

I go out Walking after Midnight
color ink jet print, 2014

Teen Angel
color ink jet print, 2014

The Case of the Baffling Bug
color ink jet prints, 2014

Wishing and Hoping
color ink jet print, 2014

Shoot Me
color ink jet print, 2014

Sh-boom
color ink jet print, 2014

Cover designed by Lucy Kirkman Allen
with permission from the artist

2014

Serendipity: Williams House
Onemo, Virginia

Twilight Time

Text by
Joe Allen

Works by
Joe Allen

Self Printing 2017

Airprint Press
Part of The Airplant Project
Directed by Justin Hunter Allen and Lucy Kirkman Allen
www.airplantproject.org

Artwork © Joe Allen
Text © Joe Allen 1992
Photography and book design © Lucy Kirkman Allen

Airprint Press encourages sharing of our books. You have limited permission to reproduce this book. You may reproduce and share this book solely in full form and unedited. No derivative works are authorized. You may not use this book for any commercial purposes. For any other uses, contact Airprint Press for permission.

Airprint Press

Mary Magdalene
(Or Tales From the Texas Plains)
Chapter 1

The Pope didn't want to go to Texas. He wanted to die with the paintings. He led Mary into his bedroom, his ragged vestments dragging the marble floor. He knelt before her. The sound of rocket fire shook the walls. Flares exploding over St. Peter's Square lit the room. "You've got to go," he said, "the fix is in. You're the only one I can trust."

She stood with one hand on his thin shoulders, the other caressing his balding head. "I know," she said. "His death is critical to the plan. From now on it's a race. We'll work together as usual, but in the homestretch I'll pull the trigger."

"It has to be done," he said. "He knows too much. He knows the secret. He knows art doesn't make anything happen. If it gets out, we're all in deep shit."

"I'll make some tea," she said.

"Orange pekoe?" he asked.

"If you like," she said.

Fade in:

LONG SHOT - MUFLIN, TEXAS - TWILIGHT

CLOSE SHOT - OMEGA MOTEL - ROOM 21

Mary Magdalene dreamed. She had little choice in the matter. It was something she did every night; she went to sleep and dreamed. She rubbed her nose, a large hooked one, and rolled to the other side of the bed.

There was a problem with Mary Magdalene's dreams. They leaked. Leaked into the lives of other people. Unknown to them, her dreams trickled into their minds, altering their ability to affect change. Putting things forever out of place.

Place (plac), n. 3. A portion of space occupied by a body; hence, proper or assigned position, time, or character; as, everything is in its place.

On May 14, 1992 a momentous event in the history of art took place. A sleazy motel in a small West Texas town exhibited a painting by a dead Italian artist. The artist's name was Caravaggio. The painting's name was The Entombment. It was not the original, of course. The original had been damaged by smoke and fire. But restorers had taken great pains to recreate this masterpiece, and some say it is better. Some say it better approximates the artist's original intent.

Caravaggio's Entombment is his most admired altarpiece. Carefully designed diagonals starting at the abandoned, out flung arms of the two Mary's at the upper right, fan, sway and descend to the horizontal of Christ's body and the stone, whose corner seems to project into our space. The dramatically highlighted gestures, faces, and bodies correspond to the flow of light from the high right-hand window of the chapel, which was the main source of light. (1)

Light (lit), n. 1. The essential condition of vision; the opposite of darkness; as an illumination from a light giving body; as, flames give light.

The room was hot and black. Naked, the Old Man turned on the bed to feel something next to him, movement, he sweats, feeling; he looks at his feet, varicose veins, uncut toenails, nothing there, he turns back, bitter taste. He wipes the sweat from his face. This was a matter of choice. He was completely free to sit on the floor, let the sweat run down his face, cascade down his nose and drop between his legs. He chose to watch Mary Magdalene. What did he see? He peered through a hole in the wall carefully carved with his pocket knife.

Silk panties. She wore only sheer silk panties. Just tight enough to give a nice little snap when pulled out by a finger and then released. The thin flesh on her eyelids danced - back and forth. Mary mumbled next to her pillow. Her breath sucked the material up and gently pushed it down, causing it to moisten slightly. The Old Man heard an insect pop on the bug light hanging in his bathroom.

The Vatican was burning. It was a recurring dream and one she never grew tired of. The smell of cadmium and flesh poured through the streets. A squadron of F111s, afterburners glowing bright orange, strafed the eastern edge of the city. The liberation had begun. Precision bombing of the cultural centers followed an artillery attack on military targets. Thousands of Sony 4000 video cameras pointing in every direction embedded the four pillars that stood guard to the museum entrance. Mary turned on her pillow and blinked. Rapid-eye motion picture bombs exploded over baroque facades. She passed the museum entrance and slipped in the door at the east entrance and walked down a long corridor toward the painting. Two men, poised, ready to drop the body of a pale muscular man in his grave. Three women moaned as Mary Magdalene watched the corpse come to life and struggle to free himself from the picture.

"Either put me in that hole or let me go," he told them.

"You know we can't let you go," they all cried. "The painting would lose all its meaning. Forfeit its goals."

"We've already lost our meaning. We're completely out of context. People don't care anymore; they've got new fish to fry."





He jumped from the picture and ran down the hallway, dropping lit matches over heaps of trash; matchbooks - Vatican Museum - have a different day; torching piles of Caravaggio's, Guido Reni's, Al Pacino, Michelangelo, Mussolini. Mary Magdalene tried to follow him - to warn him, but he had nothing left to lose; he was basically fucked anyway. He walked into the men's room and tried to remember why he had died. Then he remembered. He had pissed-off a lot of people. His hands shook as he fumbled for a pack of Marlboro Lights. There were seven left. He took a long, long piss, adjusted his loincloth, and climbed out the window. He ran down the alley dodging gunfire and rocket explosions. An old woman was firing an AK47. He grabbed her arm.

"Did you see what happened?" he said. "When I died. Who was there?"

"I don't know," she said, "but there were a lot of them and they were really angry."

"There were a lot of them who loved me."

"You were basically out of place, you know. Bad timing. Call back later."

Mary Magdalene rolled over, sighed, and continued to sleep.

The earth is located in the solar system. Much like West Texas, it is a big empty place that contains various scattered living things. There are nine known planets plus a variety of smaller bodies, among them comets and asteroids, all orbiting the sun.

















