

## **questions and subtle evasions**

### **how do you pronounce your name?**

cinadr... (sin nah dur) it's a czech name, what was still bohemia when my great grandparents immigrated to cleveland. it's not shortened and it seems it's a rather uncommon name.

### **so why is everything lower case?**

frankly, i like the way it looks, there's a symmetry to lower case letters on a page, a sort of humble posture and a kind of simple beauty. the practicality of it is it informs you straight out that this isn't ordinary prose, it's something else, a long drawn poem or a song to sing out, and that you need to read it accordingly. i want to dictate the rhythm with punctuation and not have it influenced with the emphasis put on capital letters. my stories are extensions of my journals, seeds that come to me on the road, in the quiet of trees, thoughts i'll text myself or scribble on a scrap of paper and stuff in my small pocket, daydreams and memories, the riddle-me-ree of me, none of that is capitalized...

### **when did you start writing?**

i was a latchkey kid and an only child. it was okay with my parents for me to come home from school alone, but it was not okay to be outside to play, that somehow made sense to them. consequently, i spent a lot of time alone in the house, in my head. at a really young age i'd sing songs for hours until they came home, songs i'd hear on the car radio from the back seat. i wouldn't know the words, so i'd make up my own words, rhymes and rhymes and rhymes. i don't think i started writing anything down until the start of high school. i was making my way through the local public library's list of classics

the summer before eighth grade, i was the right age for “catcher in the rye,” but he was just a punk rich kid to me, a character and a world i couldn’t possibly relate to. but then there was “gatsby.” my mind was blown, granted it was also about affluence, but it was an outsider looking in, it was beautiful, a world you could just reach, but not quite hold, which made it all the more beautiful. i started thinking that i wanted to write and write something like that.

### **who were your influences?**

growing up, poets and writers came from some other place, not cleveland, not this neighborhood, this was a working town. morrison and townshend and springsteen were my poets, they read the beats, so i read the beats, that was the real beginning.

### **you’ve worked a lot of jobs, what was your favorite?**

picking up garbage was probably my favorite, even more than the concert security- bodyguard gigs. it was the hardest work i’ve ever done, as this was the old days when you rode on the back of the truck and had to physically pick up everything, and i mean everything, people threw out. the things folks put in the trash is beyond imagination, if you can think of it i threw it into the back of a “packer,” that’s a garbage truck. an upright piano, dead animals, like people’s pets, dogs and cats, porno mags, kinky bondage stuff, sex toys, a disassembled car... i think the hard work was sort of enlightening and absolutely satisfying, a continental divide, like it became a part of me and i would forever be different this side of it. i started that summer a skinny kid and came out the other end twenty pounds heavier, a green branch you could bend and never break. i gained a respect from the full timers who otherwise hated the part-time college kids who they saw as soft, rich kids. they were. i certainly wasn’t that. the negative is it just further alienated me

when i went back to school, i was an entirely different creature from anything on a college campus.

### **...and the weirdest?**

digging graves and looking after the cemetery is probably outside the majority of people's experience. most of the time we were just mowing grass, but there were occasional funerals, which meant there were plots to dig and frame and caskets to lower and eventually cover. it was an old cemetery up on a hill outside of town with crooked, worn headstones from the early 1800s and the weather would turn and every stephen king horror movie would start playing in my head. sometimes i'd be up there alone topping off fresh graves as the dirt would settle and i can't say i wasn't looking over my shoulder every other second.

### **is your book a true story?**

no... but the best lies are rooted in the truth. the incredulous things, they're true. the everyday, mundane stuff is made up.

### **why should i read your book?**

the writing. i know it's not for everyone, maybe not even for most, but it was my aim to write something beautiful about something that isn't beautiful at all, but a part of, unfortunately, a number of people's experience growing up in broken bottle homes and thrown stone houses. our relationships with our parents are unavoidable and complex and often perilous, and maybe this book can validate your questions. i wouldn't be so bold as to say i have the answers, it's "there seemed a river," it's hard to know anything, we're probably best left to believing.