

BASIC
BY LUCAS SEIDMAN

RECEPTION

RECEIVE YOUR NEW MODE OF LIVING
BUS FULLS OF AMERICA'S HOPEFUL
POKED, PRODDED, TESTED, LIED TO, LIED ABOUT, TURNED INTO LIARS
—EVER SMOKE MARIJUANA, SON? —
—NO, SIR —
—YOU SURE, YOUNG LADY? —
—YES, SIR —
—EVER USE COCAINE, SON? —
—NO, SIR, WE ONLY DRINK PEPSI IN MY HOUSE —
THAT'S FOUR YEARS OF YOUR LIFE...
—YOU READY TO DIE FOR UNCLE SAM? —
—FOR GOD AND COUNTRY, SIR —
BEND OVER AND COUGH UNDER WHITE LIGHTS
BARE FEET COLD ON HOSPITAL TILE
—STAND UP, LIFT YOUR PENIS —
—EVER GET A SPEEDING TICKET? —
—JUST ONCE, SIR. WAS LATE TO SUNDAY SERVICE —
—WOULDN'T LIE WOULD YOU? —
—FOR GOD AND COUNTRY, SIR! —
HANDS RAISED AND MASS CULT AFFIRMATIONS
THE DEFENSE OF LIBERTY, JUSTICE AND FREEDOM
CONTRACT SIGNED, SIGN YOUR LIFE AWAY
SHAVED LIKE A SPACE CHIMP HEADED ON A ROCKET RIDE TO THE AMERICAN SIDE OF
THE MOON
THE ENLISTED ROLLING OVER AMERICAN RED-BLOODED VEINOUS HIGHWAYS
TOWARD AMERICA'S RED, WHITE AND BLUE THUMPING HEART
TALKING, LONELY
LAST BIT OF FREEDOM
ALREADY MISSING JENNIFER UNDER THE OAK TREE
MISSING GRANDMA'S PIES
MISSING THE WAY ROVER WAGS HIS TAIL AND BARKS WHEN THE FAMILY PULLS UP
MISSING BUDDIES WHO DIDN'T HEAR THE CALL
STILL UNCLEAR WHY THEY DIDN'T HEAR IT
SO LOUD DID THE LIBERTY BELL RING CALLING ALL NEWCOMERS
—SERVICE TRAIN, ALL ABOARD! —
MISSING DANIELLE IN THE BACKSEAT, MOONLIGHT LIKE LASERS THROUGH THE PALM
CANOPY
REMEMBERING HUNTING TRIPS, CAMPING TRIPS
PICTURES OF BIN LADEN, BRUCE LEE ON THE TV JUST IN CASE WE FORGOT WHAT WE
WERE FIGHTING FOR
OR THOSE SCARY RUSSIANS, WITH THEIR NUCLEAR WEAPONS, URANIUM-PACKED
TITANIUM COCK EXTENSIONS
MARCHING THEM TO THE SEA CLIFFS LIKE THE PHALLUS PARADES OF ROME
GOING TO BASIC
GOING TO TRAIN AND SHOOT GUNS FULL AUTO AND BLOW SHIT UP
THAT'S ARNOLD, SYLVESTER, CHUCK, EVERYTHING FROM THE VIDEO GAME
FASCINATIONS OF THE RECTANGLE GOD BOX MADE MANIFEST AT THE BASES THAT HAVE
BECOME FOLKLORE
—MY UNCLE WENT TO BENNING —

