
*Denise Duhamel, Thomas Fink,
Timothy Liu, and Stephanie Strickland*

Three Strikes and You're Out

Sullen David Shapiro stands in front of a chain-link fence.
He's not bowling at Leisure Time, pink swirls
undermining the stentorian. Gestural gravity is resumed under the arcane
pins. Needles. A litany of prosaic muddle. Hark! Who goes
into Port Authority and turns his wrist
hopes for neon strikes and chance love?
Luck strokes the anemic. The Supreme Court rises
for a bathroom break, and the barristers eyeball each other
with a wink, whipping out their surly puds, wiping off
the excess dribble. *Noli me tangere!* Eat
off the Starr chamber carpet
with me. Come, I've prepared microwaveable treats like sugar-coated
sestinas which preach continence like rubber weasels. How are
the canapés? Undulatory migrations sequester themselves underneath
the deep
navy folds of a stained dress hanging in the closet. Elsewhere,
there are impressionable theories about the matrix
of public spaces waiting for affectionate owners to pet them and
lick the little fuzzies off. Reader, can you tell
which strikes are Stephanie's and which
are under the sign of *fin de siècle*?
We are slippery eels splashing hot grease in the stench
because we are full of happy gerunds and clear
injunctions against the Pope—millennial indulgences for sale again!—sin
the size of Sicily. Or sides of sizzling beef.
You can roll around in that kind of s(k)in, your sweatshirt
many sizes too blubbery. Acne: the ultra-fractal.
Acme! Visions of Wile E. Coyote strapping on a rocket
with such allure that Congress should take note!
Hillary, her daughter, his lover—
all sharing a chocolate soda at Friendly's.
Hillary, friendlier than any newt would credit her

or shave her beaver if
only there *were* satisfaction with Bill or with
Vince or Janet. Whoever admits bowling with a crystal ball
is right by me. "Mirror, Mirror, disco ball,
who's the fairest intern of them
all?" SURELY MITE! Click your heels three times. Toto! We're home!