father lawyer, mother actress

your mother performed at the poet’s theater, productions by yeats and merwin and ashbery and ohara

daughter (Danzy Senna) a novelist (wrote CAUCASIA), sister Susan a poet, married CARL

started out your literary life writing pulp novels like VIETNAM NURSE

On going to church: “And I like to be in an atmosphere where people examine one more completely insane vision of the universe.”

“The Lives of a Spirit” Khalil Gibranish,

“Then I think up some things to do before the world ends: 1. Get down on your knees and play. 2. Scrape the air till Heaven appears. 3. Go out and shoot all the violent people.”

You refer to yourself as a bit of a nomad and you’re frequently traveling to give readings, teach, etc—can you talk about that traveling a little bit as a way to live a life? How does it affect the writing?

You’ve talked about always writing with pen and ink, even for your novels, that the pain, even the literal pain of your hand hurting as it writes, becomes part of what you’re writing. I’m interested in that idea and wondered if you could talk about how it works for you a little more

You’ve written, about your writing, that “The sound of each word in relation to the next is what makes meaning for me.” I think this is sort of how it works for me too—I’d love to hear you discuss this more

You talk too about how your poetry defies metaphor, how what you’re writing is “perhaps just the opposite of metaphor, if that is possible.” This idea thrills me; can you talk about it?

SECOND CHILDHOOD

“For the Book”, first poem, begins, “Yellow goblins / and a god I can swallow.” Just one of the most memorable book openings I can remember in ages

Titular poem, “One cruel female said, “Don’t laugh so much. You’re not a child.” / My cheeks burned and my eyes grew hot.”

“I decided to stop becoming an adult. That day I chose to blur facts, fail at tests, and slouch under a hood.”

“the gods and animals pound their way in on a divine night wind”

the poems are almost narcotic, after a few you stop being aware of the actual act of reading, you’re sort of lifted to another space. Is this something you feel in writing them?