

Brunchtime is Over
by McFeely Sam Goodman

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*everyone is present,
which is to say, no one is offstage.*

*In the foreground, two women are dancing. The
DANCERS wear bike clothes and bike helmets.*

*Elsewhere, SHARKACUDA and the BEAR IN A TUXEDO
pretend to play checkers. Their play is
rhythmically precise. The DANCERS dance to the
rhythm of the checkers.*

SHARKACUDA

There is a shape of a restaurant that is like a
corridor into a building, and on a fall or spring or
even summer Sunday afternoon when the sun is out and
the glass of the front window has been removed, the
restaurant seems inappropriately dark.

The type of a shape of a restaurant is bar-shaped.
Technically speaking, of course, a bar can have many
shapes, so it would seem that I ought to find a more
precise term but I wouldn't call it gastropub,
because, at least for me, when I think of a "pub," I
picture the exact shape of bar that this is not, so
perhaps it would be best to say that the shape of the
restaurant is the shape of a bar itself, not the shape
of a bar in the sense of the establishment but in the
sense of the bar itself, the uh, raised table on which
alcoholic beverages are served? Geez, I sound like
Merriam-Webster

DANCER 2

I was in Duane Reade the other day, trying to buy a
bottle of aspirin, because I had a headache. And I
had never really tried to buy aspirin before. I grew
up at a time when the conventional knowledge was you
really shouldn't give your kids aspirin, so even when
I was an adult I would take Advil or Tylenol or
Ibuprofen (which is either Advil or Tylenol; I can
never remember which), but someone told me recently
that if you have a headache you should really take
asprin.

SHARKACUDA

Let's just say that this is the sort of a restaurant
that is really a bar, and so even if it calls itself a

restaurant and even if the thing it prides itself on is its food and not its drinks, it's really just in business because the fashionable thing to do in this day and age while you drink is to eat very fancy or at least especially expensive food, with the result that in New York City and probably any number of other real estate starved American cities, on any given block (in certain neighborhoods) you'll find several restaurants the layout scheme of which is that they have a bar and then at some point the bar ends and there are a certain number of tables in what remains of the corridor space that is the restaurant between where the bar ends and where a smaller corridor leading the the bathrooms and the kitchens begins.

DANCER 2

& the first thing that seemed strange to me was that the bottles were so small, like maybe 32 pills to a bottle, whereas whenever I used to buy Advil or Tylenol or Ibuprofen you could buy a bottle of like 50 or 100 or at CVS even like 200 or 400 pills.

SHARKACUDA

Now the thing about these restaurants, on a fall or spring or even summer Sunday afternoon at about two-thirty or three in the afternoon, is that they are completely empty, like not even the maitre d' or bartender is visible in a lot of cases and, like I said, inappropriately dark, because whoever designed these places was obviously thinking along the lines of "bar" and "dusky" and "nighttime" and almost certainly not "two-thirty in the afternoon on a Sunday." So that they're shadowy and dark, especially on a sunny day when your pupils are constricted or you're wearing sunglasses, and with the glass removed from the front window, they really are these dark, deserted corridors lined with mod furniture.

DANCER 2

& the second thing that seemed strange to me was that whereas when I used to buy Tylenol or Advil or Ibuprofen a lot of the bottles would say "Extra-Strength," in the case of aspirin a lot of the bottles said "low-dose,"

so I was trying to figure out why that would be.

and another thing that I noticed was I noticed that a lot of the bottles said "safety-coated" and I thought about it and what I realized was that it's because people commit suicide with aspirin, right? So they want to make sure that if someone is at home and they're having suicidal thoughts and they go into the bathroom and look in the medicine cabinet, if they have any aspirin they don't have very much and it's a low dose and they probably can't kill themselves. And I thought about it and I figured that's probably what the safety coating is for too, that probably it's something mildly nauseating that you wouldn't notice if you just took the regular amount but if you swallowed the whole bottle it would make you throw up. I looked it up when I got home and it turns out that the safety coating prevents stomach bleeding, but on the whole I would say that the whole thing was a pretty chilling, humbling experience for me.

DANCER 1

That's what they say, right? That when you stand somewhere high up and you have vertigo what you're really scared of is not that you'll fall but that you'll jump.

DANCER 2

Really?

DANCER 1

Yeah.

SHARKACUDA

And I tried for a while, as I was walking up Broadway on a sunny fall Sunday at about two thirty or three, to figure out what causes this phenomenon of these open, dark, bar-shaped restaurants and I realized that since it's Sunday the bars have opened early for brunch and they don't want to close and have to reopen for dinner, but at the same time, no one is going to come in and order something because

BEAR IN A TUXEDO

Brunchtime is Over.

In the depths of the space a neon sign which says "Brunchtime is Over" comes on, making it clear

that the space is much deeper than we had originally thought.

DANCER 1

When he died, Hunter Thompson left a suicide note and the title of the note was "Football Season is Over," which I always thought was a hell of a title.

All this while the POET LAUREATE OF THE MINNESOTA TWINS has been writing really incredible poetry but when it is his turn to speak he says

POET LAUREATE OF THE MINNESOTA TWINS

I saw a guy with a dinosaur on his t-shirt and the teeth of the dinosaur were a zipper that opened and there was a little pocket there and I thought that was pretty cool but then I couldn't decide if it was that I thought it was cool that the zipper was the teeth or that it was a t-shirt with a zipper pocket.

Everyone speaks together:

EVERYONE

Anyway, I've always thought that that was the most conclusive evidence of an argument that I've heard David Lynch make a bunch of times which is that mental illness runs contrary to artistic greatness and that the great artists who were mentally ill individuals were great in spite of their mental illness rather than because of it and that in fact their best work they made at the times that they were relatively happy and healthy and I think that suicide is really the irrefutable evidence of that because what could possibly be less artistically productive than the death of a human being?