2 New England Red

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> I aimed to be a student not of longing but of light.
>
> (Nelson, 2009, p. 95)

RED HOUSE

This is how Sarah Messer Viking begins her eclectic ruminations on what she calls Red House—New England's oldest continuously lived-in house (or so she says).

> Before the highway, the oil slick, the outflow pipe; before the blizzard, the sea monster, the Girl Scout camp; before the nudist colony and flower farm; before the tidal wave broke the river's mouth, salting the cedar forest; before the ironworks, tack factory, and the shoe-peg mill; before the landing where skinny-dipping white boys jumped through berry bushes; before hay-field, ferry, oyster bed; before Daniel Webster's horses stood buried in their graves; before militiamen's talk of separating; before Unitarians and Quakers, the shipyards and mills, the nineteen barns burned in the Indian raid—even then the Hatches had already built the Red House. (2004, p. 1)

In this passage, Red House is a compositional node; a form of matter worlding landscape and event. Its attending, enduring presence is a perspectival agency in which things jump into relation but remain unglued. Lines of contact radiate out in a prismatic structure of etchings and refrains. What comes into view is an ecology of paths in which any object or angle can be sent into a spin. History, here, literally accretes. Energies distribute across a field of subjects-objects-bodies-trajectories-affects.

The world according to Red House is an attachment to the forms and forces of emergence and concrescence itself, of accrual and loss, of potentiality and its incomplete capture in the actuality of this and that. As a compositional jumping off point, Red House and everything it leans into become phenomena lifted out of the realm of killed-off things. Sarah Viking's

writing meets Red House's registers of difference, singularity, motion, and transduction like two parallel magical coloring books, spreading qualities and scenes across a cartography. Its more-than-representational mode veers off the critical track of tacking perception, context, and cause onto an order of representations located nowhere in particular or in some paranoid hyper-place, like the state or regional prejudice. What happens instead is the throwing together of the phenomena of wood and water, territory, mood, atmosphere, and sensory charge.

People, rivers, time, and space pop with significance like the raised knap of corduroy or a paper doll cut out of a dreamworld. Representational things—things that were once named, perhaps written down, perhaps in some momentary consensus or, just as likely (to say the least), through some kind of trickery, manipulation, or accident, and then somehow metastasized into circulation—are raised, incised, made singular and charged, turned into an ether that reminds us of something, or rest on us like the weight of a diffuse headache induced by a shift in the barometric pressure. Their fabulations appear as an atmospheric trace or a momentary might-have-been.

Their sensory/noumenal registers activate what Erin Manning calls "the more-than" of experience—"the ineffable amodality that activates the contours of the event toward a moving, an encountering, a being-moved in a complex ecology of practice" (Manning, 2011, p. 41).

Space stretches out and pulls in as an immediate surround, time speeds and slows, simultaneously pausing on a still life and zooming through eras as if epochs were clouds casting shadows on the edifice of the shape-shifting house, like a realist film fast-forwarded through great arcs of history-in-itself or place-in-itself.

Here I treat Sarah Messer Viking's opening paragraph as a more-than-representational method of writing attuned to the qualities of phenomena. Its compositionality prompts curiosity and care about the potentialities in the things that happen. It tones itself to habitations and passing or enduring impacts. This is the doubled compositionality of a writing method that works by calling out and scoring over refrains of expressivity stretching between form and matter.

What was it like when the white boys . . . when the horses . . . ? What was an Indian then, or a Unitarian, or a Hatch? What else happened here? Under what spell did things happen or half-happen or start to happen and fail? What is the river whose mouth was broken or the field then infused with marsh water? What are the river and the field doing now? What was it like when people and things gave up, or faltered, wore out, or started up again because of something?

Theory can be drawn, through writing, into the ways that people and things venture out into reals—reals that, it must be said, are not the kind of thing that a representation later brings to life or gives meaning, but a recursive haeccity (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) that loops through things starting to emerge or layering into an accretion. Reals are "transversal arrays of

qualities or activities which, like musical refrains, give order to materials and situations, human bodies and brains included, as actions undertaken act-back to shape muscles and hone senses" (Anderson & Harrison, 2010b, p. 8). This is not the work of imagination on dead matter but a "mattering (that) is about the (contingent and temporary) becoming-determinate (and becoming-indeterminate) of *matter* and *meaning*" (Barad, 2010, p. 254)—an acting-back along singular lines of action and attachment.

