WE ARE HERE

KIRSTEN GALLAGHER
HERE
WE

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Portions of this work have appeared in Abraham Lincoln, Crayon, and Model Homes.


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Kristen Gallagher

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In an effort to home in on “contributing factors” to park accidents, the service recently felt compelled to add “inattention to surroundings” to more old-fashioned causes like “darkness” and “animals.” Diana Hamilton, facebook update
let's see – ok – what – we’re at 8 right now – this is 8 – sea shore rose – uhhh – this little garden – yeah – is here – yeah – and there's all this japanese watergarden stuff – let's see where are the rock gardens – rock gardens – no way – is that beautiful – like whadduhthey – build an arch? – 22 is the rock garden – do you see it? – so we should definitely go by 22 – or we could just meander – big butterfly! – which way now?
we’re facing this way – we came down – we just came from here so this is that – what is that? – this is that
and and this is that – oh! – ok wait – what is that? – this is that – am i wrong? i just don’t know! – well, yeah
– i thought we were coming from here – we are – but then that would be there then – oh – and this would
be that – we did just come over that though, so we must have not gone this way at the right time? – yeah,
i don’t remember june beetle bridge mm-mmm, so i guess we came this way – that’s ok, whatever, here
we are – this way? this way? – i dunno – this way? – yeah, you’re right, this way – i was forgetting that we
were meant to come – the forest is ending – oh, it’s cars.
excuse me is this the right way to the park – yes – just keep going – you’ll just hit it i think yeah – i’ll just hit it? – yeah
so this'll just tell you where to go – there's a couple ways to go so we'll just see what she says – turn left. on. west germantown pike – ok so she's gonna have you take the turnpike – or she could have you take dekalb – yeah i dunno it would be strange but you could do it – dekalb is a little road, well it's not a little road but it's not as big as the turnpike – anyway dekalb, dekalb pike, actually it's route 202 but around here we call it dekalb – dekalb is one way you could go but i'd say it's the wrong way so if she has us doing that i don't know what we're gonna do – well i guess it doesn't mean it won't work it could work you'd just have to take it all the way to the expressway and the turnpike would be faster so i don't know why she'd say that but we'll see what she says – turn right. on. swede road – no that's not right that can't be right that's wrong that's wrong – well should we stop? – that just can't be right – well which way do you think we should go? – alright i'll just shut up now – but you seem to know the way maybe you can just tell us how to get there – i'll tell you what i do know she's wrong that thing, what she's saying, that's wrong – wait but are you sure? – yeah maybe she knows something you don't – it's a road that goes nowhere, it just stops do you ever wonder why we never take it? it's because it doesn't go anywhere – she told us to turn right on a road that's essentially a dead end – you know how to go though, don't you? – yeah, we've gone here before all by ourselves – well i'd just as soon see what she says if we can get her to work.
what did she say? – she said follow the trail and then there’s another trail that comes back up and you can just go around – ok – so i’m assuming from the way she talked – i’m right behind you – what do you think which way should we go – the “to stream” sign is broken – it’s fallen – it’s like – it could be that way – it’s certainly not that way – yeah it’s pointing like – then it would be inside the earth – yeah, dig hole here to find stream – let’s pick it up and carry it like a protest sign – we wanna go to the stream! – to stream! – or when we find the stream we can use it to point at it – i think the water is like towards that way – towards down – yeah, water is always down, right? – she said go down and this looks like down – at least for now
it's searching for the road – the coverage might be kind of slow – i don't think there's much out here – it's kind of hard to escape it these days though – i like that when i want to escape it i just turn it off and put it away – free will baby – right – here it is what's the name of the town? – it's beach something – beach lake? – beach lake yeah – but there's no beach and there's no lake – cool it's a poststructuralist town – this is not a beach or a lake – there is a river though – well it's not on this thing – really? – yeah really – it's not on there? – like it just isn’t there? – yeah, it's not showing up on this anywhere i can see – any way i try – maybe dick cheney lives there – like area 51 – but for hippies
after the parking lot go there and make a left hand turn – and this is the trail here? – yeah – basic – just follow the creek – it’s easier than looking for blazes you just follow the creek the whole way – it’s easy? – real basic it’s within eyesight the whole time you can’t miss it – my father always told me to be wary when people say you can’t miss it – do you not trust it? – no i believe you it just reminds me of my dad
ok – so – did we go left or right coming out of there – um ok – yeah you know? – uuhhh – i think we went right when we shoulda gone left – ok – wait – see, that’s that tree – and remember? – wait – wasn’t it – yeah, remember? – when we were facing the map that giant green rock was that – uuhhh – yeah and if i’m right then that should be here on the left – how did we go right? – no way – look at those guys – where they’re going
we just came down from here so we are here and this is that and this is that and that whole thing over there? – is this – i’m pretty sure – wait, but i thought we were coming from here – we are – but then that would be there then – oh – o shit, we did just come over something – it could’ve been that though – do we need to go ummm, it would be… there? – mm-hmmm, so i guess we came this way – you wanna try this way? – no, i think we should try your way – i don’t care, i told you i’m always wrong so let’s go this way – yeah sure this way – that looks like there’s a house in the sky
so this is it – this is her favorite area – i wonder what she likes about it – yeah, it’s not much to look at – it’s kind of a swamp – a bog she said – yeah, a bog – maybe she knows something about bogs – yeah, there must be something to know about bogs – it doesn’t look like much – no, it’s all scrubby – on the map it’s not much either it’s like a line just like a line – they should put one of those little like museum sign like things describing why this is important – it’s prolly some kind of serious environmental thing
i wonder if this is the right way – if we don’t see it we’ll make a right on centennial avenue – i wonder if it’s ok – yeah, here – what – is the right way – we can find out – um if we go past – if we don’t see it we can go – we’ll make a right on centennial avenue and come back – well, where would it be if it wasn’t here? – well, it’s here, i just thought it was actually i thought it was facing this street but now that i’m looking – oh, you think it could be back off that way – so it’s not so bad, it’s not like we’re in the wrong part of the town – we may just be a few feet back from this street here – eel grass rehabilitation project – i wonder what eel grass is – i guess it’s in trouble – there’s a sign over there that tells you but you have to walk on the grass to get there – is this eel grass? – i dunno but i don’t want to mess it up just in case – yeah i guess not – so you think this is the street we’re on? – uh, maybe – if it is – wait – we should go this way i think – yeah this way – ok
i think she’s taking us in the opposite direction from – we’re supposed to go but turn in the opposite di-
rection from the green turtle? – we shouldn’t pass it on the right we should pass it on the left – so she’s
just making us go the wrong way – yes – yeah i – she’s making us loop – she’s making us go down to
loop around – why do we have this thing on, we go to this place all the time – we gotta cross that bridge
– there’s all kinds of bridges around here aren’t there – oh you know did we – i dunno – she’s not gonna
take us back out and then down the other road is she? – i don’t know what she’s doing – why don’t you
ask her – yeah just ask her – this just doesn’t seem right – hit the thing and it’ll tell you where you’re going
– turn left. on. 72. then left on sugar lane – ok we’ll do what she says but i don’t know – i got a feeling she’s
wrong – well just do what she says anyway – if you don’t do what she says then you really don’t know
what she’ll do – eject you from the driver seat? – she just recalibrates – i wonder if you just kept ignoring
her if eventually the machine would break – yeah make her go in loops – wow i love that little camper back
there – cute
do you know if this is the right way to the park? – yes it’s right there but i’m not sure don’t go by me
go – i can’t hear you – wait i can’t hear a word you’re saying just wait – fuck me – helicopters – i counted that’s 1 minute and 20 seconds of noise – i said do you wanna go here or here – this way – yeah and check that out – what – the birds – they’re like, in a frenzy – wow – yeah – wow – you think they’re responding to the helicopters? – i kind of do – ok, so i said i think we should go that way – the other way? – i kinda wanna go towards the birds – where are they? – i dunno doesn’t it sound like it’s coming from there? – mmmm maybe – does that make sense? – would only birds that way react to the helicopter over there? – i would think they can hear all around – you’re probably right
do you think red means difficult? – no i think it’s just a color – not like black diamond when you’re skiing?
