CLAUDIA SHEFFNER Bare Crumbs Wednesday AN EXCEPRT FROM 6 PASSAGES OF

TIME.

BARE CRUMBS WEDNESDAY **"IN THE WAKE OF MODERN MAN** In the fear man cannot comprehend In the rich and in the poor There is a distinct shred of hope Yet it earns you nothing, it earns you nothing! Bare Crumbs Wednesday's the name of the day we all go home and rot On the couch we lay, at the TV we shout In the name of any God— there will be nothing today. Only on Bare Crumbs Wednesday—there'll be no "to" or "day". In the name of any God, there will only be decay In the name of any God—we shall go astray! Bare Crumbs Wednesday, be our guide! In the wake of humankind—born anew As lazy burns, as smokers, as those pressed Against a wall— into nothing we regress— in the names we speak, there is nothing but the word "repress" Punctuated by constant death— the new age of man has begun With no flowers, oh, no roses! no presents and oh, no words! Words of gratitude— all gone Words of appreciation— all off the ground Nowhere to be found—nowhere to be seen Nowhere to be found—nowhere to be seen Epic poets on the run—short-hand for absurd A single sentence earns the crown A word of motivation— the throne shall be yours! On Bare Crumbs Wednesday, we reject that word On Bare Crumbs Wednesday, we burn the great opportunity To form a community! to work as one! to be united! We reject—we object! We, oh so long ago, professed That the new age shall be an age of rest: that mankind will be free And the prophecy of peace—that the greenery will spread That the new age of man shall be one of rest We believed so dearly Yet our eyes had been shuthave we seen this world clearly? "No matter how much you shout about the doom and gloom, You will dig yourself deep into that hole soon. A backstreet prophet—wisdom's man—dressed in black In the sheds of fools does he thrive In the palaces of fools does he arrive Does he go? Does he know? Does he know "woe"? "I beget woe, yet I reject that! Death to cause and effect!" "Beget, beget! To the heretic, the false prophet we bring death!" "Under the floors of the House of Zenith! In the golden gardens does he thrive!

In the lies that he bathes in do we die! In the lies that he lives out In the lives that he overshadows In the words that he despairs over—over nothing that is said Over the words that could be told--- and the stories we unfold And the greenery of the House of Zenith! Oh how divine! oh how pristine! oh how boring!" The House of Zenith is burnt to the ground—not a single trace to be found The House of Zenith's gone now— on Bare Crumbs Wednesday it burnt down Nowhere to be seen is the Zenith of the Land- the Zenith of the New Man House of Zenith— house of power! house of power! burnt, burnt down! On Bare Crumbs Wednesday we shall start—with that house we go again! With the house we burnt— with the house that they rebuilt! We shall, indeed! In the epics of the world— in the woes of the heroes gone In the thoughts of the greatest men— in the thoughts of the greatest of your friends Solace—solace is all gone! On Bare Crumbs Wednesday, solace begone! On Bare Crumbs Wednesday— it is all lone! alone in its glow! lone in its divinity! "The House of Zenith shall appear again." The Man of the Plan rubs his hands together—ready to devour the cadaver Of the men that died for power- of the men that died for the absolute Of the men that died for the destitute Of the man that had his head begone On the day we call the day of Zenith The day where the sun's rays leaked into our heads Where the demands we made— all vanished Zenith Thursday shall be called—that day When we lost our heads right after Bare Crumbs— bare crumbs, indeed! Bare Crumbs Wednesday looms- and we shall take revenge! The sun will not get to us again! "You too?" A passer-by asks me, our eyes meet "We shall burn the House of Zenith!" I repeat. "Burn it to the ground, you shall?" The bypasser asks "Burn it to the ground, I shall. There will be no time to stall!" I reply— in manic fever I denv I deny the power that rules over modern man In history, all is written by the victors In history, all is written by the unaffected few! And then, the bird flew. Flew too high— and burnt its wing In the colors of the night— the dark blues and the darkest blacks The purple nights— the time to strike! Torches we rise! Torches we cleaver! Cut in half, the fire spreads right before our legs What is this? How did we think of that? How absurd that is! Dropping dead, caught on fire The funeral pyre of the absurd few The celebration of the lucky The burial of the absurd few

