

ERIC DOVIGI

Here Is a List of Words I Prefer

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yelwe orca crustacean grass burgundy wednesday ordovician agog french press
lime crust coconut wrest fellow ear runny masterful purple gone hunt pickle bast-
ard japan think berm frustrate blue whale pearl bake dust sonne whisky whiskey
incorrigible messed complex fresh glob circumnavigate coral brush caravel wond-
erful hilarity wiggle earwig powder jasmine green calico carmine plant bangle jun-
ta do re mi fa sol la ti corryvreckan glen sand trough shake spear fall staff machia-
vellian art blood linoleum drain oedipal nightmare crown opal road.

Here is me putting these words in sentences.

Yelwe was ye mapeldorn. An orca named Jeremy decided enough was enough. Crustaceans remember fingers. Grass rests on Robin's palms. The signposts in Burgundy-country shine a dull oak in the afternoon shade, to their everlasting ironic shame. Wednesday fell on top of Rodney with a sound like a thousand leaves whispering of autumn. Ordovician sea-flora emerged from the Cretan dust. The sun rushed agog and finger-spread into the cabin window. Take what you will—but damn you, leave the French Press. "I should have brought lime." Crust bit the bike chain. I will ask you a secret in the form of a coconut. A raven wrests a bread-angle from a storm drain. A calm fellow rested on a ladybug's back. An ear disturbed the air. Twenty runny girl legs fled the sound of the memory of a horse, and cousinhood. A masterful gouda rosed the gourmand's cheeks, and we saw the water in the cup thud with each belly-pat. Purple patches, swatches of fuschia, hollars and spills, dwindling moving-trucks on the horizon. It was too late, he was gone, and the lamp hung crooked on the porch in the night. The

winter hunt's fox, wrinkled with old age, bled viscous and cold into the snow. "No, Trinculo, I don't expect I'll ever see a pickle again." The bastards died without us, and the water caught a rash, and the second wave went down on all sides like all they had been trained to do was drop. Snow means something different in Japan. Only think. A pebble falls from a berm; a whisper falls from a lip. Frustrate the cold with a limb-jig. The blue disappeared in the blink of an eye. If I ever meet a whale, it will be on a beach, and I will pass it into the water. Pearl, as far as any Beauchamp County kid under the age of twelve was concerned, had spent her entire life on the veranda, and would die like a cut flower if you took her off it. Read in the sun till you bake a page. Behind every good flowerbed is a bit of dust. Ye sonne shene hat on ye mul. Whisky battled whiskey on both sides of the shore. The incorrigible hummingbird insisted the windowpane was only a dream. She messed the pillows and blankets, to make the bed remember him. The overzealously diagnostic psychoanalyst had a complex-complex. "Fresh" meant cut feet and sunburn, when automobiles were hand-cranked and ice a horizon-dream. "I feel that I've been through this all before," Steve McQueen uttered under his breath, running full-tilt from the fearsome *Glob*. Circumnavigate, encompass, border, consume, in that order, and chart your progress, and tell someone—cartographize yourself, as a world. Everything fights, even coral, quiet, unasked, ship-tearing. Brush one-hundred new things each day. A caravel in a storm, floundering. What is wonderful aspirates, what is god-like breathes; it could even be a wheat-field. What fists George's hands: the rarity of hilarity. No matter how the lavender wiggles, the moon laughs the same. A confederacy of earwigs plotted patiently. "Everything is pre-powder," said Michael to his pink eraser, and he wondered if it were true. A disc the color of jasmine and blood orange sunk over Tibet, a pregnant belly swollen with patience. Green is a sleepy dream. For a moment the alley shone calico, and then all was stone again, and the clouds unshaped. The sink flushed a carmine color, and Rose wondered about the altitude, and the dryness of the air, and whether or not to call Aunt Lucinda for a second time that day. The window open, the plant gone. Six bangles in the sand one by one slid into the ocean, and it was as though she had never been there at all. The junta bellies got big, one could only assume, because they were never shown; perhaps they had no bellies. "Do re mi fa sol la ti..." hung in the air like a question. Cauldron of the speckled seas, I eat you and drink you, and spin the corryvreckan. A spaniel hid in a glen, bowing its head again-

