

Shawn Mullins, Salt Lake City 1973

Mormon's are everywhere
battalions of bicycling bachelors
with dark suits
and well cropped hair
we're Mormons too
have been since '72
I'm riding between my brother and sister
in the back seat of a '67 Buick station wagon
with red vinyl seats
we stick by each other
and to those seats
we've been eating cheese and bacon sandwiches
our mother made for thirteen days straight in the August heat
and both my siblings are wakin' on those eggshells
as I will soon learn how to do myself
they play their quiet silly games
with their peashooters
as I sip luke-warm Sprite from a tin can
sold to me by a hunchback silly bastard old woman
a hundred miles back
who is probably the only person with good sense
in this part of the country
I still don't know what to do god-awful bacon and cheese sandwich
but your body is your temple
God tells us so,
so drink up your milk
and reap what you sow
I mold the cheese and bacon sandwich into a ball in my hand
it kind of reminds me of Play-dough
I look around to see who is watchin'
and stuff it between the red vinyl seats
no one will find it
at least not for a couple of weeks
we're in this big place now
it's kind of like 1/2 of an blue plastic Easter egg shell
and there's a hole in the top
where the sun cuts through
and lights up the room
and I hear all these male voices
telling me that black people are inferior
and it's ok to have more than one wife
and as the dry dry breath of the utah sun warms me
I stand before a statue of Jesus that is far too big
and has held these folks hostage for so so long
and I gaze up at the nostrils of the sandstone savior
and wonder if it
can smell all this bullshit
cause I sure can
and I'm only 5 years old
in Salt Lake City
in 1973...