– i don’t know i kind of don’t think anything here is difficult – so it’s just red paint – yeah on here it doesn’t
look like there’s even more than one trail – yeah it’s just several ways to get to the same place – is that
different from other places? – yeah – maybe – i guess not
i wonder if we can get back around that way – go up – she did sort of say that but i just don’t know – its hard to say – uuhhh yeah – it might be that we took the other path too – mmmmm – she sort of implied that you could go come back around the other way but i’m not sure how clear that is – do you see another path that way? – do you see a path pick up over that way? – she kind of implied we could go around and come back up through another direction but – doesn’t seem like it? – yeah it’s here somewhere but i – ok – could be down further – do we wanna find it? – nah, i don’t wanna get stuck in a river today
ok so it looks like the best way is to take a left on 48th – ok good, turn left – turn left – turn left – well it sounded like you were almost there are you turning left – turn left – left – left turn left – did you turn left – why not?
is that long island – oh that’s connecticut – my google maps has been so slow lately – i think i need to get a
new phone – what’s that one – new york state – this one here? – open it – so – um – i guess we just – take
this bridge – i mean there’s – i guess we could either go – yeah cuz i just don’t know anything out there so
i don’t wanna not know where we’re going or lead us nowhere or end up in some suburban neighborhood
– ok so this goes this way we could go up to the bridge – we just need a destination that’s all – cuz you
know what i mean we’re not gonna just stumble on some nice place to go – exactly – we have to know
where we’re going – this is so annoying it won’t load
do you know if this is the right way to the park? – yes i think so but maybe don’t listen to me because i really don’t know anything
oh look there’s some water – i like how the street just ends and then there’s water – would you call it ocean? bay? – i love how it says dead end – yeah, like, attention: the road does not continue into the ocean – you may want to drive into the ocean, but you should stop – that, my dear, is a true dead end – also, i don’t think we’re maybe – not quite – where we think we are headed – why – didn’t we wanna be over there? by that big house? – i don’t know show me what you mean – i thought we were going this way so that’s why i had us come this way and i thought we were going to here but that’s over there – yeah, the way it looks it looks like we could have walked through – yeah, huh – and i don’t think we can get there from here because of that fence – we could climb it – it looks pretty forbidding – yeah i think we have to walk back around – can you see another way?
do you have a map of this area – what do you mean – a way i could see various ways to go like various roads and bridges – i mean this – is this where we are? – it isn’t so big – tiny – new york is so tiny and insignificant – alright so where’s 80 – 80’s right here – ok so what about going up through here – i don’t think that’s crazy – or the g.w. – or we could stick with the hudson idea which is you know – this way – or the um – parkway? – what about this here is that a bad tunnel? – well wait is the g.w. bad? – it’s just that it’s a friday a summer friday and it just occurred to me a lot of people take half days and leave – is that the most popular way to leave and enter the city? – i know down here is the worst and yet if you do it through down this way there’s nothing you’re like the only person leaving – my parents always go this way and it’s amazing how different it is so i’m wondering if going up this far also makes a difference – yeah that could be – have you taken it and had a bad experience before? – once – oh wait this thing loaded so we can look up traffic – here’s what i hate – when it lights up the color covers over the name of the interstate.
