

Notes to Self

2/2/79

This notebook doesn't look familiar because you've just had a shock treatment which wipes out your short term memory. You'll know this is true because you know the handwriting.

You are a student at the conservatory in St. Louis, not Cleveland. The medicines aren't working. Dr. Packman doesn't want you offing yourself.

The fern is from Robyn. Water it. Hide cigs in socks. Everyone steals them here. Mom is sending a copy of Prevention Magazine with an article on psycho-nutrition.

Ray is the rummy player from the fourth floor. His wife is visiting so he might not come by today—very nervous about our relationship.

Father Dan is a schizophrenic who draws flow charts of St. Mary's life. He left me this note on a napkin:

*Dear Lucia, Cool it. Go to bed.
Love, Your Father in Heaven
P.S. Let Dan worry for you.*

2/3/79

Tomorrow you'll be having another treatment. You'll wait with other patients outside the treatment room in gowns. No jewelry, dentures, or gum allowed.

Inside the black rubber mask you'll spiral backward accelerating down a silent drain in the back of your head. Your head, like a magnet to your feet, will arch your back and neck up from the table. You will not feel the shock.

*You'll just forget who you've been.
The opposite of waking is not falling asleep
but being sucked blank.*

*The nurses will help you shuffle to the lunchroom
where your head, a vacuumed hull,
will fall forward into your soup.*