

She undergoes a mandatory physical every year and to date there is nothing seriously wrong with her. She does notice more hair in the shower drain, but the hairbrush isn't carrying away large clumps, and the pay is decent. What with the recession and wanting nothing to do with welfare — it's not such a bad job.

What else is there?

— Thomas Gianakopoulos

Los Angeles CA

EASTER SUNDAY: 1994

and we spent it with my
mom and my sister and her
husband and her little boy;

my brother in law worked on
the lawnmower while i read
the chicago paper to see if
i could find a job there;

my lady had just been accepted
into school there and i cldnt

find a goddamn thing and kevin
cldnt figure out what was
wrong with the mower so he
loaded it up and drove it into
town to get it looked at and

my mom asked if we wanted to
scatter my dads ashes before
or after we had strawberry
pie for dessert she cried
while she scattered the ashes;

they looked like white chips
of gravel, burned hard and
angry by the fire from the oven

i had no idea that they would
look like that; i had images
of sooty fireplace ashes,
something like dust that
would just float away when
it hit the air, but these
ashes were SOLID, they hit

the ground in chunks and sank
in — reminding me of how heavy
the box had been when the
undertaker had first handed
it to me in evansville, indiana.

CHICAGO, APRIL 1994

chicago is nothing like
new orleans; i thought
that perhaps it might be.

we're driving around,
looking for a park that
some kid at the art
institute told us about;
said that the rent was
cheap and that it was
safe too. got lost,

i guess, since we ended
up in cabrini green. all
black skins out in the
street, holding up fifty-
five gallon drums one of
them with fire coming out
the top, thats what my
lady said, i didnt see it

too busy watching the street
and the kids darting in and
out of traffic; all of them
wearing clothes that did
not fit; once white t-shirts
hanging around battered knees.

i figure its too damn bad for
all those kids; tooling around
on flat tires and warped rims;
but this place isnt a goddamn
thing like new orleans. i
dont see jesus anywhere and
all i want to do is get out.

SMITTY, 2

i figure that esther will
have some trouble with it
later on; for awhile im
not able to figure out
the thinking of it all;