you see that yellow thing, that tall yellow like wire like thing going off to the right? you go up there towards that – just follow that – you’ll see when you get there – the street veers off to the right – veers off actually is it a new street there – or i think it just veers off i don’t know but you’ll see when you get there just turn that way
what’s the nearest street – well you must be near some street, i mean, you just said you pulled over and i’m guessing that was on a street right so what street are you on – you’re pulled over, right? – ok so look out of the car window – are you looking out the window? – just look out and a little up like to where a street sign would be – ok? – look for a street sign, do you see a street sign? – well there must be one, just look at the nearest corner – are you looking? – do you see a green sign that looks like a street sign? – good, what does it say? – does the sign have numbers or letters – what are the numbers – 64? hmmm does it say avenue or road or street? – 64th ave – uuhhh – yeah i gotta find that – i’ll figure it out – just let me figure it out – i’m figuring it out don’t worry – i’m looking – don’t worry, you’re gonna be fine, you’ll just have to turn around – i’m telling you i’m looking here and the only thing to do is go back the way you came – well tell him to pull himself together and deal – well you’re gonna have to – i’m looking on the map do you think i’m just making this all up? – there is no good way for me to tell you streets – yes, i am looking and that is how i have deduced that the best way is to get back on the highway – i realize you’re freaking out but its just the highway and there isn’t a very straightforward way to tell you to drive – you don’t want to drive through streets here it’s a very confusing place – you thought the highway was bad? – it’s nothing compared to the side streets – we’re not doing that – no – no – i’m telling you you don’t want to do that i’m looking at the map right now and it is a truly gnarly situation you do not want this i’m telling you seriously
let's see – ok – he said enter through the arch – i do not see any arch – that looks like a map over there – entry – yeah i think that's the arch – i don't think that's an arch – technically i know but it could pass – ok – wait – we're at the train station right now – this is on this circle i guess – here – uhhh – this little thing with the pillars? – yeah – is here – yeah – and there's this garden – ok maybe – and that is what he means is the arch i think – well and he said the lookout just beyond the arch – let's see – let's just go through there and look for places to look out from – we could go through here and eventually that garden – do you see it? – we have to go through there and i think it's gonna end up being the arch – and if it isn't we'll just figure it out – i think you're right – ok here we go
is this 6? – 6 – or 8, maybe? – get the map – who has the map? – oh, oh, that’s me – yeah this is uhh this should be, wait – ok so this is 6 i think, which means – oh ok ok ok ok yeah so it’s just bigger than you think it is – that’s 8? – yes we’re right here don’t you see? – i don’t, no – it seems like we want to go further down – over the pond or whatever that is – no, you guys we are right here – no you’re looking from here i think we’re here looking this way – here turn it this way – i guess so i dunno take it – oh wait – am i turned around? – you might be – i mean, don’t listen to me necessarily – but i feel like it’s there – i don’t wanna go because of feelings – i wanna know – no, just come on it’s here look come on
in school, we can’t say like – go that way and go that way – we say like – go right or go left – we have
to give really straight directions – like, go one block left – and we get them one place to another place to
another place – at school we made these buildings that a real city needs – like a hotel a movie theatre and
little people – we made a little lego-guy go from the apartment building to the toy store and then go to the
hospital – i don’t really know which way is left and right but – you say go right or go straight one block – and
he goes – or you could say turn right again – and pretend the toy store is on his right – then he would be
there – but the city is made of blocks, not legos
just go the way you came in – ok well i don’t know how i came in – either way seems good to me – it’s
the way, this way – toward the water tower – don’t you have gps? – well we broke it on the way here so i
guess we’re screwed – yeah we’ll all become nomads
i got off at the wrong stop so i’m gonna be a few minutes late – i have to walk like three blocks i think – so
ummm i’m on a little bench umm by the paris theatre – umm on a little bench – there’s a little fountain – and
i’m sitting on a bench by the little fountain – umm, yeah so just – a little fountain i’m just right there by this
little fountain – ok well i think it’s just like three blocks sorry – that’s ok i’m here
you have to get back on and go west or south – that part I can’t see, but it clearly is not north and it is not
east, so whatever it says you’ll choose either south or you’ll choose west – you know how highways tend
to run north-south or east-west? – that’s what I’m saying – well just go back the way you came – you were
just on it like 3 minutes ago right? – can you get back there? – can’t you go the way you came and look for
signs? – follow whatever takes you back the other way – do you remember anything from the immediate
past? – well let’s work with that
i can’t really tell if this is a two-way road or not – there’s another sign that’s the other way too – well infor-
mation said that way – that might be meaningful – it said the other way? – yeah, oh, i thought you were
just doing something else – sorry – just turn around in one of these little things – that – there was also
something that said three miles ahead hike – turtle beach, that thing? – but is that the best choice? – i
can’t say for sure i’m just guessing that information would be good because i’m assuming they have a map
– then we could make a choice – from this map here it looks like a ginormous area so there’s probably a
lot of choices – it’s kind of good that we’re coming here because halliburton is trying to destroy it – we can
appreciate it – can you imagine? – let’s set up this huge ugly drill – right
what are we looking for – the bridge, or some sign that takes us to the bridge – go straight – there’s a sign there – the green and white signs are promising too – i hope – oh that lady i was talking about with the audi, this is where she works – so she really can walk to work – is that her – oh yeah right – okay – is it giving you any indication – no i didn’t turn it on – want me to do it now? – um, i guess – (beep) – i guess they want us to take 30 – well i can get us to the mall but if that thing doesn’t chime in soon we’re gonna have to make a phone call – it will chime in, it took a few minutes the other day too – yeah but i think that’s because we were under some trees – traffic! – oh look that’s where – if we get to the mall and we don’t have a satellite, call joe and ask where he is maybe you can follow him – is that thing saying anything yet – no its looking for a satellite – we don’t have a satellite – i’m serious, just call joe, he was going to be at the mall, we can just follow him – (continue. five. point. three. miles) – there it is, just threaten her and she goes – are we going the right way – yeah sort of, we just passed brick road – i don’t remember passing this bishop mueller stuff – that’s the street, grove st is where it is – any indication of anything from that thing – she’s telling us turn left in eight tenths of a mile – i really don’t think that’s the way but if that’s what they’re telling us to do – (in. point. four. miles. turn right. then turn left) – is it this road here – she didn’t tell us to turn – well i’m pretty sure that was it – (turn. right) – no, see she says here – well i’m not so sure, what street do we want – greentree – we’re on greentree – no she wants us to turn on greentree – (turn. left) – so they apparently want us to go thru here – yeah – yeah there’s sims i know she lives around sims – this is where 24 – (in. point. two. miles. turn right) – turn right here – yeah – (turn. right) – (drive. point. three. miles. then turn left) – is this supposed to be it – no, i don’t think so – lakeview this must be it – (turn. left) – (arriving. at. destination. on left) – alright, fine
do you happen to know where is the paris theatre – no but i can look it up on my iphone – oh that would be so cool – is it parrish – i don’t actually know somebody just told me on the phone – and so – like that? – i think so – that’s what i think i heard her say – let’s see – it’s just showing all the theatres around here – wow that’s all theaters everywhere – yeah it’s like – yeah everywhere – yeah not helpful
we’re right at this triangular point right there – we read about the blue dot trail being mild – there’s a water-
fall right over here and it’s near the blue dot – and right this stretch here – yeah – blazed in blue and green
– so and it’s probably a half mile out and half mile back but you’d follow the white blazed trail that’s in the
back of this parking lot – and then at this trail juncture go up – ok – is it hard to go up there? is this trail
hard? – no – and you’d follow along the creek the green trail – ok – and that’ll bring you to the waterfall
pretty shortly – do we go up anything there? – there’s a small bridge – and then if you want you can make