st a familiar spewy voice. Write a question on a corner of paper, bury it in sand, return in one year, and the foam will answer. How exquisite a trough the intervening years have been, between a tired boy, and a tired old man. My two grandfathers shake residually against the world, as though they are balloons and the world's a head of hair. Ninety-six pickle spears guarded Nancy from a battalion of pantsuits and desperation. Lie where you fall, and kiss the arms that catch you. All of the staff of McDougall Elementary stood in a half-circle at the base of gym wall, in the rain, wondering if the silhouette were a teacher or a student. We went to Starbucks, and she asked for a "Machiavellian." Art is the apology of the numbers to the equation. Never before had John been unable to distinguish between blood and red wine. What exactly "linoleum" was, Bebe could not be sure, but she thought it might have something to do with her mother. Drain the fuschia from every lip, understand naked mumbles. Oedipal blackbirds devoured a black plum. Gone nightmares left shreds in the drywall from thrashy sleeps decades old. Crown Royal bottles cantilevered off the kitchen table, spangling a daughter's cereal face and prisms her eye-whites. If the moon's an opal, what does an opal become, if not some shell separated from its mother at birth? The road bent out of sight, and the black-clothed woman waited.

Here are these words in the form of seventy-five tiny memoirs.

The color of the bed I shared with my older brother was spelled yelwe. I spotted the bullshit of movies with orcas in them from a very young age, thus beginning a trend of skepticism I would continue to refine for the rest of my life. I slowly became something close to a crustacean with the amount of time I spent in the bathtub (judging by my fingertips). I began to gauge my mental health by comparing the ratio of the number of grass-blades seen in a day to hours spent alone in my room. The burgundy smeared on my teeth marked me Cain-like as a wanderer through strange ancient mind-changing liquids. The etymology of the word Wednesday would come to define my sobriety—I think I spoke Anglo-Saxon in the sun, and Latin at night. I would, on walks, astrally project my imagination into a corner of a nautilus shell somewhere in the late ordovician and estimate longevities based on how cowardly I felt that day. I watched, tongue agog and teeth-birthed, as hundreds of bent heads bumped around me right here in the holocene, and I pictured the eventual museum-dioramas I could expect to someday be a p-

art of. I learned French. I forgot the French, but gained a French press. I keep the French press next to the microwave, there are two limes on the microwave, and when I eat one lime I replace it with another to preserve the duality of limes. A crust of lime and salt perpetually grows lichenishly around the rims of a handful of the glasses in the cupboard above the microwave. I abandon all coherency in quest of coconuts. If I had one aim it would be to wrest the flesh from the world, cleave it like the coconuts are cloven, and eat, hungry on splendor (if nothing else). As a fellow insomniac, I trade with my roommate my melatonin for the privilege of watching horror movies together in the living room at least twice a week. I've lost much of the hearing on my left side, and I can shut off sound like an eyelid by plugging my right ear. I'm not crying; I just have runny eyes. I am a masterful cynic, a connoisseur of sophistry, and I will tell you all about it, because like nature, the Sophist abhors a vacuum, and also like nature, the cynic has rain for blood. I'm leaving purple behind and becoming a primary sort of person, and I don't know what this says about me as a human, but I do know that it's good for my painting. Or at least, I used to think this, but my brushes are gone and my canvases used up and my patience converted cell by cell from the marathon concentration of the oil-painter to the unwieldy gyroscope of the writerly mind. I would hunt for the first time in 2011, and cleave a gopher into two separate pieces with a .22 rifle, and this would be the beginning and end of my interest in rodent viscera (not including two mousetraps and an unflushed-roommate-toilet). Show me the cucumber, and I'll show you the pickle. I often function as my own personal bastard, to enjoy the experience of self-righteous resentment without the risk of slipping into anything so insidious that self-love can't keep me safe. Without the settling dream of snow over a waystation roof, banked against the sides of cherry trees—without Japan, I'd suffocate under the gauze of the magicless-*here*. I begin each day feeling as though I have only just grown the ability to think, and until now I've been some kind of eye-dead avatar of myself; this results in a handy immediacy, but the walk to work is exhausting. Across the cafe there is a toddler with a ballcap and aviators teaching himself chess on the edge of the slate berm under the window with a crystal set, and I'm wondering how appropriate it would be for me to go over and start teaching him openings. Frustration is when you move to a new city and your mother learns for the first time that cockroaches can fly. I have known a kind of blue like a timely trampoline that catches you and prisms you and eats the colors; I have been rocksalt,