—MY GRANDDADDY WENT TO PARIS ISLAND —
—MY DAD DID HIS AIT AT SILL, LEE, GORDON —
—WONDER IF THE SHARK WILL ATTACK —
—WONDER IF WE GET TO SLEEP THE FIRST DAY —
—WONDER IF I'LL GET CUT, SHOOT STRAIGHT, IF THEY GOT MP5S AND CUSTOMIZABLE
ARs —
—WONDER IF I CAN DO ENOUGH PUSH-UPS —
—WONDER IF I CAN DO THE MOST —
BUDDIES MEETING, TALKING ABOUT THE FUTURE
—WHAT JOB DID YOU PICK? —
—FOR GOD AND COUNTRY, SIR! —
—YOUR JOB —
WATER, FUEL, COMBAT, HELICOPTER
BIG PROMISES OF JUMPING OUT OF PLANES, SEEING THE WORLD, GOING TO COLLEGE
—WHY DID YOU JOIN? —
—MY DAD WAS IN THE ARMY, MY UNCLE, MY BROTHER —
WARLIKE GENERATIONS
HEREDITARY RESPONSIBILITY TO DEFEND THE LAND
AMERICAN Ksatriya
—MY GRANDFATHER WAS IN THE NAVY — HE FOUGHT THE NAZIS AT WATERLOO — HE
SERVED WITH PATTON NEAR SAIGON —
—HE EVER KILL ANYONE? —
—OH, HE DIDN'T TALK ABOUT IT —
—I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN —
AND FOCUS DRIFTS TO THE HUM OF THE RUBBER ON THE ROAD AND EYES DRIFT TO
THE FOREST LINING THE HIGHWAY
OUT THERE, AMERICA, LAND OF THE FREE
TIME TICKING
SECONDHANDS TO THE MINUTE THEY REACH THE GATES
EACH YOUNG MAN AND WOMAN TO MEET HIS FATE
AT BOOT CAMP, WHICH THEY CALL BASIC
STILL MISSING MICHELLE AFTER SCHOOL, SMOKING WEED, COLD BUDWEISER
OLD MAN SOMEWHERE IN THE BACKGROUND
— I USED TO BE A TEACHER —
ALL PERK UP
FIRST TIME THEY WERE EVER THIS CLOSE TO ONE
WHAT'S IT LOOK, LIKE WHAT'S IT EAT?
USED TO OWN A BOAT
GENERAL OF THE SWELL
MISSING BIKINI BODIES IN THE SUNLIGHT AND A PACK OF CAMELS A DAY
THE FREEDOM ONE MUST GIVE UP TO DEFEND FREEDOM
TOSS MY SANDWICH IN THE GARBAGE SO I CAN SEW A CROP OF TOMATOES.

—GET THE FUCK OFF THE FUCKING BUS!!! —
HOW THEY RUN FOR GARTH BROOKS IN A SMOKY THE BEAR HAT
WOMEN, ALL OF THEM SUPERMODELS IN SMOKY THE BEAR HATS,
NEVER BEEN SUCH NASTY BITCHES ONE MINUTE AND SUCH WONDERFUL G.I. JANE
WONDER WOMEN THE NEXT
PSYCHOTIC?
NO. BASIC.
—PUSH THE FLOOR! —
BLACK, WHITE, ASIAN
—DO YOU THINK SHE'LL MARRY ME AFTER I FINISH BASIC? —
—FRONT LEANING REST POSITION! —

