



David C. Porter

Selected Cell Phone Photography, 2014–2021

## Introduction

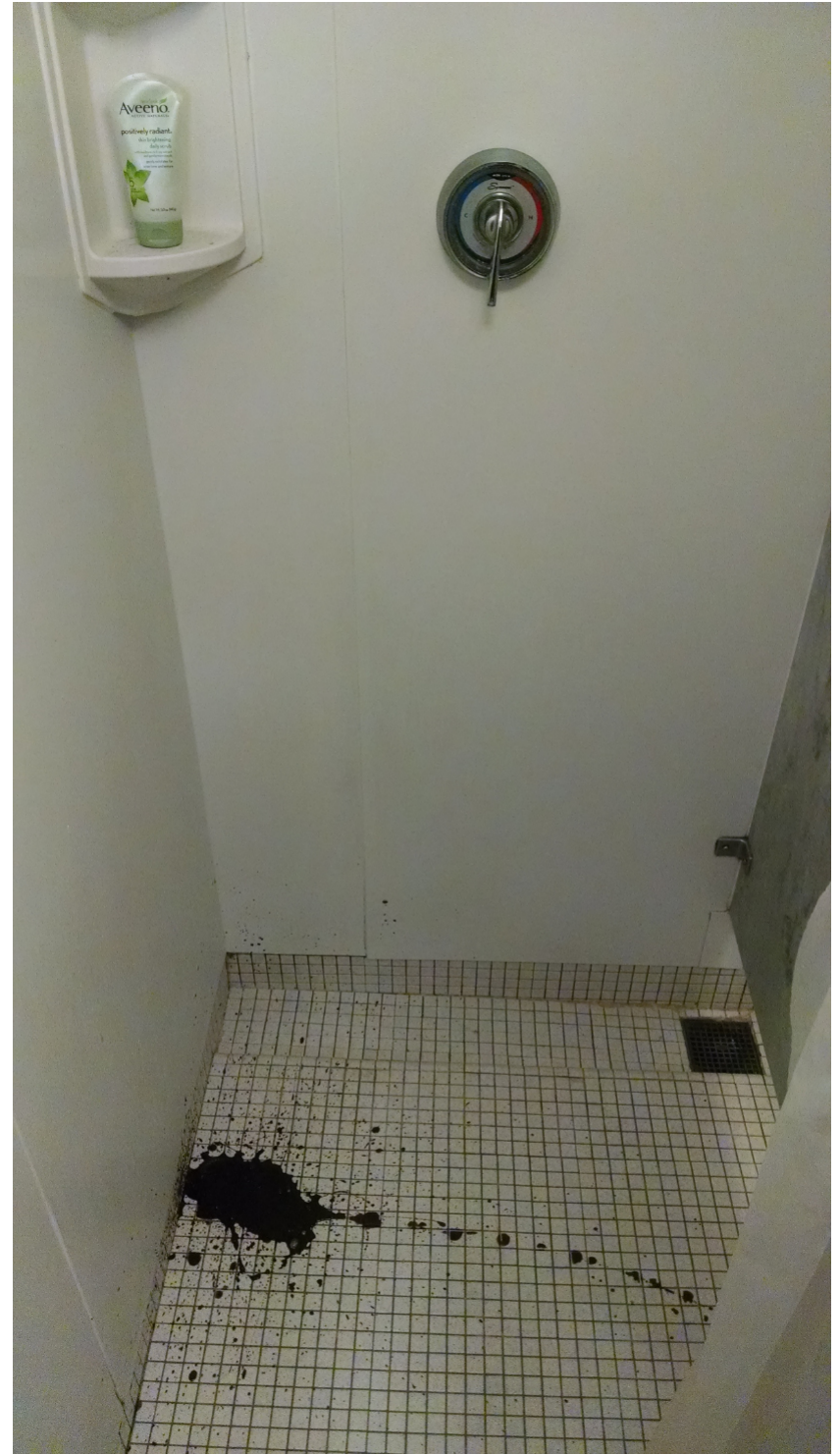
The 56 photographs collected here are something akin to, but not exactly the same as, a summation of the several hundred I've taken using cell phones I've owned since early 2014, when I was 18 years old, and living through my second semester of college. I muddled through my first semester, in fall 2013, with a Tracfone, and prior to that I didn't own a phone at all. To be extremely clear, this was not in any way a financially-motivated decision – I simply didn't want one, and it was only the massive social impediment which its lack imposed on me that eventually forced me to change my mind. Now, of course, I'm as chained to the thing as anyone, but it got its claws in unusually late. I'm explaining this in the hopes that it might provide a useful frame of reference for the images contained herein – some insight into the sort of person I am and my relationship to the technology that produced them. I figure it's the least I can do, especially since it's all I intend to do. These are, of course, unavoidably and irreducibly personal images. All of them have emotional resonance for me, some of them very powerful emotional resonance, but unless you're also a party with it to begin with (which I know some of the people reading this will be), this is not something which I'm interested in sharing. You're welcome to guess at what these images “mean” to me, of course, but all you'll really be able to glean is that they mean something. This isn't a photo-diary or -memoir, or any of the related forms of affectual pornography currently so in vogue with emotional exhibitionists and their self-satisfied audiences, but an aesthetic compendium, collecting what few striking scraps of imagery I happened to capture in a period of my life where, without really intending to, I had essentially stopped creating art in any other way. This isn't true of the entire period covered – this collection exists because I've started practicing photography seriously (again – it was an obsession in my childhood) and it felt right to put a capstone on these years – but it's what's there at the core. They're pictures that, by and large, aren't really for anyone, even myself – products of chance, compulsion, and reflex. I think there's a beauty in that, and a sadness. Perhaps you will, too.

