

EDUARDO

I've met over a hundred people named Eduardo.

I used to play soccer in New York with an Eduardo from Bogota.

He looked nothing like the Eduardo from Botswana, an international student who overturned an eighteen-wheeler on the Jersey Turnpike, outran the police, and still made it to class.

Neither of them looked anything like the Eduardo family I lunched with, working-class Bulgarians who overstayed their tourist visa for the sake of the children.

Then there's the Eduardo from Kenya who moonlighted as a cleaner,

Or the Eduardo from Bangladesh who signed up to be Army Strong,

Or the Eduardo from India who shortened his name to Ed,

Or the Eduardo from Guadalajara – A young woman mastering English for her American-born infant, driving without a license.

Presently, an Eduardo from Syria and an Eduardo from Iraq have dug a tunnel from the Mid-East to the Midwest, where they're greeted by an Eduardo from Nepal, resting in the shade after harvesting fruit in the sun. It's possible the three Eduardos become friends, lovers even, before driving to the nearest city awash with restaurants because ever since they were little, they've harbored dreams of working with dishes, And soap.

Sometimes I want some of that. Guts. I want to snort some of that.

I want to jaywalk. Ignore deadlines. Jump over turnstiles. Smiile at policemen.

Screw ethics, I want to incinerate rules. Take jobs under the table. Inhale ganja.

Break my lease. Marry without thinking. Grow a beard in August,

Keep growing it in September.

I want to walk with a black man at night.

Walk alone when the black man's unavailable.

Just feel white if it's possible to feel white.

And refuse – simply refuse – to doctor my name.

I want to falsify papers,

Inform parents Amayrika broke me. That someone took all the money. That it's hard to take advantage, or do things by the book.

That Homeland Security is sending me flowers,

addressed to a man named Eduardo.

Presently, there is an Eduardo hiding under the chair you sit.

In your dreams tonight, eight Eduardos will landscape eight lawns in eight different ways.

And tomorrow on the El, babies named Eduardo will wave at other babies named Eduardo.

Then the day after tomorrow, an Eduardo will lose his way in the desert. By the end of the week, increase that number to four. By the end of the year, imagine a thousand Eduardos sleeping underground.

Visit this desert some time next year, then place your ears close to the ground, and you shall hear what their voices sound like re-reading letters stashed in trouser pockets,

Letters sent from home.

END

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