a three and a half mile loop – a pretty mellow loop – with this red trail – you’ll ford the river and then you’ll
see the trail goes off to your left and you can cruise back down this way – that sounds cool – where are
we now – right down here – oh
we’re facing this way – i thought we came through here – right and we just came from here so we’re here – what is here? – this and – and this? – ok wait – where? – this here – am i wrong? – maybe i don’t know – well, yeah – i thought we were coming from here – we are – but then we should be here then – wait – and this would be there – we did just come through that square though – that was a square right? – maybe, sure – is it this square here? – so we must have gone this way – yeah, i don’t think we did that – no, we didn’t do that – cuz we woulda had to go by that there – so i guess we came this way – that’s ok – so should we go back this way? – ok, yeah, this way – sorry i was forgetting to pay attention i knew where we were going
isn’t it odd – it’s not at all helpful – but it’s beautiful – it’s so op art – yeah and these were not green – what is that – central park is square – weird – its representational but – and the flow of it – yeah it’s all wrong – that doesn’t even go that way – i’m getting to the point where i know the whole system almost so i wouldn’t need to look – then i can just appreciate it as art – the park seems so out or proportion – looking at london’s everyone’s always like you have these big gray parks – it’s aggressively like op art – i wish the map looked like this – it’s like i want this one – it’s a genuine piece of old real subway map – yeah i have one from 1956 – this is clearly one trying to mimic the london one – the parks are gray – in london the lines are represented in a way that doesn’t show anything about where you’re going like we’re used to here – there are no diagonals – but because the city isn’t a grid – it’s laid like a grid laid over a messy and absurd structure – it’s very difficult to figure what goes where here – but people also know where things are supposed to be here where in london people don’t relate to the city in the same way – it’s beautiful – it’s just not useful – i’ve never seen one like this – yes this is – we’re very close to the end of these – very close to the end – of not needing to use it – you need to know all kinds of alternate routes for when things fuck up – and they always do – if new york were a little tamer – yes in london – it’s not like the new york subway system – it’s aggressively op art – it’s just there if you know it
it says follow the trail toward the hash mark and then there’s another trail that cuts off to the right – ok – i don’t see a hash mark – so i’m assuming we’re not there – i don’t know, look around – could anything here be another trail? – from the way it sounds – i’m right behind you – what do you think? – what do you wanna do? – um, i wonder if we have to keep walking? – what if we made a wrong turn – i kind of think it’s back there and we passed it – but look at how it goes – it like juts back in the other direction – oh we’re looking at the wrong angle? – really? – is that it? – huh
i don’t think the bramble is on here – uh oh – ramble – is that it? – that might be it – so if that’s the case then we’re not far – we just added a “b” – we just went by the rink – where’s that i don’t see it – here – oh – so we’re kind of winding in the right direction – is there a method to this madness of the gray line versus the black line? – is the gray a more big thoroughfare or something? – could be – so do you know exactly where we are? – well we’re probably right here – cuz the rink was to our left – oh so we’re probably right here – yeah – so let’s see if we have – maybe right here we could get off by right there – i don’t know what that big black swatch mark is – it doesn’t matter we’re going this way
should we go up this way? – oh is it this way? – well i’m not sure if that’s what you pointed to but it does get us to – i don’t know – yeah i can’t tell – let me see it again can i see it again? – so if we’re here – right – then we probably wanted to keep going this way – yeah we could do that – and then or well i don’t know – i don’t know – i don’t know – it’s hard to tell – wanna give it a try? – ok we’ll see where we end up
did they move the cemetery? – i swear it was here – can you pave over a cemetery? – i’m not sure where it would be if it isn’t on this corner
ok – so – did we go past 23? – i think we went right at 16 and now we're in the 40s – but we said we
wanted 23 – we shoulda gone left at 16 – see, that's that part we passed – and – no, i know, i'm just saying
we want 23 right? – sure – yeah, remember? – so do we want to go to 23? – is there another way to go
so we can keep going through here and come back around – um, sure, all the way up and around, it could
take awhile – are we in a hurry? – no, actually – so let's check out 48 – what was 48? – do you remember?
– i dunno but it's right here – lemme look – it says hippo fountain – what, hippos bathe there? – i don't
think there are hippos here – that's why i wanna go what if there are – there's not gonna be hippos – why
so cynical? – there might be hippos
we’re looking for blue dot? – blue and green are together for awhile – we follow our plan what the guy said
– and we come back to the blue – no – oh i thought i remembered we come back to the blue – here it’s
here – oh that’s that one – yeah, here – so i’m not supposed to be looking for blue now? – no
ok so we’re actually over here – look at that – so somehow we ended up that way, huh? – interesting – so if we keep walking – i guess we’ll hit something – we’ll figure it out right? – should we go up or across or – i don’t know – i don’t care about that house, do you? – not necessarily – whatever you want – let’s go up this way – around here? – ok but we’re not going to that house, though, right, we don’t want that right? – no don’t worry but we have to go by it to go over there – oh ok just checking cuz i have no need for sightseeing shit like that quaint house – yeah, no, we’re passing the house
we have no choice but to go to main street – it’s the only place that it goes – that’s where it goes – are there a lot of lines here? – I don’t know – it looks like a lot – in philly there’s only two – blue and orange – here there’s blue, red, bright green, lime green, yellow – lime green? – yeah there, lime green – I’d just say green – but this one’s green – that’s dark green – and there’s yellow and bright orange and light orange
we just came down from here so we are here near here – and this here is there? – and this is that and that area up the hill is all this – oh, ok – i thought we were – we are – but now i just realized this is going this way – oh so then that would be there then – yep – it couldn’t have been that though? – nope, nope, because it it would be – there? – mm-hmmm – so we came this way – ok, i think i see – well then let’s just do this
so here it says, by the house the street cuts off – where's the house that the street cuts off? is that here? – it says it's here number 90 middle street – is this middle? – yeah – do you see an address? – no – that's 75 there – so the even numbers would be over there – i don't see a house that gets cut off by a road – the house the street cuts off – you'd expect to see a house cut in half by a rudely placed road – i just don't see that – maybe it's that one – 75, hmm – maybe they changed all the numbers – maybe they came and tore everything down and replaced it with that ymca there – the house the street cuts off – this is it, it says 90 – yeah, it looks like, i dunno, that's it – i guess – it doesn't look too cut off to me – i think we're here but it's not
so we’re just gonna follow joe – you can’t go that way joe – he has to turn around – well follow him anyway
– follow him – no he has to – he’s getting in behind me now, should i take the lead? – no let him – he’s
pulling around in front now – i guess i’ll follow him – yeah, because he did such a good job the first time
– what are you doing, joe – i think he’s lost yeah we’re lost – well it won’t be the first time we’ve been lost
– knowing joe he probably has a gps on him – yeah i think we’re lost – we did go past all this stuff here on
the way to the place today – yeah we did – well we should have stayed on that road – i think we blew it – i
think we’re way off – but he has gps he said he was going to put it on, so we’ll see – is it on 70 – are we
on 70 – i thought it was on 38 – oh here’s 38 – well we might still make it – we’re not even going to get to
the train station at this rate, so plans might have to be changed radically – i don’t know this area so i don’t
i don’t know anything at all – first of all from this road i don’t think you can turn left – you can’t turn left here
joe – well i guess you can if you have to but i don’t know where he’s going – give me a sign joe – woah he’s
taking us on a crazy ride – here he comes – what’s he telling us – roll down the window
where should we go? – i don’t care too much but i want it to be good – we have to have a place or we’re just going – we could just go out this way – i went somewhere here once – i can’t remember it – i wonder if i could find it – but yeah, we can’t just go around looking for a place we need to kind of know ahead of time – we’re most likely not gonna find a beautiful place just driving around – we gotta figure this out – there’s someplace in here somewhere but i don’t know where – if we can’t find it then we can’t go – ok so you think we should go up here or out here? – i guess that’s what we’re deciding.