The point of figuring compositional reals is not just that humans and matter are formed in relation but rather that the real of relationality and event has registers and capacities. That a world in the present tense is always other than its representation, or what we know of it (Anderson & Harrison, 2010a). That reals, built out of difference and repetition (Deleuze, 1994), and composed of potentiality and loss (Berlant, 2011), lean towards that which exists singularly as event, or as a gap, without ground or against the background of nothing (Dewsbury, 2010). That the social is composed of entities that are both present and absent—atmospheres, affects, virtual memories, hauntings, and that these are themselves moments of endurance (or not), instants of the holding together of the disparate itself (Doel, 2010). Being in a real is a corporeal and incorporeal capacity to be in a continuous variation of matter and event—one that sets off questions of discernibility (Seigworth, 1998).

These are the lines a compositional node pulls into view and sets spinning.

THE COLOR RED

A real is a tangle of elements somehow thrown together yet still moving in directions, singly and in clumps, and opening onto other things. Any one element can become a territory, or get derailed by its own, or other, aspects or qualities. A path can open onto a line, or a series of lines, that can be followed or abandoned as they intersect other lines. Compositional writing as a non-representational method, then, has to stay nimble in the effort to keep up with the distributed agencies of what's throwing together and falling apart. It is in this practice of trying to follow where things (might) go that habits of attunement become an associational logic.

Take, for instance, the element of the color red. It moves through streams and tendrils into an associational register of connections and differences, materials and noumena, the coagulations and diffusions of lines of influence and bits of matter.

Red House was certainly not at first red but built with an eye to the careful weathering of the unpainted wood through an attention to routes of sunshine, wind patterns, and the possibilities for water drainage. But at some point in the long life of the house, color caught on and *that* happened, in New England, within the sensibility of red. Red houses and red barns became architectural poppies in a landscape animated by the primariness

of color. Redness sparked from red leaf to red barn to red apple against supergreen grass, white snow, dark, dark ocean, lakes, ponds, eventually the white red blue of flags everywhere, the buntings, the yellow light passing out of windows to yards. Redness set in motion an ecology of sharp, crisp color popping into relief against things less striking, perhaps less buoyant or promising.

Redness became iconic of a region, establishing a regional worlding on a scenic register (among others). But rather than jump to the meaning of this redness, or pull a rope around a bag of its social constructions, keep in mind the life of redness itself as it etched onto the landscape and into the place through flickering or hardening shards and angles and eventually came, in certain ways, to be lived, sensed, worlded. Redness meant some things to the puritans. The British Army in the American Revolution was the Red Coats, and the very eruption of that war was figured and refigured as a visual and aural refrain that the Red Coats were coming into the charged colonial atmosphere and an inhabited landscape. American Indians became "red" through a complex semiotics of encounters with colonists, the circulations among indigenous peoples, and ritual meanings of colors used in body paint to mark charged occasions (Shoemaker, 1997). Redness in the colonies helped cement a nascent traditionality, producing tactile ties to the Old Country and to other parts of earliest Americana—the Pennsylvania Dutch superstitious arts (the large, colorful hex signs painted on houses and barns to frighten the devil), or the old world charms and comforts of red bricks, red geraniums, and even, among the Germans, reddish-brown cows.

Paint is a subline within the line of red (others are maple trees, chapped or alcoholic cheeks, brick streets and sidewalks, the blood of young women scalped when their long hair was caught in the early industrial machinery of the textile mills, the redheaded Irish immigrants who flooded Boston during the famine, the "redness" of the Wobblies in the early trade-union strikes and the massive red-white-and-blue flags sewn to drape over the width of the mills in the mixed metaphors of strikers' surge for a life and management's enflamed tactics . . .).

The first paint—"Indian Red"—was made, as the common story has it, following American Indian custom, of clay mixed with the whites of wild turkey eggs and turkey blood. Then, to make paint colorfast and suitable for outside use, a plastic-like coating was made out of skimmed milk, lime, and red iron oxide, producing another natural red hue. It is said that red paint actualized New England practicality (it had the utility and function to absorb the sun's rays in the winter). Linseed oil was added to soak the color into the wood and prevent it from hardening too quickly and peeling off in sheets. Through a series of experiments that ended in some habits and forms and a literal coagulation of connections, affinities, and mixtures, paint took off as a phenomenon and established itself as a trajectory, magnetizing things to the purpose of covering wood. Then paint (and art) became an industry; natural matter and hues gave way to the bright fabrications of

marketing and their surreal intensification of color—redder than red, realer than real (Taussig, 2009).

