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THE (THIRD) TIER-ANY OF TWO

For Matthew Dagger-Margosian

"This place is driving me mad" he says. It is
a familiar mantra that should embody

a prison more than a university. But not for Matt,
my radical friend who has grown accustomed to peering

down the shirts of women, through Johnny Cash-esque
shades, while hurling feminist thought

like a garter belt.

Tomorrow is my last day in Kalamazoo; but tonight –

tonight we will knot the tight rope of conformity,
that has blurred the line between us and "them"

with some semblance of security. Tonight we will delve
in the business of contradiction, toasting Thoreau

and living Bukowski, because there must be existence
somewhere, amid the realms of the intellectual snob

and popped-collar-polo shirt, alcoholics. It can't be
wrong; this teetering on the cusp of the brain-

trust is so basic that even Ivy League professors cut
rap records and read *People Magazine*.

We sit in the center of a two story fraternity

house, where the dj is scratching glass. The sound barrier

is broken: "I don't want to change the world,
but I need to be that *seed*." The blunt

and Oberon (which resemble assimilation
but taste like freedom), they are leaving him now.

We grab the two closest girls, crush
a break-beat into fine specks of dust,

and when the music stops, the four of us discuss reality
television and Orwell for hours.

On the way out the door,
my date for the evening asks for a pen. I catch her

scribbling series of words on a piece of receipt paper.
She says, "I'm writing a thought; not my phone number."

I look at Matt and nod—
fertilization.