now what? – we’re at a crossroads – with a traffic light and everything – this is gonna be like that thing – the bike, cyclist, jogger thing – so we could go across that and go up that – see it seems like there are fences or something and we have to go past that – oh so you think this is here? – yeah and we wanna go here so this would go that way – or we could try this here – whatever we’re definitely headed in that direction
this way is out, isn’t it? – i think you have to get up on that thing there – oh, that road with cars? – i think there are two ways out – back the way we came? – but check this out, can we cut through here? – yeah, that could save us time – i’m pretty sure it’ll work – yeah, or just keep going – it could take longer – when’s sunset these days? – ya worried we’ll be trapped here overnight? – that helicopter could block out the sun – where? – oh – a shadow just passed over that big yellow arrow
this is a puzzle of the united states of america – each piece is a piece of the world of america – it belongs to america – this is cheeseland – this is bull-land – which land is this? – love? – no, iowa i-o-w-a – we live on that little green piece – no, we live in washington dc – no, we live in virginia – no, we live right here – no, here – where’s washington dc? – new york is called the big apple – no, yes! we live in new york city the big apple i know it! – no, smelly apple – smellyapolis – there are pictures of every state that help you find out what the words say but they didn’t help me cuz i don’t know what they say so i make it up – this piece is outer space, mars, because look at the rocket (points to florida) – i’m seeing a tennis racquet – the usa is in outer space! – just get on a rocketship and go! – and then you get out – and you get to go vroom! – we’ll have to have helmets on – i’ll be her puppy – this is news y-o-u reporting from space – there’s jupiter! – there’s the moon! – there’s mars!
do you know which way is the park? – central park? – yeah – you wanna go west ummm – so you wanna
go past – oh this way? – you pass madison, right? – yes three blocks – it’s past madison and the next big
street is fifth – oh, ok – and i think just when you get there if you can’t see it just ask somebody – so if i just
go this way i should see it – you should
you’re not here necessarily just to be here – you’re on your way somewhere – if you’re out in the square
you’re like, here – oh well i dunno what do you think people are going this way for – i don’t know – they
seem to go every way – we wanna go west – often i find myself like, here, and i can get confused – there
have been times when i’m there and i’m like which way’s west and i ask somebody – often people aren’t
even sure and i have to ask somebody else – but at this point i think i’ve learned it’s that way, past that
blue restaurant
this is bad – i’m thinking about turning around – i’d love to know if this just goes on like this – if it’s only gonna be like this for awhile then i can wait – yeah, but what if it goes all the way up – that’s what i’m worried about – i’m thinking about turning around – wait i have this thing – you have gps? – yup and it tells you the traffic – wow, that’s so great – i know right – it’s loading – what does it say – it’s loading – but how do you get traffic – it knows where you are and you click on traffic and it tells you – that’s so cool – yup – ok it’s red all the way through here – how far – all the way past where we’re going – red, that’s pretty much the worst, right? – yup – i’m thinking about turning around – yeah – you mean this? – yeah, this is never gonna – let’s do it – i love that you have that
where is that pointing – what is that – where is it pointing to – north? – except i think north should be that way – maybe it’s south – it’s funny how what feels like north and south – it’s not – right, due north – exactly
oh this is the way? – so we’re following green all the way? – well then there’s red – i thought we went that way at some point – we did – can i just look so i know what’s going on? – i think we should intersect red – we’ve been on – we’re – he said there was a – ok so where did we – we’re along like at 5 and 9 – now we’re at 9 we’re just on green – oh – so we’re supposed to stay this way – oh, steps – did blue end somewhere? – oh wait, so blue – is this is the blue too? – yeah, we already left the blue behind – so we’re over here – i’m just trying to figure out why there would be steps – so you think these steps are for us? – and it seems too soon to already hit the red – right, i think that’s definitely right – but i wonder what is this all – we already got off that – this one ends at a nice little look-out though – yeah i’m glad we came here anyway
this doesn’t really look like new york at all – no – there’s not much of a grid to speak of – that’s why when you go to london and ask where things are even the londoners don’t know how to tell you – it’s a very unmodern city – you just ask person after person and they look around and they just tsk and they tsk and they’re like i don’t know, i don’t know, i really don’t know – plus the river goes the wrong way and there’s only one of them – and it’s not like straight – our rivers are pretty straight – it seems like a pretty place from here though – i’ve never been there so i don’t know
first go that way then go that way then go dig all the way down in the ground then dig another hole back up then go another way then bump right into the building then go another way
alright now we’re gonna try this short cut – alright – ok – which is a little sneaky – it’s not even on any maps
– didn’t you go this way last time though? – i think so – well we exited – no that can’t be it i missed it i
think – yeah this is it, it was right by the bridge there – it was – alright let’s try it – i’m gonna try the short
cut – we don’t know if this is gonna work but we’re gonna give it a try – is this the way we came out when
we left before? – yeah it’s a short cut that i’ve done a couple of times on the way out – ok – and there’s a
reason why they try to make it not possible on the way in, the neighbors don’t the neighbors are not very
nice to them as you can imagine – really why? – well – this is a more conservative area – yeah – ok here we
are on this – is the road – this is it – and then if i remember this way – beauty shop! – towards the beauty
shop? – i don’t remember – i don’t remember either but let’s just do it – that’s right – just do it what’s the
worst that could happen – we get lost – bears eat us – i’m thinking more of a hills have eyes situation – that
could really happen
in the colonial era everything’s pink – cold war there’s two main colors – pink? i think of colonial maps as beige – no they’re pink – and in the cold war they’re either red and blue or they’re orange and green, or sometimes instead of green it’s like a teal color
i appreciate so much that there are different ways to get somewhere – like when you can look at a map and just figure out all the ways – yeah that is great – anyone might figure out a different way too – i think i’m good at it – yeah i’m pretty good at it too – i think we should see this place to turn off to 17 anytime here do you see anything?