But the synthetic world tacks back before and around and after paint. Long before and after paint became an industry, the relationality of nature and commerce set heads spinning. The dance of color and nature, social hierarchy and collective sensibilities, popped colonial New England houses in bright reds, greens, and blues. It was not until the nineteenth century that the weight of the already heavily industrialized region became a vision of pure white (whiter than white) colonial houses encircling the town commons as if to return to sharp, crisp nature (Conforti, 2001). Town centers threw together, and the red poppies of barns and outlying farmhouses like Red House then radiated out to dot the hills and become the color of rurality and the cottage industries of dairy farming and maple sugaring. The beautiful, occasional shock of red nestled into a wooded zone off the hard-core beat of gray and bloody industry that ruled by means of large bright white houses perched over experimental industrial villages full of immigrants.

By the time New England Red became iconic and lodged itself in the senses of the place, it was sparking from tree to blood to paint to skin to photograph. The cartography of color it pulled into relief revealed a world made of transient matter—a mode of being copresent to history and place. Redness (along with white-green-blue) had become a qualia of the "incipience of movement in its very taking form" (Manning, 2008, p. 325). Its compositionality had set things spinning in an interworlding between animate and inanimate movement, preconceptions and anticipations. It had become a mutating realism of a certain vision of light meeting movement, a transduction shifting between planes that catches the actual in its vibratory constellation—its becoming hued (Manning, 2008, p. 334).

New England Red was a flickering variation on the potential to activate new fields for perception (Manning, 2008, p. 329). It became a supplement to the ordinary, a superfluous promissory note. It became an instinctive intentionality sparking in a world's immediate on-flow and loss, the virtual, relational precision of redness that took shape in triggers, skills, and sensuous dispositions. Was there ever any advance notice of what it was becoming? Did it ever feel like a cresting wave (McCormack, 2010)?

In the story of New England Red, color rolled and peaked with regionalism, the local color movements of the 1930s and the 1970s, surrealism, the winter sky, the importance of labor made visible as painted wood or woven cloth, and any number of other bigger or smaller events of light, hue, and density. A redness-intensified reanimated a landscape abstraction to a quality that was realer than real. Robert Frost almost single-handedly reconstructed New England by pulling the region out of the gritty industrialization of the three southern states to New Hampshire through the portal of a dreamy abstraction done in red, white, green, and blue. Vast archives of early American words and objects were preserved with a new purpose. *Yankee* magazine's depression-era rurality pulled the dream of

straight-up Americana into the postwar, upwardly mobile nation (Conforti, 2001). The new New England was a way of life present to itself in (and as) moments of composition—the road taken, the scene animated by the qualia of sounds and sights and weather. As if time stood still for the split second the image appeared; as if plainness had been revivified. In its long, prismatic path of lines, redness had lifted into a color quale—the whatness that made a particular feeling or experience what it was. Peirce calls this phenomenon a first: "certain qualities of feeling, such as the color of magenta, the odor of attar, the sound of a railway whistle" (Peirce, 1931, vol. 1, p. 304). Redness saturated New England as an irreducible quality lodged in events in the arts and commerce, in religion, class, race, and migration. It spread across fields of vision hardened into kernel-scenes of red maples, sugaring houses, and red barns. It travelled, with the leaves of the maple tree in autumn, through picturesque calendars, a body of poetry, leaf tourism, and who knows what kinds of desires, fears, and dead ends. It took place as accidents, encounters, laws, horrors, exchanges, adventures, occasional appearances, dull routines, brightenings, chances, tools, milestones, and losses. It had events and so sites, actors, stakes, consequences, properties, competencies, modalities, attunements, and velocities (see Anderson & Harrison, 2010b).

In the end, redness was far more than a symbolic element in a representational order and far more matter-of-fact as well. It was not a representation actualized but an actual composition spun into representations, objects, and states of sensory alert.

It popped in the manner of an infrastructure repainted for its promise. It magnetized qualities and senses as it pulled objects into its orbit. It sat picturesquely evident in the field of Kerouac's speed-vision of an America *On the Road*. It sedimented into a pastoral clearing in the distance, a path to a horizon, a promise of encounter. It cast a spell over residents and tourists alike. It inspired a flood of photography, painting, literature, and postcards.