—WHAT DO YOU THINK SHE DOES IN HER SPARE TIME? —
—SHUT YOUR MOUTH AND STAND AT ATTENTION! —
SMOKY THE BEAR WITH CURVES, LOOKING GOOD ENOUGH TO EAT WITH A SPOON
TOPPED WITH PEANUT BUTTER
TIME TIME TIME, ALWAYS TICKIN'
—600 HOURS UNTIL I CAN EAT A PIZZA AGAIN —
MEN LAUGHING, BANGING ON BARE METAL
ARGUING OVER BASKETBALL FOR THE 10TH TIME
CAN'T REMEMBER WHO THE PRESIDENT IS AS SOLDIERS
CAN REMEMBER WHAT COLLEGE THAT ONE GUY WHO MADE THAT ONE JUMPSHOT IN
THAT ONE GAME THAT NO ONE WATCHED ATTENDED
WORKING OUT PRISON STYLE
LEATHER GLOVES, KILLERS IN TRAINING
PUSHING AND PULLING UP, CRUNCHING
— GET THOSE ABS! —
AND STILL SOMEWHERE IN THE BACKGROUND.
—FUCK THAT BITCH! FUCK THAT BITCH! —
TURNOVER, MORE PUSH-UPS, DIAMONDS
—REFORM! REFORM! REFORM! —
—YOU BE THAT INDIVIDUAL! —
INSPIRES TEAM GROUP
GROUP OF CATTLE
GROUP OF SHEEP, SHEARED DAILY
ZIMBARDO NIGHTMARE
SOCIAL PRESSURE OF CONFORMING TO THE ROLE OF ZOMBIES
BOOT CAMP, RUNNING ENDLESSLY FROM MRE TO MRE
THROW IN CAFETERIA FOOD EVERY NOW AND AGAIN
THE DRAW OF FOOD
ASK HIM IF THEY'LL KILL FOR A DFAC PEANUT BUTTER PACKET AND FRESH WHEAT
BREAD.
—NO, MAN. THAT'S NOT THE GOOD TALK HERE —
AND HONEY PACKETS.
—SOLD —
EIN, SVI, FREI, BOOM!, FIER

GOD MADE MEN
MEN MADE GUNS
GUNS CANNOT MAKE YOU GOD.

DROP YOUR RUCKSACK, ADMIT TO WORTHLESSNESS, OR FOR THE MAN, DROP YOUR
RUCKSACK AND FOREVER BE COUNTED AS A FAG!

—I'M GONNA FUCK YOU UP I SWEAR TO GOD —
TRADES MADE AND PAYMENTS TAKEN FOR SHIT TICKETS, SHIT PAPER
—I NEED SHIT PAPER, YOU ASSHOLE! —
—USE THE BABY WIPES, PEASANT —
AFTER SOME THOUGHT
—GOOD IDEA —
—SMELLS LIKE SHIT IN HERE, SMELLS LIKE ASS, ROTTEN PUSSY, A BAG OF DICKS —
DOES A BAG OF DICKS SMELL WORSE THAN A BAG OF HEADS OR ARE THEY BOTH JUST
PILES OF ROTTING FLESH?
I AM NOT ASHAMED I HAVE A PENIS, NOR SHOULD ANY MAN BE

A MAN WALKS IN CARRYING HIS RIFLE

—I CAN SMELL HIS SHIT! —

—YOU DON'T HAVE TO USE THAT WORD — A MAN OF GOD REMINDS HIM
MEAT FREEZER COLD, ROWS OF STACKED BUNKS, PACKED FULL OF SEEDY MEN,
JUST LIKE THE JAILS, THE ONLY DIFFERENCE INMATES GET TOBACCO PRODUCTS AND
PHONE CALLS

—WHEN I GET OUT OF HERE, I'M ORDERING A PIZZA AND GETTING A CAN OF GRIZZLY
AND A BOTTLE OF LOTION AND HAVING SEX WITH MYSELF —
SHITTING, DIPPING, EATING AND SHOWERING, CYCLIC, AND NOT NECESSARILY IN THAT
ORDER

—DON'T THROW THAT AWAY! MOTHERFUCKER, I NEEDED THAT SHIT! —
MRE IS COMING, STILL BEING PRODUCED, WE GUESS, THOUGH NO ONE CAN GET
AHOLD OF ENOUGH TOILET PAPER TO SERVICE 200 YOUNG ASSHOLES PACKED FULL OF
AMERICAN CASUAL CUISINE THREE TIMES A DAY
PERSONAL REFLECTION, REFLECTING ON INADEQUATE PERSONAL MIRROR HAVING
BEEN SUPPLIED OR AVAILABLE FOR THE WIDESPREAD USE, AND THUS LACK OF
QUALITY PERSONAL REFLECTION