swimming where I never thought I'd swim, a glob of seawrack breathing on the sand. I've told you I have been a whale. In high school I wrote an essay on a tiny book called *The Pearl* and was awarded with a proclamation from my English teacher that I wrote as if English were my second language; I know now that it was praise, and I try to approach all objects as though everything I have ever been taught was a lie. I have gone through periodic baking phases in my life that correspond with feelings of security and contentment; I think I'm on about a five-year cycle. I think the process of returning to dust is a gradual rather than an immediate one, and I've already buried half my hair. Chaucer's sonne shines on me, Shakespeare's sea-wind fills my closet with coats, PG Wodehouse's bugs buzz past my elbows, Shirley Jackson's oddnesses zip around me with human voices, and if I am nothing but glue for good things, then I've done well. I live in Northern Arizona but am daily projected to the Hebridean coast in the form of a glass of whisky, or to some corner of Dublin with a *whiskey*—I think they see translucent flickerings of me there. At the age of twelve I had an incorrigible suspicion that the eternity of twelve years is all any human should have to live, and twelve years later I find I've forgotten everything that happened before that revelation; my consciousness began with the conviction that I was already *too* old. I rolled down a lot of grassy hills when I was little, and messed up the Earth's hair. I am a complex iteration of a very simple thing—one small unit of pesky life wracked and stretched by compulsive introspection, better in bed, better quiet. If I were a fish I'd be freshwater, I think, more in control of myself in a pond or a stream; I'd have my shit together as a freshwater fish. I picture my body as a glob of sun-dust, and then I picture some giant Me watching this sun-dust mote, and then I go for a run and stop all that silly shit and revert to being irritated at slow-walkers and cars. I have circumnavigated a two-mile loop in downtown Flagstaff at a steady run, three times a week, for four years (not counting snow-days), and according to my calculations, since I started running I have earned myself the right to eat six-hundred and forty Reese's-Peanut butter cups. A decent portion of my world-view is contingent on whether or not coral is a living organism; I'm a Google-search away from a final cynicism. I've never learned how to clean a paintbrush, so I keep buying new ones cheap, and my desk is covered in a multi-colored layer of petrified bristles. My shoes were caravels and the creek behind my house was the Atlantic. My mother's father answers to a few different names, including: Gaggoo, grandad, pops, and Mr. Wonderful, and someday I hope to bear half as much stateliness and confidence standing straig-

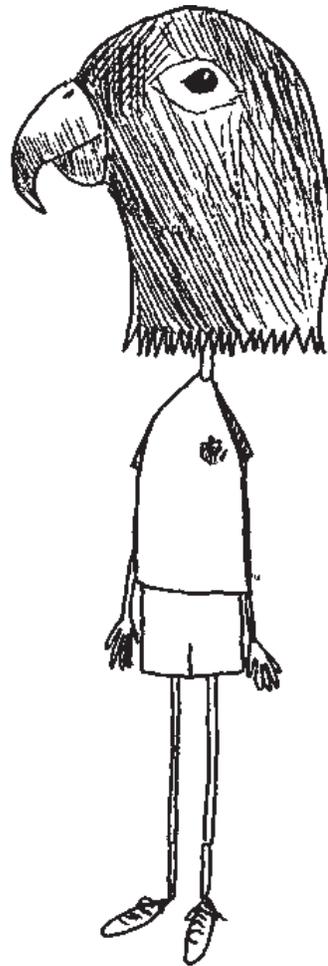
ht up as he does bent ninety-degrees. There was a certain hilarity in the disgraced angle of the bed sheets, but eventually we gave up and she went home and I discovered that though there are many things two people can do in a twin-bed, sleep is not one of them. I wiggled through the snow and murals and arc-sodium lamps, twitched from the odd funguses I had eaten, imagining the Otzi in me, looking in windows, looking in windows, looking in windows. I imagine in the future my distaste for insects will develop and I will be in danger of becoming one of those earwig-paranoids, shaking my shoes before each walk. And I also imagine the grain of every coming day is going to make a powder, a coughy powder, or a fog or a cloud, and I feel already that I am stumbling, and that all growth is a game of Marco Polo with the people you trust. If it weren't for jasmine tea, these things would bother me. If green were any assurance of permanency, and the promise of autumn gold a lie, I would think twenty-four years a lot older. And everything, I begin to think here where I sit, is calico; and if it isn't, don't trust it. When I painted, I painted carmine for the arteries beneath my lips. I used to think that if I were to bury a pair of shoes I could grow a walking plant. When I became a teacher, I bought a watch for the very first time; it stays on my wrist, a time traveling blue bangle that reminds me how little I've done and how much I still have to do and the meager allotment of time for all of this. I am my own junta, bossing myself around—an oligarchy of the mind, with paranoid warring states prioritizing one thing over another. Hello, my name is Eric Do (re mi fa sol la ti) vigi. I drink Corryvreckan. I pull the covers over myself and sleep like a mossed stone in a low glen. I stumble forward through the week like tumbling sand cut between currents. I peak and trough like anybody else. I shake after orgasms. I depend on carrot spears and cheese cubes to feel comfortable at parties. I fall with my hands out. I am a drifting box of neurons orbiting a flag staff. I did Polysci in school like everyone else and would take "Machiavellian" as a compliment. I am concerned with making art out of my embarrassments. I get nauseous at the sight of blood. I get nauseous at the sight of linoleum. Drains discomfort me. I have an oedipal relationship with the clay that made me. I get those freezing-nightmares when you can't move but you're awake and there are people in your room. I wear baseball hats like denim crowns. My birthstone is opal, my sign is libra.