It had become a germinal aesthetic, a tendril of practices and sensibilities gathered into an energetics of form. It had produced affinities, accidental admixtures, and refrains on which people and things travelled. It had worlded.

Like the Red House itself, New England Red out-survived all its particulars to become a singular hinge opening onto a world throwing together and falling apart.

Many things ensued.

Redness became an improvisatory conceptuality that pushed matter itself into a state of emergent expressivity (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Hard and impersonal, it permeated the contours of the landscape, the climate, the layers of determinations laid down by histories, the leftovers of everything that happened.

Its ephemeral spark created an atmosphere that pulled qualities of sociality, personality, and language out of people (e.g., the town accents, the intimate public spaces of walking, stopping to talk, sitting together, the joking

about the human condition, the stories). It pressed people and things into service (e.g., neighbor men cutting down trees together, my brother's satisfaction at cutting down all the trees around his house after a protracted battle with squirrels in his attic). The red barns, the red dining rooms created spaces of care, territoriality, order, horror (e.g., you don't put your old furniture out on the street for people to pick up, you keep up with the painting as it weathers, you don't warm up to strangers, you know who you're talking to, you watch what's going on, you help those in the circle who need it).

Windows came to matter, not only as an aesthetic interface with an outside world but also as a method of worlding in themselves—a node of lines of sociality and mood. In the downtown neighborhood of the small New England town where I grew up, fifty miles from Red House, windows were kept uncurtained. Curtained houses were a sinkhole in the neighborhood—not just a sign of something amiss (depression, withdrawal, indifference, dysfunction) but the actual physical shadow of a state of being that broke the circuit of a gestural economy of seeing and being seen. People walked the neighborhood to see the still lives of those inside reading the paper or up early, as usual, drinking their coffee. Lamps were strongly favored over overhead lighting, lending texture and specificity to the scenes.

Windows were left open at night. This meant that the bedrooms of houses were left unheated through the winter and all that that entailed (strong bladders, electric blankets, a lifelong intolerance for the way heat dries the nostrils while sleeping).

One of the regular rhythms of the day was to pause at a window, fitted out with panes and shutters folded back on each side, to check in with the unfolding and pleating of a world pulled in and out through the glass. This was not just a practice of looking but a mood—ruminative or touched, for good or bad. That mood was a contact point with the threat of being shut in or stuck (see Pine, 2012). It was as if "getting out" was a necessary balancing act against the kind of intensity that came of being inside peering out of those powerful windows attuned to the compositionality of ordinary things. Raking leaves, shoveling snow, planting colorful pansies, painting the house, going to Dunkin' Donuts and the ice cream stands on every road out of town, and cutting down trees with your neighbors were somehow palliative acts of dispersal—a lightening of the intensity of mood. Public space was intensely intimate: when they met on the street or in a store, people stopped to talk about the weather (i.e., the human condition); neighbors watched and checked in and went to wakes at the end; there were benches everywhere to sit and visit; the town bars felt like 1970s basement recreation rooms; town accents marked intimate territories and a slack-jawed willingness to be copresent (see also Vannini, 2011, p. 289).

New England Red had become a way of hearing the world—a dissembling and a shock to thought, a machine in which things threw together and pulled apart, hardened up and sloughed off.

COMPOSITION

Strands tangle in a composition. The opening passage of *Red House* and my outline of New England Red here are suggestive cartographies of the mixing of elements and their varied, solid, or flickering ontologies. The expansive mapping of elements in play adds a disorienting weight to the stark mantras of representational critique: that the play of abstracted categories (i.e., real/fabricated, nature/human habitat, wild/tame, red/white, high/low) bloodlessly determines worlds or adequately describes them; that to say that everything is political means to always already know what the Political is (i.e., something that exists in the big picture or broader significance, something strongly obvious—but not to most people!); that meanings can be easily (even automatically) assigned to things and are the basis of those things' value.