THE MELTING POT SIMMERS AS FOREIGNERS SHARE THEIR LANGUAGES
LANGUAGES OF THE ORIENT, SING TUNES
TWO MEN THREATEN TO FIGHT OVER ONE SLAPPING ANOTHER
SIDEBAR OCCURS

—I'M NOT RACIST. WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME I CALLED YOU A NIGGER OR ANY OF
THAT? —

MALCOLM X IN THE SHORT BED WAKES UP

—WE WILL NOT BE TREATED THIS WAY! —

IN THE COLD NOW

THE SNITCHES HAVE BURNED HIM FOR HIS JACKET

—SHIT SHIT SHIT, TAKE A SHIT, SMELL THAT SHIT, FLUSH THAT SHIT —

SOME DAYS THE ONLY JOB IN THE ARMY IS EATING IN BULK

GOD BLESS AMERICA

CONCERNED ABOUT THE ASSHOLES OF ASSHOLES AT THE DOORSTEP OF ARMAGEDDON
BASIC PROCTOLOGY

COVID-19...

REMINDS ME OF WHEN I WAS 19 I MADE A VID WITH A COED. SHE WAS 19 TOO.
CALLED OUR BED THE CLOUD AND WOULD NAME OUR CHILDREN LATE AT NIGHT WHILE
TYPING ON OUR MATCHING LAPTOPS

THE BED, THE LAPTOPS, THE GIRL...ALL GONE

MADE OBSOLETE BY THE UPDATING OF TECHNOLOGIES

—ECHO COMPANY OUT THERE GETTING SMOKED AGAIN FROM THE WINDOW —

—SHOULD WE WATCH? —

—MAYBE NOT. WHAT IF WE'RE NEXT? —

CHINESE GIRL APPEARS ON CRUTCHES NOW AND WITH EVIDENCE SHE TORE HER FEET
UP DURING THE FORGE

READ ABOUT CHINESE BREAKING THE FEET OF FARM GIRLS AND BINDING THEM TO
KEEP THEM SMALL

WONDER IF THERE'S ANY RELATION TO THESE PRACTICES

WOMEN'S MILITIA FANTASIES

THE REVOLUTIONARY IS NOT GUILTY

—WOULD YOU TRADE ANYTHING FROM YOUR MRE TO SEE HER AGAIN? —

—I'D JUST GIVE AWAY THE TERIYAKI BEEF STRIP —

—AND THE REST? —

KILL KILL KILL!

BLEED BLEED BLEED!

GIVE ME MORE OF MRE!

KILL KILL KILL!

I'VE GOT SKITTLES!

M&Ms!

TWIZZLERS!

YAY!!!

THE CHILD SOLDIERS SING AND DANCE AS THEY BUZZ LIKE TURKEY VULTURES OVER WHO GETS WHICH MEAL FROM THE MRE BOX DROPPED BY THE BULL

UNCLE SAM'S SOUTH CAROLINA FRUM CULT

VEGANS GET VEGAN MEALS

WHINERS ALWAYS GET TAKEN CARE OF FIRST

EVEN OLD MAMMY BACK HOME ON THE FARM USED TO SAY IT, BUT LIKE THIS:

THE SQUEAKY WHEEL GETS THE GREASE

—I NEED YOU TO WIPE MY ASS —

OVERHEARD IN THE BACKGROUND

—FUCK THAT BITCH! FUCK THAT BITCH! —

—DROP YOUR RUCK AND BE RECYCLED —

QUIET FEAR

SPARKS AND HEAT, SMOLDER, METAL, POUNDING, HAMMER, SWEAT, STEEL,

ALL THINGS VALUABLE

ANYTHING THIS TIME BUT SEX

—IF YOU MAKE MY POSITION, I'LL SERVICE YOU IN THE BATHROOM —

HALLS COUGH DROPS LIKE CURRENCY

SMALL, EMPTY WRAPPING PAPER ACQUIRES ON WINDOWSILLS, ON STAIRWELLS NEXT TO 10 POUNDS OF DUST

NOT SAWDUST

DIRT

ACTUAL HUMAN SKIN FLAKES HANGING THICK IN THE AIR

LIKE BAILENE WHALES WHO DRIFT IN THE MIGHTY OCEAN DEEP, SUCKING WATER TO STRAIN IT AND COLLECT WHAT BECOMES LIKE THE CRUD OF NOT BRUSHING

