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Report from the Kingdom of the Afterlife

By Chris Hutchinson

In the future, books of the past will be redacted
and digitized, to be read only by the criminally insane.
As the gulf between the present and what you imagined
the present would be swallows your wounded
baroque sensibilities, so the lines of the scribes will fade
unmetaphorically, into white noise. Puerile
and petulant adjectives will be the leftover things
from an excessive past where you once sat, pondering the broken air-
conditioning—a smaller brain inside a larger brain inside
a sacrosanct antechamber removed from a certain unimaginable
misrepresentation which was the feather-tipped leather whip
of the old poetics. You'd read one too many theories
that led you back only to the fact that you were educated.
We were all educated then, stoned, and not so unpleasantly famished.
Everyone drove a rusted-out Volvo and named their cat Flaubert.
That was before all this virtual fame—so many lives blurring inside
the touch of a touchscreen. So many minds up in the cloud.
The rest of us crazy, imprisoned, or soon-to-be dead

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