The celebration of those who rule over this world! Their pride—insurmountable Their words—unpronounceable Their eyes—aflame They go astray! They kill! Blood drains the rivers! Blood fills the rivers! The grass is red—the skies cloudy The massacre of Bare Crumbs Wednesday we do not forget The massacre of Bare Crumbs Wednesday we regret And the words we spoke— and the friends we lost And the men that had gone into the fire To cleaver the heads off those laughing at the pyre To fight for the absurd To butcher the chosen few To become whole And let go of the primal To be human again. When the zodiac foretold—our words distant Our lost friends— always here Always gone And always in fear Always burnt— always felt— always felt The new world— the new astray! The new man—the new feelings! The Wednesday of bare crumbs. Feeling—felt. A bypasser asks me "Was it worth it?" "It will always be." "And the bare crumbs spilled Will always be With the heads severed THAT WEDNESDAY WILL REMAIN." "IN THE WORD OF GOD Overly clinical— the surface level— always in doctrine Inter-patient. Hermits on the run Detail— the death of it, and thereof In the balancing act of 'the new human'— in the distortion of Recipes and rapid transit—sprawling cities 19 million-20 million-35 million Geographical—dense words—wrapped in the silver tongue of a serpent Heads swallowed— the therapeutic nature of "nourishment"— hours through the regurgitation—poor research, attending the lecture and then falling through the floor Confined spaces—greenery. House of Zenith— all of it burns, O holy O holy Preaching to the choir, the new words of the stream To the dense depths of "interest"— and the lack of

Controversy is par the course—everything wrapped in the mystery of flames alit to the SPECTRUM SPECTROGRAM— the silver screen and the box office Provided by the opaque— the factors of the loophole A convenient alternative— a cumbersome medium— on a Saturday night, cherries and oranges Passages of time— and then all that In the AGE OF MODERN MAN— we all find solace in the absurd In the AGE OF MODERN MAN— we all find solace in the new In the AGE OF MODERN MAN— the events of in a can— the theaters and the dust we SPRAWL— and the squabbles and the rubble In the AGE OF MODERN MAN— a lost period of time Black outs and the WHITE OUTS- red outs and blue outs The various scribbles and the various technicalities And all that lacks— it all is locked within Within what? A hallway— a door way Everything burns— the skin. The flesh—engulfed in fire In the AGE OF MODERN MAN— feel it, feel it feel it! PLAN OF ATTACK: Disarm- redistribute- burn. PLAN OF DISARMING: Turn the cogs-vanish into the flame. Punks get nailed— and the youth goes for a standing ovation In the wake of modern man— the flame engulfs Everything that ever is And everything that ever WAS In the inferno there is a rose— a bright blue vase Rises from the ashes— into the depths of flames Rain pours— thunder surrenders to the flame Names forgotten— names long lost Death sentences for the weak— and life sentences for the strong Everything in a swirl— a spiral that— given enough time, will Will swallow— everything in its path, uninterrupted All burning— all feeling, all enveloping A scale of ordinary to extravagant Nowhere there— nowhere near 3, 2, 1. Wildfire—thirty-six wild lions in the garden IN THE GARDEN OF THE GOLDEN HOUSE The house of Zenith The house of Panacea The house of Faith The house of the End A silver God— a golden god, in the wake of MODERN MAN Everything repeats again. Bare Crumbs Wednesday— the hurricane and the storms The words enveloped in the fire starter's fist

