

## The Room

After the press conference in the hotel conference room with the glass wall and the struggling air conditioner. Where she said something she really shouldn't have. The podium with the various microphones had been dismantled. Conference chairs remained in disarray and the floor was littered with hotel stationery bearing a logo that hadn't changed since the 40s. The one with the palms and the birds. You could still smell nicotine gum in the air.

There's a way to say everything. There's a way to keep them calm. There's a way that says I understand your fear and frustration, and yet. And yet knowing what she knew and doing what she did he asked the one question that no one was supposed to ask. And before you knew it she answered with words that have never crossed her lips. And when she finally stopped talking all you could hear was the breaking of pencils and the clicking of pens.

It didn't matter, not really. And this film of our lives that takes some two hours to watch and covers some twenty very public years is over. It was a set-

up anyway. They were leaving by helicopter from the roof before she even mounted the podium. In the air they were wearing headphones and sunglasses and looking down at the building tops. At the abstracted city seen from above. Heading towards the coast. You can't talk over the racket of the propellers but I know they heard every one of those words.

And so it's an ending. She doesn't even feel a thing. That thing no one could foresee, that the administration would throw its hands in the air. You're right we tried. Now go home. There's no going back. There never was. People would lose fingers, and books would be thrown in the ocean, and pets would get their names taken away. Welcome to not getting or being or doing what you want.

Part of my mind was attentive as everyone was frantically writing. But instead I made a drawing. Immediately I knew I was someone else and that drawing was the first thing I had done as this new person. It wasn't very good. But I think of it from time to time.

—Matthew Brannon

## Ch.1

A Public Fiction

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Ep.1  
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# Abstracted Plane in the Expanded Field

Eric Wesley