December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021





2014/03/09



2014/03/24





2014/04/11



2014/04/11





2014/04/13





2014/09/11



2014/10/12





2014/11/10





2014/11/16



2014/11/17





2015/04/26





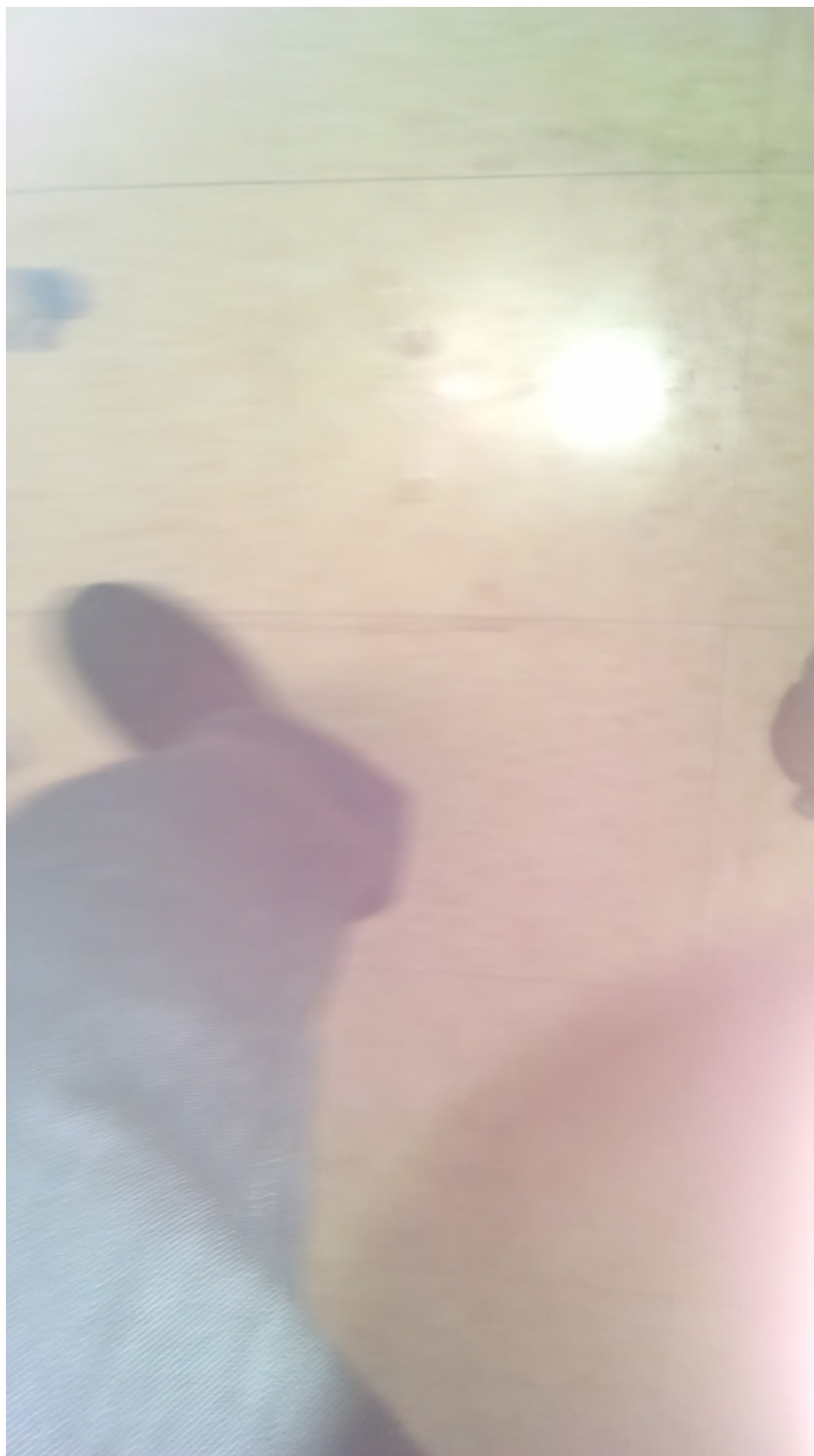
2015/05/19







Will not forgive you



2016/01/31





2016/02/29





2016/05/06





2016/10/02



2016/10/15





2017/03/17





2017/04/28



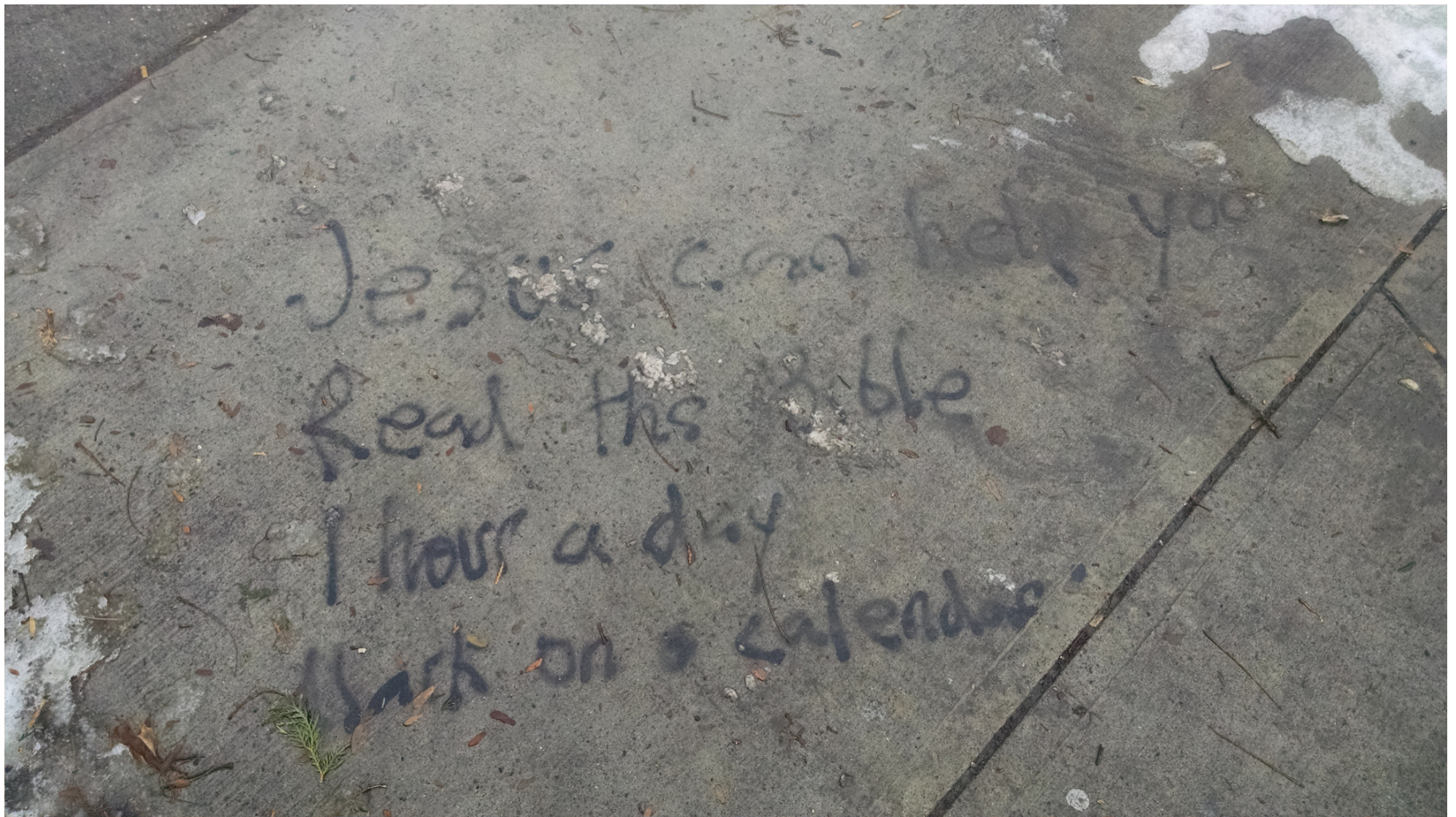
2017/05/07





2017/05/07









2018/03/30



2018/04/02





2018/08/18





2018/08/18





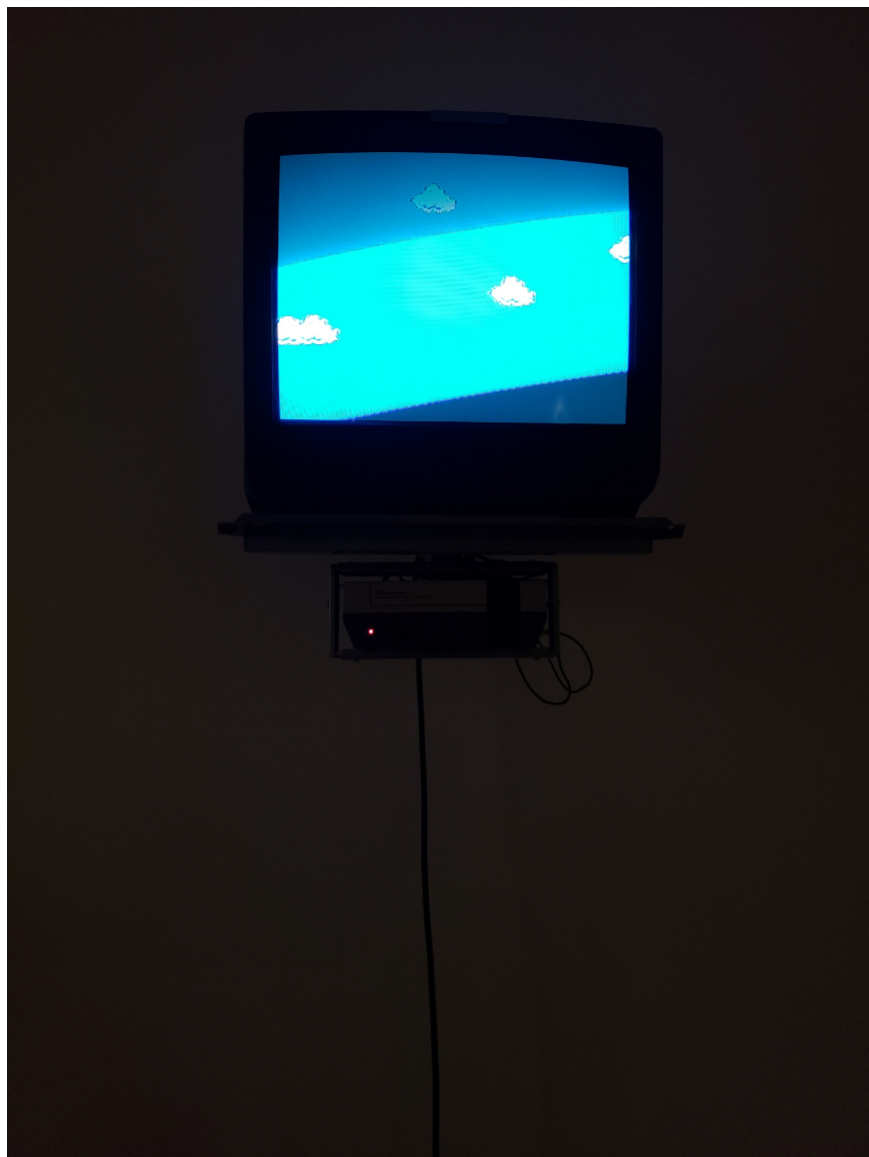
2018/08/20





2018/08/28





2018/10/17



2018/11/15





2018/12/12



2019/01/15









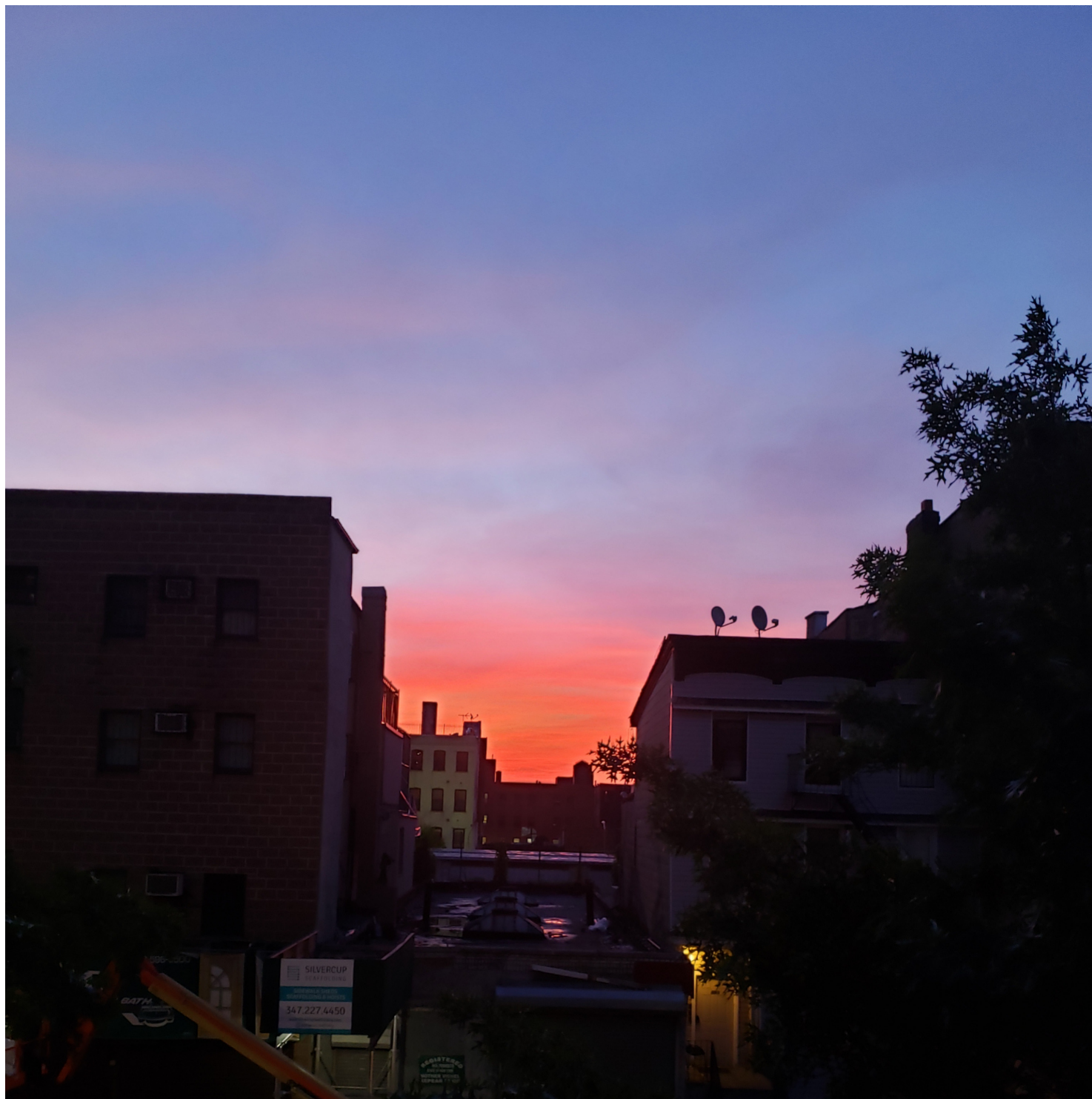
2019/03/11





2019/03/11





2019/08/22