In the palm of an empty hand—frivolous and all—consuming All— repeating. All— vibrating. All— cultured. A ship sinking— a ship rising from the tides And like that—there's silence A literary critic and a drunken captain All on a dead shelf of books never written Bet you'll be fine. Shocked by audacity—shocked by the waves Shocked by the violent embrace of the sea Shocked by the words drowned IN UNCERTAINTY "Syntaxis and parataxis go to die At your disposal—literary techniques" Bare Crumbs Wednesday— where the modern man goes to die Where the pathetic, pitiful man dies Where the rich man dies in silence Where the taxman dies in agony Where the Wednesdays pass— slowly dissolving Where the Thursdays go and go— running far away Capture the opening— capture the ending. Serpent tongue of the End IN THE WIND comes descending a silver bird In its white robe and its golden feathers Its eves made of rubies—its claws made of steel "I got the Times of the Lives to tell you!" The bird descends on a man's shoulder-grasping it with its claws "I bear bad news and I bear the gospel" Its voice resounds "Which would you like to hear first?" "Oh, the gospel! Tell me the gospel! Tell a poor man the gospel of the New World!" "The world ends yesterday— and so it goes." 'In the wake of MODERN MAN— the pessimist revels in his ignorance, slowly, slowly, slowly... sowing what he's done. "Sun in his head! Moon in his head! I tell you, sun in his head! Moon in his head! Scrapping all he wants—scrapping all he needs!" The literary critic gets off the ship— onto the decks and into the wilderness The bird lands on his shoulder—grasping his fist with its long claws Its claws like blades— into flesh it tears The literary critic—scared—backs away—falling into the bay. The captain swims to the shore, charging into water With great pride— he harvests the corpse of the literary critic With words to not be spoken— with the journalist long gone We shall know that the fidelity is dying. We shall know that the the tail of the Ruby Bird is made of teeth—slowly, slowly eating away at all it touches Sweep, sweep— the broom SCREECHES at the HOUSE OF ZENITH

"My whole life, my whole fucking life!" The broom screams.

"I sweep, I sweep! I sweep! I sweep! My whole fucking life!"

"Now, now, dear broom, pardon your French." The carpet suggests, laughing.

"What shall I say to you, dear Carpet? I cannot find the words—exquisite. I cannot find the words—kind. I cannot find the words—right. So, go fuck yourself."

The argument is observed by the captain— he, stepping slowly over the carpet, grinds his teeth

"Oh, dear Captain! Pardon us, we shall not misbehave!"

In the house of Zenith— the pirate screams! And screams! And screams! And scrambles for the door!

"Since when do you, dear Carpet, speak? Since when did you let go of your voice—so meek?"

I remember— as a youthful act of stupidity— pushing snow onto roads while cars pass by

When was this? Long ago, times lost to the flame

I remember it, but only in name

Only in vain do I hope to return to these days

I struggle to stay awake—bare skin in decay

I struggle to be human— I struggle to compose myself

I struggle to be whole— I lose myself

IN THE WAKE OF MODERN MAN, I've found myself

Asleep and awake

At times knows when

When no man's awake, when no man's asleep

At times known when— indeed. With that conceit, I struggle to get out

IN THE VIRTUES WE UPHOLD— digging for gold, we find zero— and thus we unfold into nothing— we shout into the void

In the stories untold by generations long decayed— in the words thrown into the dame's name

Arbitrary— all so pristine

In the wake of JUDGMENT DAY— we find ourselves aflame

In the wake of JUDGMENT DAY— we find ourselves awake in the golden coffin of MODERN MAN

In the pristine— the divine— the exquisite burial.

In the strength we deceive— in the words that we concede

In the glass that we shatter— all deep within

In the windows we look into— seeing nothing but the obscene

The violent and the absurd

The immoral and the darkened

The profuse apologizing- and no man's lands colliding

The profuse apologizing— and the claws that we dig with

And the depths we find with— and the feelings that we hide

In the words we recognize as our own

As the serpent flails its tail— in the wake of FASHION and the models

It becomes the standard—the golden and the pristine The silver screen awaits it— the madame of the Snake The jets emerge from behind it—bombs dropped IN THE WAKE OF MODERN MAN— we find ourselves ashamed Of the pasts and the presents that we hold dear Of the pasts and the presents we hold in fear In the words that we erase— and the truths we recognize In the infinite "ifs" and the partially complete— half-dazed— half-foolish. In the bare lucidity of the idle mind We find ourselves trapped In the unconscious we find the bizarre In the exquisite world we call the conscious mind—there is no such thing as the absurd But in the depths of every treasure trove lies a stain— an echo of a shadow that takes over A wordless death— a conscienceless plague The ill mind— and the recovery that we forgot And the people that refuse— in the profuse need To be whole and to be needed To be human, to be whole To be whole and to be human To refresh— to rearrange To burn words into your memory TO FIND SOLACE IN THE ORDINARY TO FIND SOLACE IN THE EVERYDAY "Oh lord! Must we suffer in vain?" The priest shouts into the sky— the echo of his voice uncertain Will it reach? Will it mean anything to any God? Any deity at all— any strength to be given— any faith to be maintained? Must we doubt the solace that we're given? Must we doubt the fake that has been foretold? Must we doubt the absurdity of our reality, oh so much we have to unfold Oh, so much that burns! Oh, so much the scent of which lingers! On Bare Crumbs Wednesday—we reckon We'd rather be dead than be a beacon of hope The stew that we brewed stands on the stove Always forgotten The stew that we brewed stands on the table Never eaten-never touched Yet a man comes up— and takes a sip With a wooden spoon he eats Disassembling the empirical **Disassembling the Biblical** "An obscene attack on our God!" The priest exclaims In the words of the worst men