SUCK HARD ENOUGH IN THE MAY BARRACKS AND YOU CAN SCRAPE HUMAN SKIN OFF YOUR TEETH

FEAR OF THE LORD... AND JODI

TWO MEN ARGUING ABOUT WHICH DAY IS BEST TO JERK OFF IN IN THE COMMUNAL SHOWER

ONE CAN'T PICK. CHOOSES ALL INSTEAD.

FEAR ON THE NEWS WE CAN'T WATCH

DISEASE IS SHUTTING DOWN THE WORLD

THE AYATOLLAH IN IRAN

READY TO OPEN DISCUSSIONS OF WORLD WAR III UP AGAIN

NO SHALOM, NO SALAM

AMERICA'S TIRED OF GETTING BUZZED AT BY SCUD

YOUNG MEXICAN YELLING

—YOU CALLING ME A MONKEY?! I'LL FUCKING KILL YOU MAN! —

WHITE BRIGADE COMES TO BREAK IT UP

MORAL ORDER, COHESION

—WE DON'T CALL PEOPLE MONKEYS AROUND HERE, YOUNG MAN —

LETTER WRITING, LETTER READING

ILLITERATES FROM KENTUCKY WITH PENS LIKE SHAKESPEARE

DEAR JANE, DEAR SARAH...

YOUNG MAN, PRACTICING HIS AIM WITH ISSUED M4A1

PRIVATE OSWALD

BEWARE THE NEXT PRESIDENT OF THE SIN OF CUTTING THE DEFENSE BUDGET

EIN, SVI, FREÍ, FEAR
TURNS TO THE BUNKS
LETTERS TOO MANY TO MOMMY AND GRANDMA, TO MARY
MEN GETTING 40 WINKS IN 40 MINUTES SPRAWLED NEAR ONE ANOTHER
BLACK, WHITE, MEXICAN
NO ONE CARES ABOUT COLOR WHEN YOU'RE THIS MISERABLE
GUMS FLAPPING ABOUT NOTHING WHICH IS EVERYTHING AFTER TIME SPENT ON THE
LINE
YOUNG MAN STANDS IN A GROUP OF MEN, FRESH SHAVEN SHAMPOO TESTING SPACE
CHIMPS
—STOP CALLING ME A SKINHEAD! —
MEN ON SUNDAY CONTEMPLATE THE MERIT OF THE KJV VERSUS THE GIDEON VERSION
MINIATURE OLD TESTAMENT OFFERED AT PROCESSING,
WITH DIFFERENT CAMOUFLAGE COVER FOR EACH SERVICE
— I LIKE THE THOU AND THINE BETTER —
— IN CADENCE! —
MEN ARGUE AT NIGHT OVER WHO'S TALKING, TALKING LOUD
NINE WEEKS SEMI-FOCUSED ON SEMI-AUTO AND THE HOW TO OF FIGHTING WITH IT ON
THE FUTURE FRONT LINES
—FRONT LEAN REST POSITION! —
NO ROOM FOR HOPE
NO CHANTS FOR PEACE
—FRONT LEAN REST POSITION! —
30 SWEATY MEN AND WOMEN, MUSCLES SWOLLEN, SHAKING FROM STARING AT THE
CONCRETE FLOOR IN THE WINTER
ONE ASSHOLE CACKLES WITH AN EVIL, CROOKED GRIN
ADDRESSES ALL THE MEN THAT LEFT SWEET JENNY AND MARY AT HOME
—JODY IS FUCKING ALL YOUR WOMEN RIGHT NOW —
THE ANGST, THE WHORE!
TRAPPED WITH NO CELL PHONE ON FRIDAY NIGHT DREADING 10 MILES IN THE RAIN
TOMORROW.
—JODY GOT YOUR GIRL BEGGING FOR DICK —
OUT IN THE COLD, BLOWING DRAGON'S BREATH
THE SMOKER OF CIGARETTES SLEEPING IN A FOOT OF WATER
—JUST ONE DRAG MAN —
—JODY IS IN YOUR GIRLFRIEND'S BED RIGHT NOW AND THEY ARE WARMMMM.
THEY'VE BEEN DRINKING AND SMOKING CIGARETTES NEXT TO A FIRE ALL NIGHT —
NO SHOWER FOR DAYS
—JODY GOT HER IN A HOT TUB FILLED WITH BUBBLES —
FOURTH DAY OF COLD HAMBURGER PATTIES
—SHE'S WITH JODY AT THE OUTBACK – JUST HAD PRIME RIB – HEADED HOME FOR
DESSERT —
SOME CAN'T STAND THE VOICE OF REASON, CONTEMPLATE HOW TO KILL HIM IN THE
NIGHT.
—GET OFF THE PHONE WITH HER — FROM THE GALLERY:
—SHE'S ON HER WAY TO JODY'S RIGHT NOW THEN STRAIGHT TO HER KNEES —
—FRONT LEANING REST POSITION! —
RUNNING OUT OF TOILET PAPER
DISEASES BRING THE WORLD DOWN
TWO MEN MAKE A MISSION TO ANOTHER FLOOR
THIEVES IN THE NIGHT
TOILET PAPER FOR ALL
THE BULLS GET WIND
—FORM UP ON THE LINE! —

