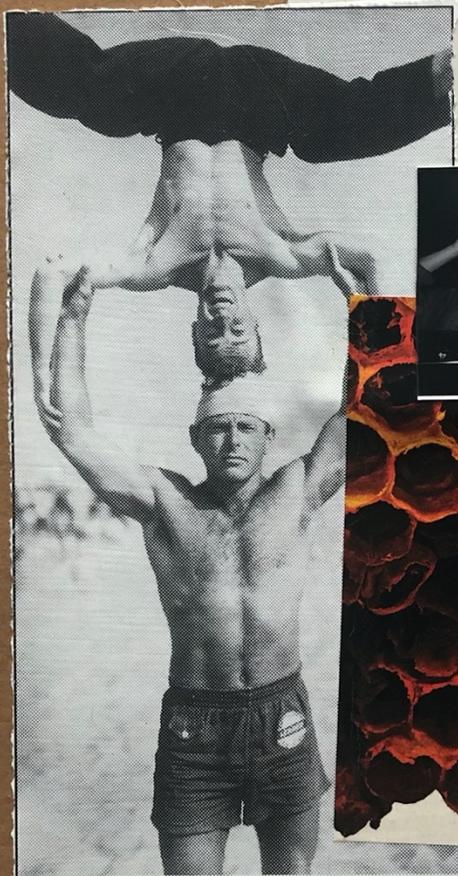


HIVE

Inside this there is no up,
each chamber the exact size
of a thought, big enough
to sleep in. I'm happy
you're here. For these few
moments, head-to-head,
we can feel our thoughts
moving in & out of each other.
Here's one now: we are driving
across country, the country is
America, there is so much I
want to tell you, too much
about what's behind us, not
enough about what's ahead.
We cannot keep our hands
off each other, as if we could
mold each other's bodies into
the shape of this car. This car
is home, the hive is home,
the road is home, your arms
are home, the flickering bulb
in the hallway that needs
replacement, home.



Headstand, Muscle Beach, Santa Monica, California, 1954.
LARRY SILVER



S.A.

MARRIAGE

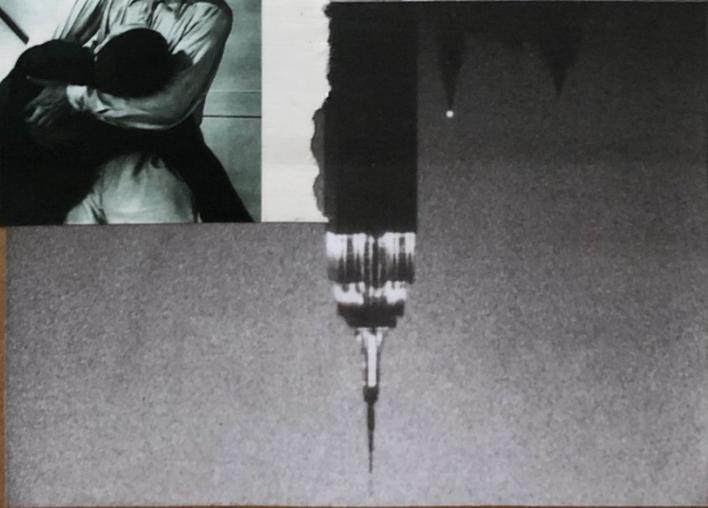
I was married once, at least we thought about it, it was in b&w, we were tiny, walking in a forest, the trees dwarfed us—they had been married forever, moss hung from their fallen branches, we had to step over them. We put on the costumes—*groom, bride*—these are jobs, I realized, that only last a couple hours. Why not try it, what could we lose, we were already deep inside the forest, we were already lost. Marriage was just where the path was heading, I thought it would make us more like the trees, growing closer every year. I wanted you to put your hand out, like the trees, to pull me closer. I wanted all the way in. A child would be the glue. Was it wrong to think of a child as glue? Too late, we were already in our costumes, we'd already had a shower, maybe someone would give us a red toaster. It was just another day to get through, even if it felt like everyone was talking through long cardboard tubes. In the distance, the Empire State Building, no matter where we were we could find a window or a roof & it would be lit up red or blue or green & that would tell us what month we were in. We could even climb it, that's not impossible, & then look back at all the windows we had looked at it through, all over the city,

waking up in strange rooms,
& there it was, waiting. It was,
for awhile, the tallest, & then
for awhile it wasn't, & then it
was again.



BIRDLAND

Life, child, does a number on us,
& this number opens a door. Birds
find their way in—*birdhouse, doll-*
house, dreamhouse—we make
ourselves small so we can fit in-
side. Look out the window over
the sink to that spot beyond the tree-
line where we bring the bones,
far enough from the house so
the rats, always looking, won't
come close. By morning they are
gone, nothing left but the branches
we pile whenever they fall. It's taken
so long for you to see I've been here,
growing beside you, all along, to see
the damage—*leaking*, is the word.
Slipping away. Look up, thousands
of hungry shadows, a migration,
each having come a distance we
call *impossible*, following a river in
the sky we call *invisible*. They can't
mourn us the way we mourn them,
our palms pressed together, made
of light. Do they know that everyone
they love will also die, or do they
forget? The dead, I mean, not the birds.



LA STRADA

La Strada on pay-per-view,
I wanted you

to watch so you'd know
what to expect. In that

room we were two
snakes, teardrops folding in

on themselves, one

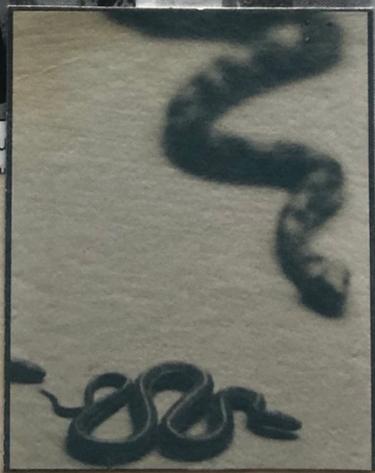
moving toward the other,
everything

hungry . . . as long

as we perform,
we eat.



g up to-a final disillu
ms free and almost u



PING

At the party, you followed me
into the bathroom & asked

to watch as I pissed,

& I left my body & sat on the edge
of the sink beside you,

both of us just
watching. It all happened

so fast. In comic books

you get to see what the cowboy
is thinking

the moment his gun jams,

as the bullets fly around him (one
even PINGS the gun

right out of his hand), a bubble
over his head with a word

inside it.

