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The Norman Conquest

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The Norman Conquest

Jesse Stanton

I found a cassette: last words I'd left—holding "record" after Annie died while fearing death. If English has "Old English," then I guess I have "Old Beth."

It's queer anachronistic archaic words, like "rad" or "bummer," while missing idioms not yet uncovered. Words that make people say "That's Beth"

all started somewhere. "Clearly," came from Jessica, "count it" from Joel, little sips of Spanish from the cherry-girl who taught a word a day (some stayed).

English managed, long ago, to envelop its invaders' tongues, patiently distressing them, a hot iron pressing flat their lingual folds.

My words, like English's, are not my own—my tongue, the sum of conquerors.