

Madison Gransby II.

How to bleach your stockings without eggs, in ten easy steps.

I feel wrong.

I don't

- a. a. believe I am wrong.
- b. b. really think I owe much else for my wrongness, like another lighter I must've forgotten in the wash.

- I don't really even believe I hurt anyone as well as they could play up the pain for Sister Rosetta over there, at the end of the breadline.

But I must be wrong for something.

Yes, you know I am. Just something that I've deeply forgotten.

Maybe you two are mad at me, for cutting off a piece of Dorothy Furro's hair when nobody was looking, back in Kindergarten.

Or maybe you're mad at me for making fun of Anthony Silliani's mile time, before any of us knew he had the cancer that'd take his life.

I don't know exactly why, but I feel wrong. You both must be mad, because I also know I

am wrong.

Like a spoiled apple that thinks it's ripe.

Or maybe a ripe orange that thinks there is a worm inside of it.

*..And this worm lays its eggs, like a parasite, in the ears of whoever is unlucky enough to be afflicted by the wrongness of my voice.*

And this dove's in pain too, and I made it feel that way, with the knowledge of the wrongness in my heart and in the world.

But I don't know why.

In the New Orleans Aquarium, this dolphin found a black sticker on the other side of the glass.

She'd just learned to see itself, when she decided,

“This must be wrong.”

...

“I am not a dolphin. Those two little beads-for-eyes, there's no way they can contain the understanding, that I am wrong.

that I see myself, that this is not who I am.

Truly, if I cannot see myself inside what is clearly my body, that must be wrong,

but if I could see only myself entirely, with absolutely nothing else behind these two

beads-for-eyes,

and the two fins,

and the smooth bulbous head,

then I would still be wrong,

because I am not only this voice and absolutely nothing else.

I am also a dolphin, and I will always be a dolphin.

So I am still wrong.”

*You are still wrong.*

Why do I have to be right?

*A righteous man is always lucky. You'd want that, wouldn't you?*

Yeah. How do I do that?

*Follow the path laid before you by righteous men.*

Where? There's a lot of snow.

*Well... walk well above the snow.*

I don't think I am doing this right.

*No. You are still wrong.*

(crinkle, toss.)

This past February, I took some crust punks to a monastery in Rye during the second-biggest Nor—Easter of the season. Everything was supposed to freeze over I think, but they were about to sleep in some parking garage.

The Monastic resolution had been presented to me by fear, not God.

So naturally, my room was hot as a bitch. I'm not sure how they slept.

It snowed all night. By six the next morning, barely a pine branch was visible through the white snow.

My eyelids were practically self governed during the first hour of the liturgy. We all moved automatically, gaping at the icons, reeling with the chandeliers, until finally one of the monks kicked us out for not being Orthodox.

Presumably, as their leader, I had been crossing myself the wrong way.

I was/we were still wrong...

We were still wrong.

Now, I go to a private house-concert for my old Violin teacher in Westchester, and I am talking to the benefactor.

There is no crucifix in sight.

He is trying to sell me on some paid club for alumni of a private college that I forget the name of, but I tell him truthfully, I have neither time, nor money, nor diploma.

Then he asks me,

“How do you know \*redacted\*?”

I respond that this was my violin teacher for ten years.

“And you live in White Plains?”

“No. The music school I went to- that \*redacted\*—“

and nod respectfully towards my old teacher-

“was in White Plains.”

“Oh. So where do you live?”

then quickly respond.

“Tarrytown.”

He smiles and squints at me until his whole face turns into some squished penny-like thing, the likes of which you see at the Science Museum in Midtown, as he rapidly nods in motor-like gestures, bemused, lolling his muscles like a bobblehead.

“Ha. Okay.”

We pause for a minute. Suddenly, he shakes my hand, asks my name again, says he’s pleased to meet me, and briskly evacuates himself to his cheese plate, somewhere.

Still wrong.

*“Hrooo...”*

What more do I owe to you, dove?

...

Whatever fear invents will not itself be any holier than your tennis club.

I do not want to fly south.

*I want to eat the cheese plate. I want to be not-lactose-intolerant.*

Surely this could be arranged, if I was still correct.

Tell me dove, where did I go wrong?

When did I burn the monastery, with whom did I drink the aquarium, whence did I eat the  
knowledge, where did I spit the worm?

Why am I not the person you see on this bench,

with two beads-for-eyes, two little fins, and a smooth bulbous head?

Tell me dove,

Why am I still wrong?

...

You can feel it?

*“Hrhoo... Hrhoo...”*

Oh man... I'm probably freaking out those kids on the bikes.