In a composition, categories, meanings, and plays of force become generative in the course of something taking place. It is not that the things that happened to New England Red along the sparking lines of nation, region, class, race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, migration, in the industries and the arts, and in the constant shifts and hardenings that make up daily life were the mere effects of contexts or causes but rather that history and determination took place through lines of color and the other forms of the compositionality of living through the things that were throwing together and wearing out. These things happened in moments, scenes, and forms that swelled into a knap and matter pulled into line with a real: the moment in the nineteenth century when unrealistic stylization of visual experience became the hallmark of a new realism and the town centers starkly whitened; the scene of the red barn and the red maple leaf charging the landscape with the singularities of domestic industries and the promise of nature; the way that Hart Crane's short stories began to operate through color irreducible to subjective experience or objective physical properties.

Crane lifted the feeling of blue from its visual appearance to infuse it into his language, word touching world not in a mere symmetry of registers but as a generative relation. Gaskill (2009) likens this relation to the relation between water flowing through a turbine and the electrical current that is produced. In the same way, visual artists' use of colors did not simply replicate the new hypervalent styles and colors of advertising posters and tomato-can labels. Rather, art as a form was energized by the perceptual experience of the fin de siècle city and countryside in ways that led to the animation and even personification of color (Gaskill, 2009, p. 731).

In a cartography of compositional elements, formal compositions and unmarked ways of being loop around each other, fly out on a wing and back up. Wallace Stevens' poetry flew the queer-compositionality of color into the twentieth century by abstracting colors into a structure of being in a world composed out of shifting elemental qualities (McFadden, 1961, p. 187). A palette of colors made a reality (something that could be accepted) by adding form to being: black sky and ocean (limit, outline, elemental flux,

matter waiting formlessly to be changed); white ice and snow (stasis, shape and form, a blankness that challenges composition, the transitoriness of an ice cream cone); red (the feebly real, the long, low-frequency wavelength of the dying stars, the past, the effort to fix dead reality in a cast); green (plants that glare with a harsh reality, the violence at the heart of the world we inhabit); blue (a limited, temporary success in fixing experience in a pattern) (McFadden, 1961, p. 189). Prime colors indicated the capacity for a shift in perception attentive to forms raised or cut out of the materials of life. The evanescent glimpse of being is the closest we come to the ground of things (Miller, 1964, p. 100). The present is "physical if the eye is quick enough" (Stevens, 1954, p. 444) and also compositional so that a "day still full of summer" changes profoundly when the leaves, poised in the trees as if asleep, suddenly fall "and the leafless sound of the wind is no longer a sound of summer" (Stevens, 1954, p. 488).

A Stevens poem looks to the pure sensation of things as they are in their "living changingness" (Stevens, 1954, p. 380). The poem fastens itself to the moment poised between form and formlessness, a crystallization filled with the potentiality of dissolution. It is a de-creation that exposes reality as a rhythmic alternation between objects, events, and words, an uncreated world with everything still to be started up. "An ordinary evening in New Haven" is "a permanence composed of impermanence. So that morning and evening are like promises kept" (Stevens, 1954, p. 471). Reality is solid not because of a premise but because "a shade . . . traverses a dust, a force . . . traverses a shade" (Stevens, 1954, pp. 488–489).

OPENING ENDINGS

The question of New England Red is the question of actions, labors, nightmares, grubs, chemicals, forms of touch and repulsion. It is the question of a series of worlds unfolding and folding up again, each with a "we"—a matter of compositions. Are they tired or fresh? Are they feeble, experimental, eccentric, habitual, generous, gestural, half turned away? Have they reached the expressivity of a mood, an infusion, a tone of voice? Do they lighten things or load them down?

My mother is dying in the nursing home. I escape for lunch, walking several miles to the Pizza Factory on the highway to get a Greek salad with chicken and pita bread. Lured by the sight of a red barn, I am veered off into a route through the woods. This is an adventure and I am alone, anxious but also setting off. On the way back I see a different path going up over the hill and decide to take the detour. Then hours pass lost. I am dehydrated, becoming physically disoriented. Finally able to retrace my steps all the way back, I catch a glimpse of the white and gray buildings on the far side of a long wooded patch of overgrown bushes and raspberry briars. I run through it to the hardtop and the buildings that now seem to have been waiting, on hold.