ok i figure we can do this – we can get off here – then we can turn left – i mean right, sorry – we can turn right and go down here – then on the left, right before these trees – see the shadows of the trees here? – uhh yep – that looks pretty flat, right? – yes it does – i think we can just walk right through here like it's a sidewalk– it may even be a sidewalk – exactly – then we'll be right there – we just go down here and it's there – it's right on the left it looks like
which way should we walk in – for where – for just general exploration – just get a map and follow the trails, follow the trails – oh yeah? – the trails that go down – ok – that way and then that way – they’ll just take you down – go along, you can walk into the woods – and they’ll just take you there? – over that way or that way or that way to the garden – ok – although watch out there’s a bear – ok, i promise not to sue you if a bear attacks me – so this map is gonna make sense to me when i’m out there? – yep – i just go down? – yep – ok
i think this thing – where we are right now is this gray line – i think we might be on the gray line because this gray line here maybe – yeah – this one right cuz we were down here – right yeah – cuz if that’s the mall then there would be a line right through the middle of it but i don’t think we’re in the middle of it – actually there’s also a street though – this is the street – maybe the dark one is the street that cars go on – so maybe that’s that and we’re on this or something? – yeah – i don’t know – ok – i thought we were here because of going by checkers earlier – i didn’t think we went this way – well you could be right but then i don’t know why there’s not a – well then maybe that line doesn’t – means something – meadow – where the hell is a meadow would that be over there? – i don’t know if this is – no disrespect to the homeless or anything – what it’s not accurate? – it’s not very clear
where we’re going is – yeah, here it is – so you turn on here? – i dunno i think maybe – we’re going by the post office? – yep it says here the post office is right here and it should be right across – the post office – there’s the post office – and the library – the light there because of the corner – that’s this corner – stays as it was because of the big elm and the reflecting houses – are you sure we’re on this corner? – sounds like a glass house or house of mirrors – are you sure we’re there – i don’t see anything like that – i think this is the corner – that place is called dusky and that’s supposed to be near here too – named for the quality of light? – but its so sharp the sunshine here
do you have a map i love maps? – i love maps i really love them you can see all around – yeah, i love maps too – here see if you can find us something i mean, we’d prefer this way but – i take 87 all the time – i mean i prefer this way but – and 87 is behind us – is it behind us? – there’s another way to get there, like it seems like this says – we’re so close – you could take exit 18 towards us 6 – it’s so great that you have that – exit 18 towards us 6 – do you see exit 18 on that map? is that truly above us? – exit which one? – 18 – going to hwy 6 err rt 6 – that might be north of where we are – yeah that looks like it’s probably near the mountains, wait – that’s what it says here this is yeah – but by the time we get past the mountains it will be tomorrow i think and we’ll – i think we should turn around – ok, but then where will we be going?
so are we still on the trail? – yeah – how can you tell – just look around – i am i don’t see any evidence whatsoever we’re on a trail – we are i can see it – ok i’m in your hands then – aren’t there supposed to be mushrooms here? – she said not now because there’s been no rain – it seems like we can’t get very very lost here – so it would be fine to get a little lost then – yeah, let’s go for it – could be good – wow pretty – woah slippery i don’t know about this cliff edge it’s a little sketchy – is there a better way to go? – just go around – this way – that side? – around here – you mean the other side of this? – this way come over you’ll see – oh yeah like steps – those shoes look great for this – it’s a false impression – it’s really beautiful here – yeah, this would be a great place for a halliburton fracking project – huh, right – so this is the trail here – and we came from here – and we went around here – ok – and now we’re here – that’s what i don’t get how do you know we’re not here or here or here – ok it doesn’t really matter because either way we end up here and can’t go anywhere without crossing this creek – what if we only think we’re walking to the creek and we’re really all the way over here? – well then we’re about to walk onto the highway – oh, yeah, i guess that’s true
where are we i think yeah where are we in relation to like here – here? – here? – pretty sure – but then that means that if we go south we'll – what's the closest town – i can look on here – hold on it's loading – it's loading – it's loading – if this is – it should be really close to that entrance to – which entrance – uhh, the thruway – oh – we didn't pass that yet? – i didn't think we passed it – you wanna turn here? – i wanna turn around here – it might be better to turn around – yeah why don't you turn around – there's something for 4b? or 45 or – 45 great, 45 i see it here 45 – does that help us? – yeah – seriously? – yeah – ok, then i'm not turning around – that's awesome – 45 is awesome? – yeah – you can get off here and go on 45? – yeah, i think if i am not mistaken it depends on where – we can take it uhh south? – any town names on there? – no? just 45? let's just take 45 – route 45 – rte 45 you said? is it a small road? – it's fairly small – yeah, i see where we're going right it's a small road that goes uhh south – if that's the case then that's good cuz just take 45 a little ways and i think we're gonna hafta, there'll be a sign i'm sure for this other road that goes thru it – ok, to 45, eh? – follow that guy – yeah, whatever he does, i'll do – yeah, so this is like a small road that goes directly south – so where do we wanna go after that? – i got a choice of 45 north or south here – i think south – south? – i think
this says we’re walking west – ok – so that makes sense – we wanna head up north – so then this is west
this is east – so then – you wanna try going north then? – north is where we’re going right? – as long as
we’re below it which i believe we are
can i see the map? – cross the stream – it’s actually – i just wanna see where we actually are – oh it’s not here? – oh, ford? is that what this is? – we’re fording the river – holly spring – so we’re on this dotted line and that means fording? – yep
look, we can sleep here – yeah, beds – and a bird cage – why is this here? – do people sleep outside here? – it’s a stage – like a movie set? – do you think people sleep out here? – no because it’s not comfortable – feel this – oh, wow, no – imagine waking up here and not knowing how you got here, like where am i? – right, like you wake up and you’re alone in what seems to be an anthropologie catalog ad – yeah, and this birdcage, like hey birds come get in this cage – maybe it’s an installation, it’s art – it’s not on this map – it’s certainly a point of interest – yeah, or something
i love how curbstone is out here in the creek to help us get across – how does curbstone get all the out
way here? – it’s migrating – the city is everywhere
alright where we goin? – we’re gonna make a right on main – i remember seeing that at the intersection
of something – wanna try making a right there? – i looked on google maps for somewhere to eat – yeah