"We'll always be here— scared again?" In the delusions of our broken minds We find solace in the absurd In the refuge of the bare dime In the refuge of the time—spent, lingering In the refuge of the words unspoken—left unsaid In the refuge of the winds that pour into the room In the refuge of the winds that will be coming soon In the beauty and the excitement That we shower ourselves in In the pettiness and boredom In the keys to our new "if". 'That's not a great way to sell a novel!" The literary critic exclaims in the depths of Hades In the river of death—he finds confusion He finds the protrusions of bone trees—growing from the bottom of the lake He finds himself drowning—grabbing onto the branches, he climbs the bones. They clunk—flesh sprouts. Skin covers. Surprised—climbs to the shore—runs away. The bones move, the branches grasping him—miniature in comparison "In the wake of modern man— we shall repeat our mistakes!" He exclaims. He climbs the bone tree again— then falls onto the ground, his body deflected "We shall repeat our mistakes again and again!" He climbs again— this time he gets to grab onto the branches for a second. Then he's thrown off again—slowly climbing again. Making this mistake thousands of times until he's in extreme pain—he finds himself in the depths of Hell, slowly looking for an escape. The blazing hot rocks of the ground and the lava rain melt his skin- yet for him to be resurrected yet again. Soon he's resurrected as a butterfly—mercilessly killed by the rain Soon he's resurrected a mouse—running for a bit before dying quietly once again— a piercing squeak! A squeak! A squeak, I tell ya, a squeak! Then he runs— then he runs— as a skeleton without skin. A bare man— without intent and without flesh. He runs, he runs! Freed from his skin so thin—he finds himself stripped down to the bare essentials— a man without flesh, without the power to take criticism. Powerless against his own words— he screams. For help he scrambles— for the helping hand he despairs Maybe it's a dream— maybe nothing is real. All swells. MEANWHILE AT THE HOUSE OF ZENITH The Broom exclaims: "IT'S GONE! IT'S GONE!" Indeed, the Carpet has vanished. It has been covered in dirt—stripped of his bright red color.

All dirty—like a shadow swallowed it.

Red—like blood, darkened like dry blood.

That which remains under fingernails—slowly turning black.

Florian's— the gardener— sprinkler exclaims: "IT'S GONE! IT'S GONE!

The whole House of Zenith is in uproar over the disappearance of the Carpetoh so panicked, oh so vulnerable and fragile

In the concertos of the old— the words annotated— with every chord so precise That the fragile-single mistake-could break it all

The flow—collapses—the melody—scrambles—falling flat.

In the provider of the words— in the lyricist— the libretto all torn up

The life that's lived had been hung up— the life that's here had been destroyed the life that's all there has been shattered.

IN THE WAKE OF MODERN MAN, the mistake has been made again.

In the crime of rhyme—in the chimes of the bells—in the atrocities of the modern-in the minor mistakes-in the old and new-IN THE WAKE OF MODERN MAN- do not bother us again, imbecile!

Do not bother us, indeed! Leave this place at once! Leave it at once! Leave it at once! Leave it at once, you fraud!

The imbecile— the quacker! The homeopath!

The scoundrel! The miserable mistake!

IN THE WAKE OF MODERN MAN- do not bother us again!

IN HELL we find a man sitting on the beaches burning with brimstone, with lava flowing in and out.

Indeed, he had been abandoned—slowly but surely crawling out of HELL. How long did this take? A while, really.

IN THE HOUSE OF ZENITH the Broom whispers: "Where's the Carpet? Where's the Carpet?"

IN THE HOUSE OF ZENITH the Carpet exclaims: "Leave me alone at once! You filthy scoundrel!"