2019/10/16

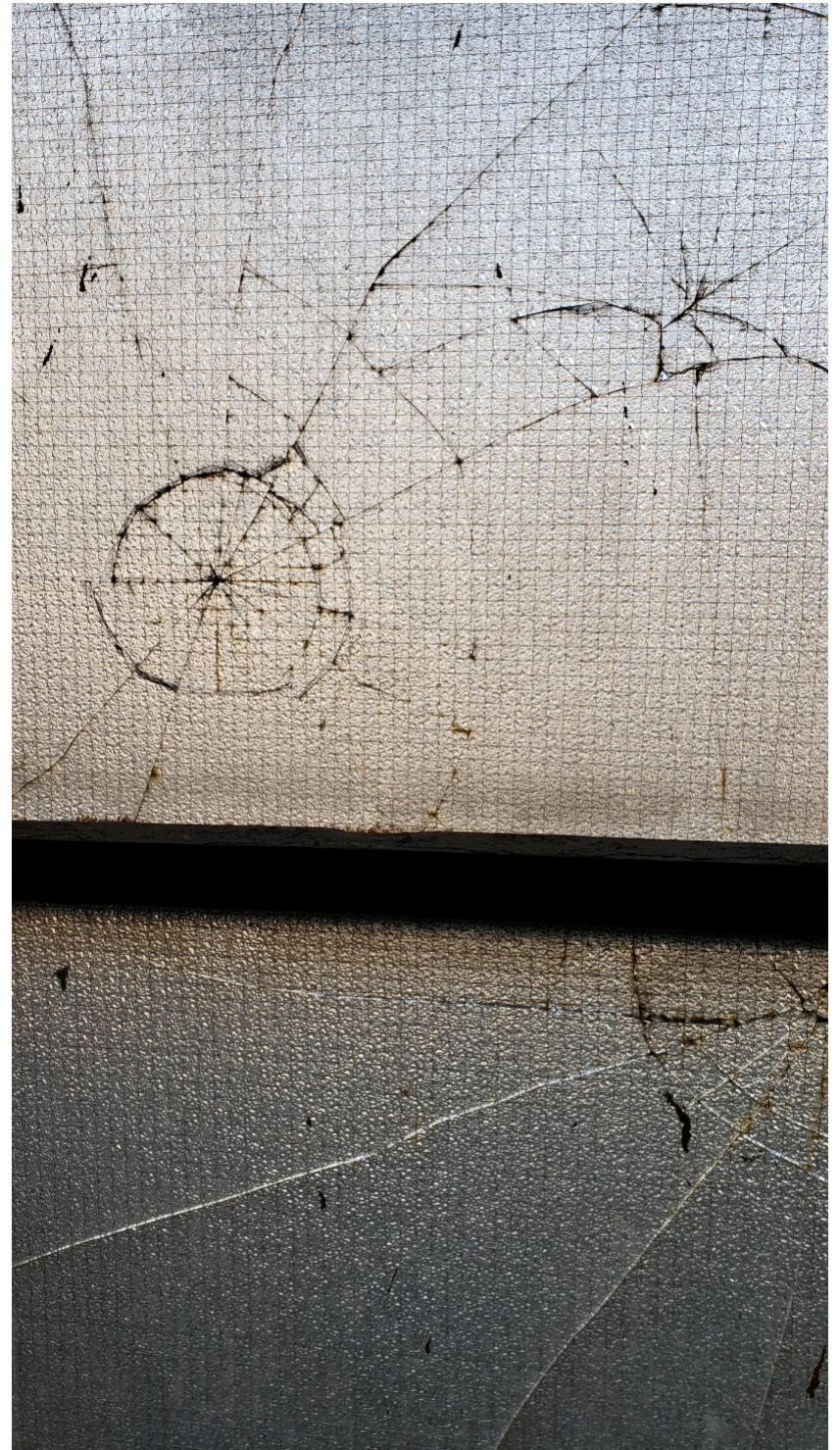


2019/10/17





2019/12/23



2020/02/22





2020/12/17



2021/01/29





2021/01/31



2021/02/27



dance, he says to them. Then he looks at his wife again. She's furious at the increases in the defense budget and her hair is a mess. He smiles.

"I realize that my psychological struggle is going to be the same struggle until I die. The only difference between my current marriage and my past one is how I handle it. If I can let my wife in on who I am and she doesn't have to get sucked into my struggle—and vice versa—then we can keep the marriage alive. We remain separate but equal. That means I have to expose who I am and Kate has to do the same. That never occurred in my first marriage." Jim pauses. This time the marriage is going to last, he says.