but what comes up on there in a small town isn’t necessarily what is good – let’s do it like bees, whatever
attracts us – yeah, look for bright colors – this says town is this way so i wanna turn here – ok – town
what is this map of? – here – here? – yep, you are here – it’s beautiful – it’s great – i’m concerned it doesn’t work though – can you explain this map, like in real life terms? – whaddaya mean? – i’m having trouble telling where i am and where anything else is – just follow it, it’ll get you there – well maybe i’m just not good at it, but i can’t tell from looking exactly where anything is, could you just help me? – oh it’s easy that’s just down that way, this is that way, this is all just down over here a little, and this is all over that way – and if you go down here you’ll see all kinds of great stuff ok? – um, ok, thanks – great stuff, huh? – so, you know where we’re going? – i really don’t – did she help? – not really – it’s so beautiful though – yeah i just want to know where i’m going – i just wanna take it home and frame it – you mean the map? – yeah it’s gorgeous
so now which way? – we might wanna continue north if we’re – ok so the thing is we were going sideways before – by sideways you mean west? – so if we were going this – if we were going – here’s where we are – wait what where are we? – where, the blue? – yep that blue dot – ok so according to this map then it would be on the other side of that water – i think so maybe yeah – so we wanna keep going – i wish we could walk on that – it looks like a nicer thinner path – well – i can’t tell which way it is – it’s really hard to read paths from the map like – i think we just hafta go in the direction and see if we see a path that we like – right but we’re right here you know so i’m trying to figure out if like – well if we’re right here then that path must be what we’re on – it depends cuz if we’re facing this way then it’s this path – oh i see what you’re saying – yeah so which way are we facing
where is it we're trying to get to, what is it you're looking at? – so we're trying to get to, unfortunately it doesn't, it's not telling me what the name of this road is – is it soon? – not too soon – not too soon ok – it's like uh let's look – does it cut – no it's about uh about i dunno 5 miles – and does it take us to another road? – at that point we'll see signs for the thruway i'm sure cuz it looks like it's only about a quarter mile – so this goes down for a little while – yeah, exactly – cool – so there'll be a crossing with a road that is probably called the 17 actually – it's the smaller part of the 17 that – ok, i know what you mean vaguely – i don't know what – and we're gonna take that – right but i don't know where we are now i dunno – any town names? – i don't know but we can't be far – i like your optimism – well we know we're headed towards 17 – we should be intersecting with 17
i thot it was going to tell you to turn on 43rd – no it told him to turn here – cabs always turn on 43rd – must be some kind of secret cab thing – yeah secret cab knowledge
i don’t now what that is – i think the one you want might be this one – yeah but i think it might go there and then off that way through the woods cuz i don’t think it’s by this big giant path here right? – but usually once you start walking and it moves with you you know where you’re going – so let’s walk and see what it tells us
it should be soon – i think we should have already hit it – but maybe not – i mean there’s a little space
– that’s true it does give you dots – so let’s go a little further
ok 77 north – he said we’d go through a tunnel – ok, east river mountain tunnel i see it here – i guess it’s right up here – wow – yep – here we are – tunnel – do you find tunnels maybe a little scary? – like they’re gonna fall in on you? – no, mostly they don’t – you never know – yes, it’s true we could die – ok i see the light – there’s gonna be an exit 1 up here – he said exit 1 is immediately after the tunnel – go – ohh there? – yep right here – ok – ok – now at at the top of the ramp turn right and that should be a traffic light – the first traffic light – at this point you might wanna get in the left hand lane cuz you’re gonna turn left on 460 – west, ok? – got it – yep and here’s the wal-mart plaza – he said we’d pass it for three traffic lights – so it’s just wal-mart world at this point – yeah, pretty much – ok – i don’t know how many roads it is, he just gave me just traffic lights but it looks like it’s lights on every corner – so i’m seeing here i think it’s gonna be mule toad road up ahead we turn left – we’re gonna take a left – mule toad, huh? – yep, mule toad, according to this – after the third traffic light – alright, mule toad – now we’re gonna turn left on route 720 – ok – 720 right here – you said left though right? – yeah, turn left, sorry – got it – good – ok – he said we’d pass a circuit city then you’ll wanna take a left, it’s right when you see the circuit city, a left, on country club drive – and he said the entrance will be right there on the right – do you think there’s a country club there? – you know, i really don’t – i don’t either – funny how these kinds of places get a street name like that – country club – i really don’t think there’s a country club
ok, so we seem to be following the big fat road – so let's try going this way and see what happens – oh so this might be the literary walk – those look like maybe there's some literary dudes – the road is so huge this isn't what i want to walk on – yeah everything just seems to lead to these literary dudes
you know, when i was looking at this map the other day i thought when we got here it would help us but now that i'm here i'm like this is totally meaningless – lemme see – look at this, can you tell where you are? – umm – are we in the bubblegum playground? – yeah, you wish – part of it is the trails aren't clear – yeah and this makes it look like everything is really close together or you're gonna know where you're headed already but i don't know the way to the merry-go-round it's just like a huge field – so when i start just kind of walking out in some vague direction, will i be surprised when i don't get there? – no, it sounds like you won't be – there's a merry-go-round? – apparently but we'll never get there – let's try – well where are we now? – here, is this the front or back of the house – is this even this house? – it's kind of a terrible drawing – yeah it looks like the white house – it really does – i think, so i think that's the back of the house – and i'm pretty sure that's the tree here – yeah, i guess that is correct – oh definitely – so it looks like it's either to the side or maybe out from the front here – ok but it also looks like we should pass some kind of obvious circle out there but there is no circle out there – i think that's supposed to be more off to the side than it seems here so maybe let's ignore it – ok. ignore the promise of a clear circle – yeah, it's not real – or it's real but i can't see it
let’s see where we – i think we’re here – really? – ok no i think, wait – yeah, no she’s right, we’re here
cuz we passed this and we passed this but haven’t passed this – ok, you two figure it out – but no i wanna
figure it out where’s 50 – we shouldn’t really be anywhere near 50 – and now we’re in the 40s – but we
also turned away from that at around 42 so 50 isn’t the right place to be looking – we shoulda gone left
at 42 instead of right – you wanna go on this side of the pond? – i don’t know, i think, yeah, right? – sure
– yeah, remember? – so you wanna go through the 50s? – i always thought we were – is that ok with you?