—ARE YOU ARE EYEBALLING ME, PRIVATE?! —
FRONT LINE SWEATY MEN AND WOMEN
AMERICA'S FINEST SQUIRMING ON THE GROUND LIKE SEIZURE VICTIMS IN THE A.M.
SEE ANOTHER DROP
—GET THE FUCK UP! —
NEW FAVORITE WORDS
—HOW ARE YOU? —
—GET THE FUCK UP! —
STILL GIGGLING
—SHUT THE FUCK UP! —
SOMEWHERE BETWEEN TASKMASTERS AND HITLER UNTIL THE BULLS COME TO
SCATTER LEADERSHIP LIKE LIGHT SCATTERS COCKROACHES
—YOU DON'T RUN SHIT HERE MOTHERFUCKERS! —

THE GREAT SONG PLAYS
FEET BLISTERED, BONES WORN, DIRT IN PLACES YOU CAN'T FIND IN A TEXTBOOK
DRILL SERGEANT SHOWS UP LATE IN RUNNING MASCARA
WAS OUT CELEBRATING FOR THE TROOPS LATE INTO THE MORNING
BRADLEY BUSHWOMAN, ARMY STRONG
BRADLEY URINALS IN THE ESCATAWPA BOATS
MY DRILL SERGEANT IS CLOSE TO COCK IN OVER 200 COUNTRIES EVERY DAY
WHERE THE ARMY IS STILL WINNING
THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF GODLESS GOAT-HERDERS
ONE DAY LITTLE AZIZ AND MALIK WILL TAKE THEIR DATES HALF DRUNK ON ZIMA TO
BASKIN-ROBBINS AND SCORE IN THE DUNES JUST BEYOND TOWN
LEVANTINE LOVERS LANE
—SHE WENT ALL THE WAY, BROTHER —
THANK A SOLDIER SOMEWHERE
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT
AND WHERE'D HE LEARN IT
FORCE GENERATION UNITS GENERATING FORCES SINCE THE DAYS OF THE BARON VON
STEBEN — ERIN GO BRAGH —
AT IET, WHICH MOST PEOPLE CALL BOOT CAMP
WHICH OTHERS SIMPLY CALL
BASIC