Many people can renew their remarriage contract without therapy. But your personal psychological struggle is often so subtle that you need guidance in sorting it out. You are also welding your struggle onto your partner's struggle. What is your spouse's special drama in relationships? How do you fit in? In other words, you marry each other's ghosts.

A major part of getting married is getting to know your spouse's family. The second time around, the task is usually much more complex: stepchildren, ex in-laws, old lovers, along with blood parents and siblings.

For many people, one of the most difficult and explosive areas in remarriage involves the children. "It's a package deal," says the child of divorce to a prospective parent. Also in the package is the past life of the family unit, the pain and abuse as well as the hopes and good times. It's important to remember that you both bring a string of old ghosts to the new marriage. Part of the glue in remarriage is helping each other deal with old ghosts as well as stepchildren and ex in-laws.

Some people deal with their ghosts by making sure that the second marriage is the exact opposite of the first marriage. You don't rush into anything. You are very cautious. You don't want to get remarried on the rebound or when you have your first *coup de foudre*. Maybe that's the way your first marriage started, and you know what happens when passion wears off. You are determined to change. You wait and think and wonder. You are a Remarriage Reversal.

Joan Billings spends six years working on her divorce before she remarries. She's now been married for three

years and has a year-old son. Her first marriage lasted fifteen years and she had three children. When it ended, Joan was devastated. She knew she had to fundamentally change the course of her life as a result and she entered the second marriage very cautiously. "I was very determined that this marriage would not be like my first one," she says, and then she smiles. It's been three years. They've just bought a new house in Atlanta. Finally, at forty-one, she feels at peace with herself and secure in her life.

"You can only find emotional security in yourself," she says. "That's the only place it's going to be. I guess that's what everyone is searching for in all this jumping around between marriage and divorce. You want a focal point in your life: you need understanding and support. You look for it in your parents and in your marriage. It took me a long time to realize that the only place I could find emotional security was in myself."

Joan grew up in Atlanta, the oldest child of a mother who was an invalid with Parkinson's disease. Her father traveled most of the time on business and Joan became the substitute parent to her younger sisters and brothers. At seventeen, she had a *coup de foudre* and eloped. "It was an escape," she says, to find the emotional security she didn't have from her family.

In her first marriage, she continued to play the mama role and poured all her energies into making her doctor husband a Great Man. In the end, he fell in love with another woman and left her.

