



## WORKS

### **So Many Incredible Gehennas!: Anti-Blackness and the Ruse of Safety** TACKY (2023)

*"This boat is your womb, a matrix, and yet it expels you. This boat: pregnant with as many dead as living under sentence of death."*

*Edouard Glissant*

A man was killed on the F train earlier this month. He was hungry, exhausted. Meager in frame and lean in muscle. He yelled in a subway car and some of the passengers thought it best to subdue him instead of hearing his pleas. Witness accounts hover around something about hollering, "I want food!" while throwing his belongings on the floor in demand that his pleas be heard. A tiny fragment of Best and Hartman's "black noise" butting up against the sense and rationality of those not born of any void. Basic necessities are undeserved for the absolutely impoverished but death is surely on the table for the black ones.

His capacity to commit harm is immaterial to me at this point. His level of danger is minuscule in the face of a non-black anxiety's dedication to its own preservation, always against the inherent danger of a boisterous blackness. They all strangled him. Everyone in that car. A few pairs of hands at his feet and one pair of arms around his neck, but even the witnesses were willing participants. The city of New York released the man's criminal record, as they always do. They needed to establish their bedrock for when the justifications came flooding in, as they always do. "He was dangerous, he threatened me, I feared for my safety.": claims never forced to appeal to the reality of those threats nor with the boundaries of some imagined safety because blackness is always this monstrous object the world needs to be protected from.

A man was killed at 4th and Market at the end of last month, outside of a Walgreens. I don't know if he was hungry and I'm not sure of his exhaustion levels. But I know he was killed over stuff, things. There was a scuffle in the store that led outside. It was essentially finished and the man left, followed by the security guard who pulled out his gun and shot him. Over, in the guard's mind, an alleged theft. The outpouring of grief and anger from the city of San Francisco was minimal in comparison to what happened to Jordan Neely. Part of me thinks it's because Banko Brown was a trans man. The mundanity of black death is extrapolated