In the washing room, the highest floor of the HOUSE—the Carpet is being washed—scrub, scrub—soap, soap—bubble, bubble.

"IN THE WAKE OF MODERN MAN— do not ever wash me ever again!"

"IN THE WAKE OF MODERN MAN— I shall wash you once again!"

"IN THE WAKE OF MODERN MAN— I shall wish death upon you!"

"IN THE WAKE OF MODERN MAN— I shall scrub you! Scrub, scrub, scrub."

"IN THE WAKE OF MODERN MAN- I refuse!"

"IN THE WAKE OF MODERN MAN— I shall."

"IN THE WAKE OF MODERN MAN— I... you know what..."

IN THE DEPTHS OF HELL the literary critic runs-descending deeper into the void—descending deeper down the stairs of the Northern Fortress.

The coldest point of Hell— warm as ever. Scorching temperatures.

"Heat, heat! Oh blazing! Oh so warm! Oh so deadly warm! Oh so dead! I'm so dead!" Speaking in a verse no one really gets— he proceeds down the fortress

The minotaur of Hell quickly stops him—dying, he turns into a mouse

Running under the Minotaur's feet

Sneaking past the guards— he succumbs to the heat He is reincarnated as a butterfly—quick and nimble Quick and speedy—oh, he runs! Oh, I run! IN THE WAKE OF MODERN MAN- I shall die again! IN THE WAKE OF MODERN MAN- he dies again. IN THE WAKE OF MODERN MAN— as a ladybug, he flies. Tiny in its size—quickly squashed. Quickly depraved of life—quickly gone. IN THE WAKE OF MODERN MAN— the critic is dead. On the shore stands the pirate. In the glimmering sun— The wind rises— the tides flicker. On the beached whale's back Stands a pirate His hair wavy-long and made of void Shadows do not reach it The night could not compare The silken, the enchanted— the hair in the wind Of the pirate's long unshaved head No bald spots— no light to shine Florian— the gardener— with his quick hand trims the plants And the pirate makes amends with the sea "Oh mother! Shall we sail again?" "No, we shan't." The sea replies, rising its tides. IN THE ARCHAIC TONE- in the voices of the old In the voices of those lost— in the voices of words left unspoken In the voices of words left unsaid—treasured by time and left behind In the voices of words unspoken— in the voices of words not evoked by anyone in the voices of words left behind Shrieks and screeches— the AM radio flickers on, through talk shows The rhythm of stories— the rhythm of boredom, always looming— always ticking. The silver beard of the pirate glimmers— in its light— absorbed No rhyme— no rhythm— death of song In the words that flicker in and out— the shapes of old The meanings and the deflections— the reflections of the young and the long forgotten The reflections— the refractions— the reactions— oh so clear Diving headfirst into nonsense-pen and paper in hand With the words that sprinkle together— with waves made through the lines of a song Oh the lyrics of the old! Let life be new and bold! Let recycle and let re-hoard! Let your lines flow, let your scribbles concede in song and dance! Let the conceit of your prose be the absurd! Let your conceits be clear! Let your words launch into the stratosphere! Oh so beautiful! Oh so glorious! Oh so divine!

Let us disarm the Gods that we dismay— let us disarm the Gods that we protect and the Gods that we regret The humans that created— and gave form to— our own selves and the memory carpenter's déjà vu Good morning and good night—dose yourself—doze yourself; let the catalyst be the end! Let the catalyst be the beginning—let your words flow in a stream like the tides rising in the Bay of Berlin! Let your words restructure life! Hold your spirits—hold on tight! Let your words create infinite possibilities— without flaws and liabilities! All so flawed— and all so beautiful In the graceful voice of poetry— we find solace IN THE ARCHAIC TONE -in the voices of old That is our conceit. To find voices and to give them life To raise spirits and burn all rights! Public domain— into the wild it all goes! Burn Mickey Mouse at the stake- let his spirit flow free An endless Disney— a carbon avenue A greenhouse gas— a Great Awakening A new life— a new sprouting of memory A new grace— a new face A new life— and a new mace! A new death— and a new dead cop A new life— and a new event A new life— and a new death A new life— and a new regression A new life and a new depression Let your cycles be rewound! Let your wounds be healed by the sound of silence! Let your wounds be healed by the sound of tone! Let your wounds be healed by the sound of voice! IN THE TROPICS OF YOUNG MAN- we find voices of your friends We find voices sprinting across— we find voices deserted. Voices lost— and voices stolen Voices taken— and voices returned Everything in order—everything in harmony Let us disassemble it anew! Let us give birth to words reborn! Let us give the lives to the Golden Horn- of voices that remain To be trumpeted and born again As the brightest voices— as stars in the sky As the anthems of a new world— as the anthems of words written anew In the bright language that we speak— in the festivals of a single syllable In the bright words of a single tone— a single fricative A single exchange of breaths

