

The Subject is Addressed

by Tamar Love Grande

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Constructed for the purposeful incitement of self-loathing, the mix tape no longer wore well when played, late, in a room lit by candles, after a night of drinking. Moreover, instead of compelling the listener into the "black pit of despair," it caused great amusement, which-as it may be understood-was incompatible with the environment the listener had labored so hard to create. It was apparent; the tape would no longer suffice.

[this tape that said so much in the car five years ago]

She burned it, along with the ticket stubs she had been saving. When the fire wore out, there was nothing left but ash and some nasty plastic bits of char.

She thinks:

this is the last road traveled.

She thinks:

*now, at last, there is sleep,
and waking, and sleep again;
no journey, only peace.*

When I threw the roasted peppers into the cart, I thought, *fuck you*, and when I threw the herbed goat cheese, the carton of off-season raspberries, the forty-dollar rioja into the cart, I thought *fuck you*, and every time I took another luxury product off the shelf and threw it into the cart it was *fuck you* and *fuck you* and *fuck you* until I had spent one hundred ninety-nine dollars and I was empty and proud and thankful and glad.

and then there are nights when
she hides in The Cave, sullen, abhorrent, convinced:

While
a host

of impossibly tiny memories
gaunt from ritual
lack of remembrance,

mocks her green dreams, whispers
we have been here before,
dwindles from memory as she is pulled from sleep

and trying to shake the dream, she remembers:
there are no synonyms for forget.