

The following three works—"One Last Drive", "The Assessment" and "Father"—are excerpts from a text/image collaboration between musician and photographer **JOHN SELLEKAERS** and writer **BRIAN EVENSON**, with the latter writing short pieces in response to the former's photographs. It is their third collaboration, the first being a spoken word/music CD (<http://www.discogs.com/release/402267>) and the second being music with an accompanying story (<http://www.discogs.com/release/608482>).



ONE LAST DRIVE

Later, when the oil reserves ran out, many of us took one last drive in our vehicles and then abandoned them where they died, slowly walking home or slowly plodding forward in whatever direction the car was pointing. Certain people began to think of themselves as their car's spirit, straying farther and farther away from the deceased chassis, connected to it by a thin strand of thought, until they separated completely from it to become a sort of ghost.

Still others found themselves unwilling to leave their vehicles at all. They remained at the wheel, motionless, staring out the windshield. Over time they passed from the motionlessness of life to the motionlessness of death, and their bodies slowly mummified. We know better than to do anything but simply leave them there, simply let them be.



THE ASSESSMENT

They had formulated, so they claimed, a revolutionary and all-new concept for the open-air urinal. Sergeant Douglas, though on leave, was quick to volunteer for the test run.

Standing at a discreet distance, we eagerly awaited his assessment.





FATHER

Nights, we kept father confined to his room by draping the walls with black velvet curtains to hide the door—which in his sleep-addled state he did not entirely remember existed—and by hanging the drawing of the girl on the window. He would get up, not even half awake, grope around in the dark until he found the flashlight, and then make for the window. When he caught sight of the girl's image, he would give a shriek. Then we would

come and turn on the lights to find him tangled in the curtains. We calmed him—sometimes vodka was enough, sometimes we had to resort to tranquilizers, sometimes there was nothing for it but to beat him with sticks until he lost consciousness.

In the morning father was always his old, arrogant self: blunt, cheerfully deranged, in command of even the minute comings and goings of the house, his domain. He ordered us about our tasks and, when dissatisfied, jeered at us or fixed upon us his reproachful and imperious eye or sentenced us to a few hours' confinement in the darkened cellar.

But at night, everything was different for him. How we had had the foresight to draw the girl's portrait before her disappearance we did not know. But we knew we couldn't have done without it.