

*We had plans to go to a football game. I saw the potential for so much more with our time together. In hindsight, maybe I should have listened to the old 'less is more' adage. I sprang to life. I would need a tent, 200 helium-filled balloons, a trumpet, and as many pigeons as I could find before Friday...*

Somehow, you can do all this and find a stack of 48-hour turnaround printed postcards in only the spare change of a few days. It was all very clear how all those pigeons, that trumpet, the 200 helium balloons, communicating with strangers, and the backdrop of the city all seemed a perfect idea. You see, this project was to be a meditation on how we become who we become. Inspired by the drawing my father had shown me as a young boy, my early art project was titled 'Who I will be when I grow up.' In place of a doctor or lawyer, I drew San Francisco. Decades later, I moved to San Francisco on what I thought would be a layover and stayed for decades. With my father coming to visit, it seemed all too perfect to create a project on this with San Francisco as the backdrop to the art action. I couldn't help myself with the sonnets and soliloquies of poetry that seemed to be drawing some grand serendipitous circle and oneness of being with the universe. Everything felt suddenly symbolic. However, it was

all yanked back to reality by, uh, chaos math, or romantic talk waxing poetic aside, a raccoon who ate my pigeons, which, as it turns out, were technically doves but certainly unimportant now because they were a mess of feathers and blood. This dove murder mixed with a photographer who couldn't show up due to an emergency he somehow knew of before it happened. In the end, these pictures were ours for what was left of the beautiful moment, dead doves, and a flaking photographer be damned, this was the alchemy, our lead to gold, or our lemons to lemonade, depending on which morale-lifting idea you prefer, or perhaps it was our free doves flying out of a cage that ended up as dead doves in a basket. One can't be sure what message that raccoon was trying to send me by ruining my art project, but what is for sure, is that we all went and got a beer afterwards and at least that much made sense. -hughleeman.com