college was the most stressful
experience in my life up to that point,
and i wonder sometimes just how easy i had it.
now i really know what freedom is,
and what the fuck it's not.
there was one security guard in high school
and we all knew him by name, ed.
you can't be afraid of a fat guy named ed,
and none of us were, but usually he just socialized
with the jocks, and sent us potheads home.

VIII. Parenthood

i don't have any kids yet
but when i do i will love them
surreptitiously because if they ever
call their mother a bitch
i will beat the shit out of them.

IX. Diagnosis

one day i woke up and i was dying,
but i didn't know yet.
i suffered a little and was reborn,
the details are boring and inconsequential.
point is, life is so beautiful,
and so are you,
my darling.