A SINGLE TRIUMPH— a victory beyond A SIMPLE TRIUMPH— a victory uncouth Yet a victory so pure-devoted to its craft A victory agreed on—yet desecrated by the law Oh—Olaf the Taxman— we hang him on the stake With his throat sliced and his eyes torn awake ...In the ясли of the mind We find solace in our childhoods In our ham-fisted thoughts In our delinquency and inadequacy In our broken and long-lost desires In our empirical evidence In our falsehoods and our traces In our deaths and in our despairs We shall be born again as voices that remain In the voices that remain here— we will be In the voices that remain there— we will be OH SO FREE In the comfort of our words In the words in which we propose Our hopes and dreams— all so lucky In the fragments of tragedy— in the words of remorse In the long—lost thoughts of our dreams In the long-lost voices of our inner critic IN THE LONG LOST VOICES of the words that you said to me long ago AND IN THE TIMES WE'VE LOST we've gained a lot more AND WHEN WE SEPARATED I found you again In the books that you wrote— in the words you laid down— in the prose of your voice— your one and only A love song for the ages— new times for the mind A rejection of form—yet a celebration of freedom Every single word—dragging along, slogging through Yet oh so pristine— oh so amateur Oh so beautifully auteur There's a charm in your works— always there Always here and always there Always buried— always in plain sight Always there— in your bare mind Souls laid out— a triumph calls A trumpet rings— the whistles and the noise Your life is here—your rigor is deserved Your times have flickered—your life rewarded And you're gone. Static flickering— the end is nigh In the grasp of modern man— the eternity we spent

IN THE WAKE OF MODERN MAN— Bare Crumbs Wednesday'll come again AND IN THE WAKE OF MODERN MAN— there'll be words for everyone And in the end of MODERN MAN- we shall hold a wakae A wake unlike any other An eulogy for a grave A wordless death— and a peaceful rest Words stripped away— meanings lost in the sunshine And Bare Crumbs Wednesday'll come again With gunfire and cannon strikes— with the wounded words Between your lies Between your futures and between your sighs Between your meanings and your deaths Bare Crumbs Wednesday'll come again With gunfire and cannon strikes— with the bullet holes of passion With the bullet holes of com-passion With the bullet holes of your name With the bullet holes of what you represent With the bullet holes of the bare skin And the words given meaning— and the words of which is lost Bare Crumbs Wednesday'll come again For better... or for worse. HOUSES OF BROKEN PAGES— razors strip away Denizens of voiden culture—sing a song for us! Denizens of vulture—sing a ballad for the wound! Denizens of voiden culture- burn a stake for us! Engage— the wheels spin— on the roads paved with gold Flames alit— candles on the verge of death The world—so precise, glimmering with hope There's nothing to hide— in loneliness tethered Lips hitched—words spoken—left unheard Voices lost—endlessly vain In broken words we represent In hell's tides we find our gaze In the many games that are played In the voids left floating In the voids left spoken In the voids left considered IN THE VOIDS LEFT UNSAID I'll give you everything— take it, without a thought Let it flow into the river's depths Throw it out-ridden of The moment ever comes— I shall find it once again IN THE WAKE OF MODERN MAN-Bare Crumbs Wednesday'll come again It's plain to see-an enemy is you.

I'll give you everything— left to burn. I'll give you everything forgotten— everything left spoken Everything left meaningless An effigy of the cold In the sun in your head Better off dead— I suppose In rivers of prose, meanings collide In rivers of lost time Spare parts— machines obsolete Humanity's woes, all dressed in pretty colors In effigies of strawmen— I know them They're here! In lands of the dead