

the way he scolded alexa

Vange Schram

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the way he scolded alexa
reverberated in the tone his son used
to inform the filipino nanny she misplaced his water
Bottle

private-school boys queued at the timmy's an imposing
phalanx of the jr. brett kavanaugh association

hormones not their fault – these will denude – entitlement
though? a de-conditioning defying mano
sphere logics

countertenor complaints regarding a missing yet paid-
for cheddar slice bellowed at a demure brown
woman with boiled-liquid scars lacing her fore
arms

one doesn't elect self-mutilation here / one is mutilated
by global labour malpractices

i brought a reusable tumbler in a tote
bag, though, #white
girlsmug

like the climate activist-by-day who broke
his tibia heliskiing by-long-week
end my brain tries to parse
the ways people inhabit this eco
sphere – what does hedonism or

privilege or the insecurity of *this*
moment inure us to?

thieved & foraged moments enable
me to even have this thought – a luxury beyond what the small
girl thought possible

scrawled words used to be a surf
board skiffing atop a garbage barge of ambient
anxiety, sometimes still are

but right now a werther's – something you can't
bite, or more a bite
block as the shocks
wave like those miniature plastic
horses that collapse when you press the under
side of the platform upon which they're fixed

this writing protects my tongue so i can hold
it, prevents the expletives from ripping
through my kitchen, surging over the crypt-
keeper wail of the 90's-era dish
washer into my kids' cortexes

so i can tell you only what is precisely
necessary while simultaneously evincing
a politeness reserved for an email sign-
off to an address, the arrangement of which's lower
case on either side of an @ grates
burningly at one's sternum

you calming all of them like spritzing the
feeling of seeing one's dentist's
name aligned in equidistant
kerning across the chest of one's travel
toothbrush

Questions, Prompts, or Provocations:

How do your engagements with the technocultures of your life (including, for instance, AI, your Timmy's coffee, your hobbies [snowboarding, etc.], your dishwasher, your email signoff, your travel toothbrush) force you to encounter your values, or, similarly, to dissociate from your ethical responsibilities?

Vange Schram is a writer, mother, and educator from the territories known as vancouver island and the sunshine coast of british columbia who currently resides on the territories known as toronto, ontario. their award-winning creative non-fiction, poetry, and critical work appears in journals including CV2, feminism & psychology, plenitude, english studies canada, the ampersand review, feminist media studies, grain, and canadian literature, to name a few. vange schram is the pen name of evangeline holtz schramek. they are completing their doctorate at mcmaster university in hamilton, ontario.