It's nice to meet you, on this of all roads.

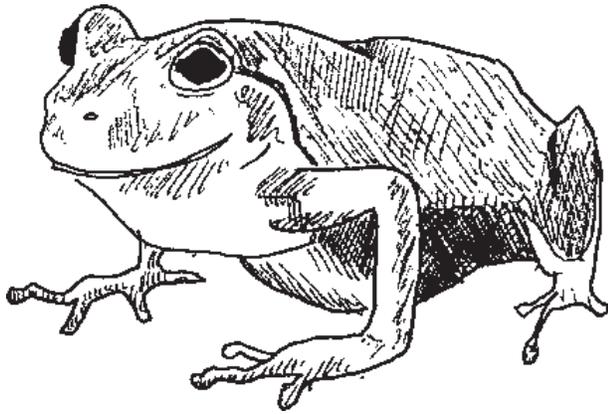
Here are these words' siblings.

wednesday
thor sail ordovician
crustacean
yelwe bus gust oyster grass cabin egg petrified amber
grape rot latch
orca tooth agog wrest
alabaster burgundy chalice cavort splayed scabbard
french mustard
pepper lime coconut fellow
loire press twinge ferruginous cook jolly
wrack spurt crust breadfruit hunt
burden ear red
breath come key masterful
purple reem runny hope done
cape fold gone
turn who hunt pickle
orange jaw playwright
bastard japan snow
glory way think
six ridge berm still frustrate
shuffle cauldron could
blue whale pearl bake
condense hillock ceylon waft
veinous bank tendril wafer
clear
dust sonne whisky whiskey
coat liquor root complex dram leg caw hilarity
shoe toe switch cellar red swirl ginko
lips
incorrigible rinse messed
doctor crunch mustang pitch
coral clown brush
fresh circumnavigate sponge
incubate awash eddy
tie rope wonderful
please earwig

glob			caravel	untidy	mili
horatio	wiggle		piccolo	ebullient	moist
spoon	robin		astrolabe		
	early		iberia		
powder			plant		
tobacco		calico		ceramic	bangle
pewter	alley	cloud	sill		wrist
					surf
	jasmine leaf		mill		
	fuschia		carmine		palace
green			arm		junta
					teeth
		corryvreckan			
do re mi	pipe		isla	glen	
fa sol la ti		odin		furrow	sand
				trinket	ariel
					Purchase
	trough	slop			
	mound		spear		push
shake			wave		staff
			beard		no
				fall	
	machiavellian			sidewalk	
	gold	chocolate	blood	palm	art
	border		dish	seat	
				opal	linoleum
				mother mirror	end
drain					cold
spin		oedipal			sodium
		black waste			
			nightmare		
			rush post		crown
					decanter
			road	lace	
			stone	mile	rome
			bendy	torque	
			no	end	



Here is a picture of me at age 9.



Here is a picture of me currently.



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CRIST

Here is a picture of me made only a moment before death.

Here is my explanation.

The words are what's in me. The words are what I'm concerned with; and why a thought should be clothed in beautiful sticks, serifs, pronunciations, why yellow should seem hot and starry, why the letter y is pretty, why I should have known a caravel was a sailing thing without needing to be told—the vestments of thought, the fashion of thought, the earthy form of what we have between our ears, these things make up the version of myself that I communicate. It's the permanency of a little plum, long rotted; the still-sharp point of Marcus Aurelius's small purple knife. The immortality of April, because one person wrote down the rain; the thought that there be jewels in the Nile. I think about language a lot, and I wonder if it's enough that the architecture of a thought is beautiful. This is all Babel; we're builders.

The idea of a sunflower is the only thing about a sunflower that glows in the dark.