This affective event of the ever-so-slightly reckless impulse to venture into a place that pulls watchful bodies out of windows and off tracks is familiar and strangely satisfying, almost compulsory—an allure into a stranding in a moody solid world of trees, punctuated, and even initiated, by an instance of red, and further broken, perhaps, by an occasional weathered shack, a sudden wild turkey run. I recognize the allure of a stranding in a still life of nature overlooking the scene of the human world not as an iconic ideological message imprinted on experience but as a structure of attachment to a future already passing, a present saturated with potential and threat, a composition made explicit in the figure of the active survivor and the knowing reader of impacts. The act of going off track and finding a way back was a search for the touch of a red-piqued world my mother and father had lodged themselves in. As children we had watched for the occasional glimpse of that world's emergence when the breaking waves and worn grooves of a present took off in an associational spin. This is a watchfulness-turned-impulse that ends not in meaning but in the haptic, multiangled, sensorimotor qualities of a world's unimaginable detail.

PHENOMENAL RED

In "Why Red Looks Red Rather Than Sounding Like a Bell," J. Kevin O'Regan outlines four qualities of sensorimotor interactions with environments that are not reducible either to thoughts and imaginings or to the physical properties of things in themselves: richness (a scene spied provides infinite detail beyond what you can invent), bodiliness (the motions of the body affect sensory input), insubordinateness (the world has a life of its own; things move by themselves), and grabbiness (sensory impacts matter apart from their cognition) (2010, p. 16). Having a phenomenal experience is having skills with these qualities.

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New England Red is a presence even when it isn't actual. Walking home in the middle of my first drunk night as a fifteen-year-old, I peed under a huge elm tree right on Main Street as if these trees, red-piqued by the maples, created an intimate public space out of the world (see Berlant, 2008).

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I came across an old photograph of an icehouse on Lake Cochichewick. Men would cut great blocks of ice out of the lake and drag them with horses up to the icehouse, where the ice would stay frozen all year. Then they cut the ice into blocks and delivered them to iceboxes all over town. The icehouses didn't get painted red like the sugaring houses did. What's the question to ask about all this labor and why they did it?

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The body learns to respond to red. If you turn your head, for instance. Or if you are sitting in an Adirondack chair at the top of a hill in winter. You can see over the bare trees to the lake and the hills behind it. The winter sky is a beautiful blue-gray. The hour is stolen from the hard time of being in the nursing home down below. In there, the colors of the walls and bedding are muted, though New England pops in wood built-ins and large photographs and paintings of coastal villages and paths through dense fall woods. Out here the colors have a fresh smell. They sting the cheeks. You can breathe. It's an interlude cordoned off by the phenomenon of Red. Not now, but soon, red buckets will be hung from the maple trees at the bottom of the hill, where some of the old people can still get out to walk or at least remember walking or at least see the color red out there.

CHECKING IN

Writing, like New England Red, is not epiphenomenal, not an expression of knowledge already garnered from scholarship, but a phenomenal method of attending and composing. It can get on a roll, cook things down to a sensation, spin out of critical thinking's bad habits—the facile moralisms, the prizing of prefabricated good objects over bad. Writing, like red, can be a hinge. Or a necessary detour. Or a phenomenal cartography that reaches a point of expressivity: a queer performativity of flighty infrastructures, an energetics of attention, a comagnetizing of things.

In *Checked out OK* (2013) Corwin Ericson pulls police reports from small-town western Massachusetts papers into smooth, speculative little clumps of phenomena. Subphenomena pop up, establish little lines of their own, and tangle. There are forms of corecognition, something witnessed that gets cooked down into something saucy. Compositions sort into forms. Bits and pieces of reporting throw little lights on phenomenal compositions of noticing what happens and routine acts of checking in attuned to the "more than" of experience.

> Aug 4 2:15 p.m. and Aug 6, 11 a.m. A Wendell Road resident told police someone had been using a pruning device to remove branches from trees on the property. Police determined the damage was actually being caused by porcupines.
>
> 9:14 a.m. Police determined that a child reported home alone at the Brook Estates was actually an adult who was OK.
>
> 2:38 p.m. A suspicious man seen looking into car windows on Spring Street was determined to be a blind man who was just waiting for a bus.
>
> 6:34 p.m. A group of males putting a branch with spikes on Harkness Road turned out to be a pine branch.

4:50 p.m. A swimmer at Puffer's Pond reported that three people with weapons and holding walkie-talkies were loitering in the area. Police determined that members of the department's detective bureau were working there.

4:07 p.m. An Amherst Road resident reported that there was a rabid mole in her yard snapping and attacking a plastic trash bag. The resident drowned the mole in a bucket of water. Police said there was no sign that the mole had been rabid. And the resident was advised to bury the animal.

