

**SIMEON BERRY**

**The Doppelganger as Guidance Counselor**

All day long they struggle in and out, their sentences  
smudged with pot, THC shorting out major plot points  
like a sizzling logo flashing *Ingest at Joe's!* One told him

she had *the fuckin' ennui* but was taking pills to clear it up.  
The doppelganger looks down at the insectoid scribble  
of algebra that is Arlen's greatest worry, after his mother

trying to sell his gold-plated pendants on Third Street.  
Aren't they all word problems? *If Marlina decides  
that crystal meth is best stored in her birth control case,*

*how many Tuesdays will elapse before she realizes  
head trauma is not aerobic activity?* He has some  
spider plants. They are supposed to inspire trust, and are

silent but alive nonetheless, like teenagers, which is why  
his office is known as *The Hanging Gardens of Dorkylon*.  
High-schoolers believe no one else in all of history

has ever used a textbook to express their rage at being  
carbon-based and deriving nonspecific sexual pleasure  
from animal crackers. His bow-tie is based on ancient

Assyrian texts and protects him against all 400 known  
variants of sarcasm. He cannot tell them they are alike,  
but different, so often he has no choice but to say,

*You were born to Middle America in great confusion  
and escalating limerick rates. You will never understand  
that Prussian and Russia are not satisfying rhymes,*

*and will often think there are tiny red machines  
in your spine that eat good thoughts. You are best suited  
to study either Neuter Astronomy or Advanced Frippery.*