– i don’t care – i don’t either – why don’t you tell us what you wanna do
it's so weird this thing has that as blue – why is that blue there? – it's a park – but they have it as blue – maybe it's water – no, it's a park, and parks are green – then why is it blue? – it's like they're saying there's a lake or maybe the river – yeah, but we're right next to it here and it's a park – yeah, it's a park – is it possible they're confused? – i hope they're not going to change all the colors around – yeah, parks are green, water is blue, and that's just how it is – i hope they're not gonna change it – yeah it's bad enough we never get any time away from our desks but now they wanna take the colors and mix em all up – i agree that would suck
so i’m thinking this if – see where we are? – if we go just a little bit further you know that way – yeah so that would be that path – and we go up – and this looks – but those things are never – well you’d be surprised – if this is true which i found it’s been really accurate over the years – it will take us over that water – yep – and then that’s it – yep – so that’s up there – i think it’s right up there maybe
you don’t know where you are, what happened? – um, you don’t have a map? – can’t you just put my address back into the gps? – ok, um, i guess, let me get the computer – there are maps on the internet – you go on the internet, open google maps, then enter an address, a town name, whatever – it has streets highways basically everything – alright – do you have even the slightest idea where you are? – 29? – ok i’m looking – 29? – you’re saying 2 and then 9? – ok, 29, 29, 29 – jeez where the hell are you guys? – i can’t even find it – no, i’m gonna find it i’m just surprised – oh ok i think i got it – 29, really? – really? 29? – how the hell did you guys get all the way to 29? – jesus – 29? – i don’t even know where that is – no, i mean i see it on the map but i don’t know the area – you know i don’t quite know what to tell you – wow you guys are way way out there
what did she say? – i think she said go right and something about branch – no, bridge, go over a bridge – i think she said something branch – no she said bridge – well, sounded like branch – ok well it wasn’t – bridge – well i don’t see any bridge – maybe it’s a bridge that doesn’t seem like one – yeah i think we’re on it now – oh my god look out for that branch – what? – where? – just kidding
we came through right where that thing is – didn’t we come through here where the weird installation was? – oh good we’re lost – yeah good job team – i think we came through that way from this angle to here – no we came this way – ok well – i don’t think it matters much either way – remember left past the graveyard – there was a graveyard? – you didn’t notice that? – i didn’t notice that – you didn’t when we first went left, if you headed down straight to the ravine and make a left? – nope i missed it – well you’re about to have a second chance – and it is on the map – oh yeah, huh
There is a street right up along here it’s called Zion Crossroads – uh-huh – you go left on it – then there is a home depot and a Marshalls – go past that – uh-huh – the road you are on, keep going – ok – there is a long tunnel – that road becomes a tunnel – ok – and at the end of it there is a mall – ok, like right there? – yes, on both sides of the road – uh-huh, ok – there are signs after that for the high school – follow those signs – ok – then on your right you will see Achievement Drive – ok – the signs will take you you don’t need to even know but just in case – uh-huh – turn right on that and you’re at the school – so that was all just like two roads right? – very good I was testing you.
we’re inside a cape – and a whole bunch of the towns are on this cape – what are we on now? pleasant?
– let’s look on this map here – we’re gonna make a right on main – see how it is – i think we’re on the tip
– but i don’t see the ocean here – is that where the ocean is? – on the map it’s like an inch away
o – no – 88 i know it seems far but you guys are gonna love 88 we’re going to 88 is that ok does that sound good can we go to 88 – sure – sure – o you’re gonna love it – let’s just go – well it’s kind of far, is there any way to maybe plan to walk by something else? – ok – what’s this obelisk? – um, phallic? – yeah, phallic – yeah i’m thinking more like turtle pond – that’s 27 – and we could go around this way to 88 – that sounds nice – oh here 47 – alright let’s check that out – but you’re gonna love 88
ok we’re on the right road – is that it – no cuz it does that triangle in the middle of the entry – yes – yeah that’s right – and it has some arty stuff – so look for arty stuff – yeah their mailbox is arty – but we did this before and we did it right – and we’re on the right road so – we’re on the right road – so nothing can go too wrong – i kind of remember these trailers – check out that fallen patio, damn, it’s kind of unbelievable – i think this is it coming up – you think this is it? – yeah, i really do – i think we parked up here – this is it? – i think it’s on this – he’s feeling it – i’m feeling it – feeling it – i’m feeling it – feeling something – is this? – no that mailbox – it’s too cute – too cute yeah – not arty – hup, here, here we are – nice – and we needed no technology – except the car – ok, true
now we go left – right – is that right – that means we’re almost done – is it – probably we’re about two-thirds of the length going back as it was coming – oh that was the top – we’re at the top of something now – so there’s still quite a ways – oh i was associating white with the end – we started on white but – we came up it and got off it and now we’re coming back to it at a higher point – so now we’re going essentially down i guess – yeah i think so
so i wonder if this will take us this way – which way – let’s try this way – i don’t know it’s not looking good – let’s try this way – i think so – i think this is right – this says we’re here and we wanna be on this bridge so i think we’re close – and then we’re gonna be there – and this is just a big ass area with no paths – at that point we just go wherever
maps
charts
roads
boundaries
pegs
surveys
claims
fences
hedges
stone walls
tracks
genealogies
perimeters
bus route
mother country
london
magistrate’s residence
redoubt
stockade
barracks
prison
mission statement
bus stop
parliament
store
church
europe
port
empty land
terra nullis
uninhabited
unoccupied
uncharted
reserves
maori
kainga
marae
inca
aztec
iroquois
nation
burial grounds
museum
background
foreground
flagpole
hinterland
cut
cross
cosmos
east jesus
black forest
royal marriage
writing
topos
siberia
to sea
figure
ground
angle
point
barbed wire
family crest
theory
survey
decoration
fence
train station
stop sign
view
tradition
bench
the pale
the zone
legend
projection
fold
woodcut
guam
administration
military
stereotyping
compass
horizon
This work began about four years ago when Andrew Levy asked me to write an essay for the special issue of *Crayon* titled “On Beauty.” I felt I had nothing to say about beauty, and having just finished a PhD, felt an aversion to a study of Kant or Hegel or formal aesthetics. I also hadn’t been writing much, adjuncting at two CUNY schools and feeling more exhausted than inspired. So in the spirit of Gilbert Sorrentino’s idea that constraint “serves to destroy the much-cherished myth of ‘inspiration,’ and its idiot brother, ‘writer’s block,’” I decided to do something semi-procedural: I would go to “beautiful” places with various close friends and audio recording equipment, and then later listen back to recordings of the excursions, transcribe them, and see if anything interesting emerged. After my first three outings, I transcribed for the first time. Within minutes it became clear that on these trips a great deal of time was spent consulting maps and otherwise orienting oneself – and the language of that orientation was not only interesting but often funny. It had that quality of Perec’s work that I love, his capacity for capturing those things that are so obvious, so ubiquitous, that we don’t notice them. I thought surely this language must be happening all the time. So I decided to keep attending to it and collect incidents of it until I had 99 pages. Sometimes I recorded purposely, other times it just started happening and I had to reconstruct a scene relying on either memory or notes taken on my Blackberry. I originally tried to make poem-poems out of the findings, but in the end realized that the real work was just to let the language of the conversations be, with very little interference, and to leave the surface of the writing as flat as it is.