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Assemblage

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Assemblage

by Peter Desy

Some toss all their family photographs in a drawer, I arrange mine in chronological order, from two years old to sixty-five. There is row after row of inactivity; some have more or lesser light. In the older ones a consciousness of a peering camera; in later ones a consciousness of avoidance. In a few, a contemporaneous look, the subject caught off guard. But even then, the photographer is the theme. I scan the stilted images of myself, try to take several in by fast panning with my eyes to see if some continuity can be detected. But each frame is a concluded act—no coherence, no maturation, no blurring of the edges. I pick one up at random and ask, What was he thinking then? Here's a boy about fifteen with his *Detroit Times* paper bag around his neck. He's so dead I can't even remember him, or want to. Here's one in which I'm about fifty-five; but he's only paper thin, another lie if lies are instantaneous moments that promise to be restored. The spaces between the pictures are dark square holes almost everything has fallen into.



Photograph by Joel Kendall