Her world crashes. She is thirty-two years old, with two sons, eleven and nine, and a daughter, eight. Joan goes through a couple of low-paid clerical jobs, rents out part of the house and spends most of her spare time on the phone arranging baby-sitters. The most important thing she does, she says, is to get into therapy.

"I had this need to go into a very deep period of reassessment of myself to understand how I got into this predicament," she says.

Slowly she uncovers her own special drama: She is both very strong and very vulnerable. From childhood she is groomed to take the dominant role in relationships, and at the same time to look for approval from her father. In the first act, she has a *coup de foudre* and elopes. In the second act, she has a *coup de foudre* and enters into a marriage. In





2021/03/17





2021/04/09



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2021/04/14





2021/04/20

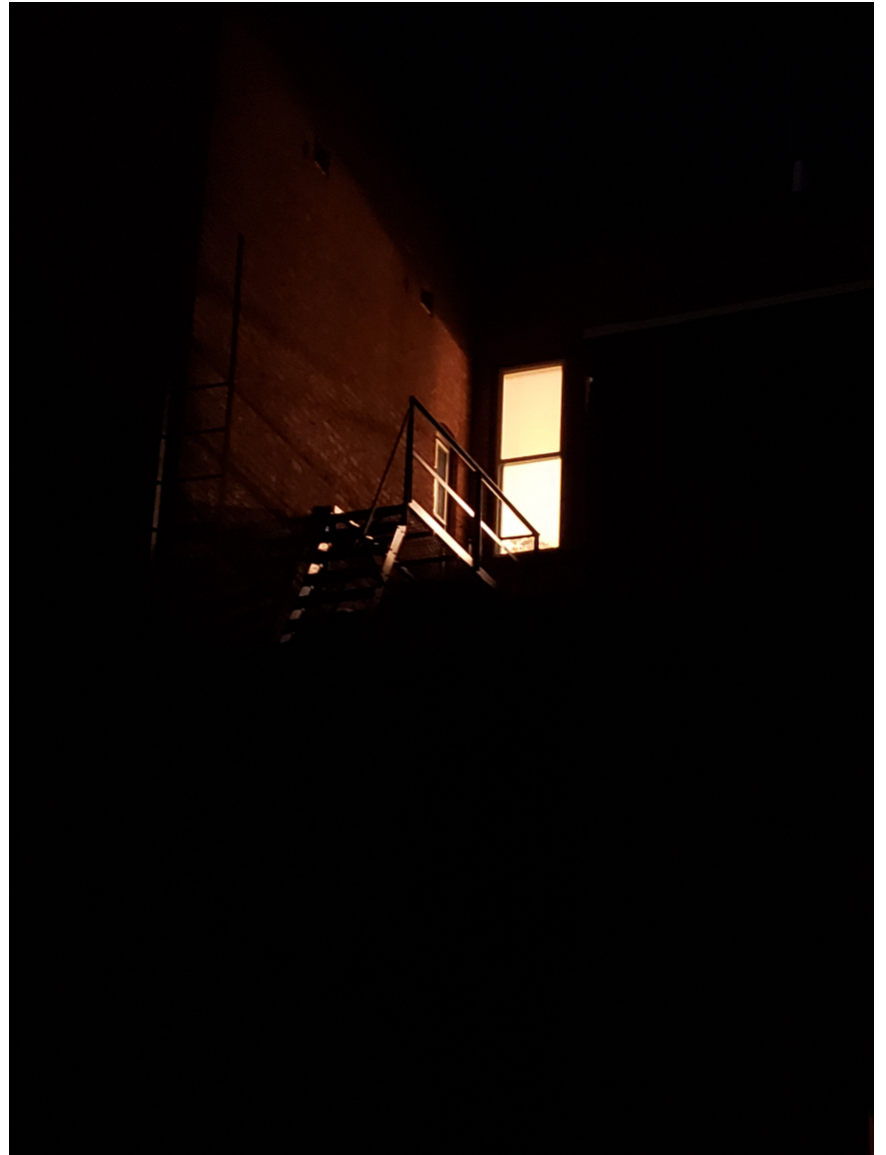


2021/04/20





2021/09/29



2021/09/29





2021/11/19



2021/11/19