10:48 a.m. A man crawling in the middle of Main Street was issued a warning to stay out of the travel lane.

(There were three other cases reported of men crawling in the middle of, and usually licking, the road. This is a line of composition.)

2:52 p.m. A person reported finding two jackets in a snow bank alongside the Norwattuck Rail Trail where it crosses under South Pleasant Street. The jackets were left in case they had been placed there deliberately.

9:33 a.m. A man licking the locks on doorways of apartments on North Pleasant Street was gone when police got there.

(The licking again.)

3:28 p.m. A Belchertown Road resident was advised to talk to her roommates after she said someone entered her apartment and ate bananas.

5:06 p.m. Witchcraft was allegedly being practiced at a Pelham Road home. The woman who reported the witchcraft called police the following day at 8:28 to report more trickery taking place.

(There is a line of obsessive endurance when it comes to suspicious acts or acts of injustice. People complain to the police that a store that claims to be open 24 hours isn't open at 5 a.m. or that one that is supposed to be open at 6 a.m. still isn't open at 6:05 even though there are people moving around in there.)

4 p.m. Police received a report from the management at Bart's Homemade that a woman causing problems would not leave the store. The woman told police that she had asked for a piece of pie but was refused service because the pie was allegedly frozen. When she returned to the store, she discovered that the pie, by that time defrosted, had been sold to another customer. She told police she may file a civil complaint against the store.

12:50 p.m. Police received a report that a human hand was in the middle of the Route 116 near the Goten of Japan restaurant. Police

> determined it was a rubber glove and contacted the Highway Department to remove it.

(A couple of months later a blood-soaked glove was reported on the ground outside the DB Mart on West Street. Police located the glove and determined that in the moonlight its pink color just made it look red. There are a lot of people sitting in cars who turn out to be just looking at the stars.)

> 10:33 a.m. A dangerous-looking animal that a Pondview Drive resident reported was moving about on his property turned out to be a black plastic trash bag blowing in the wind.
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> 2:47 p.m. A Village Park woman told police that she found a brownie underneath her license plate.
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> 6:25 p.m. A call was made reporting that a duck near the campus pond had not moved in three or four days. An officer responded and determined that the duck in question was a wooden duck.
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> 2:59 p.m. A Village Park woman reported four 60-watt light bulbs and four boxes of cranberry bread mix were stolen from the residence. Police were unsure whether any break-in had occurred.
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> 5 p.m. A Lake Wyola area resident told police that threatening graffiti was placed on his lawn. Police determined that the graffiti was just markings made by phone company employees.
>
> 9:57 p.m. A Station Road resident reported hearing a strange noise in the area. Police determined it was just wind in the trees.
>
> 9:12 p.m. A Hawkins Meadow woman told police that someone may have been entering her apartment while she's not home as she found her toilet filled with urine when she returned. There were three other cases of women finding alien urine in their toilets and assuming someone had broken in to put it there.

The more-than representation, the more-than what we know, stretches out into nether lands and then snaps back to the register of sensory phenomena and compositional leaps. It catches attention, sets off lines and habits, spreads into an ecology of paths that matter by means of the things that happen in a present in which we are lost yet attuned.

As Taussig, thinking of Walter Benjamin's compositional methods, puts it,

> Back to the red butterfly as seen under the influence of opium, same color as the poppies filling the fields, vibrating blood red in the summer haze of Ibiza. Back to Goethe, positing color as a function of the human body, itself seen as an ongoing experiment in nature's relation to culture, language being right there on the cusp where nature and culture intertwine closer than ancient ivy. (2009, p. 252)

THE THING ABOUT RED

This red is a clumping of trees and painted faces, war colors and dreams of cottage industries far from the bloody gray of industrialization. It's domestic touches, the invention of landscape, and the price you pay for being in a place that spins in a tangle of events, lines, and accretions. It's a compositional method scored through matter, a leaning in to a worlding. A knapping up, a refrain that loops out and back between form and matter. It's a quality that became atmospheric, sensory, an ecology of potentiality marked by violence and care. An expressivity stretched across a field. A register of compositionality and all the ways that people and things venture out into reals. A prismatic fan of projects and momentary might-have-beens throwing together and falling apart. It became a capacity more than, and alien to, the representational. The non-representational method of following red's lines here has suggested an associational logic of connections, divergences, the coagulations and diffusions of lines of influence and bits of matter.

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