

Dispatches from the End of History

Adam Gibbs

1991

Someone had changed the channel, this wasn't our usual Sunday night viewing. I remember the faint outline of buildings washed in night vision green, an ominous tint my generation would grow used to. Suddenly, the screen went violently, blindingly white, as if a bulb had burst within the TV. The adults in the room inhaled sharply but no one spoke. Even at six years old, I knew something had changed. "This war is gonna be easy," someone finally said.

2001

There's something different about the drone of plane engines overhead now, some imperceptible menace, terrible echoes that never fully recede. That creeping fear when a stranger looms over your shoulder in a crowd, that vague dread that rises when the engines fire for takeoff. You can't quite put your finger on it, but it's there, something you can't quite trust about an impossibly blue September sky.

2020

A day is coming when cable news won't break in for mass shootings because they've become regularly scheduled programming. A day is coming when you can experience a terrorist attack through your VR goggles, when you can cast your ballot via text while shopping for Christmas presents on Amazon. A day is coming when islands disappear under water, when this sinking planet will leave us no choice but to take the high ground in an argument nobody can win.

Adam Gibbs is a writer and poet from Grove City, Ohio. His debut novella, *Dumb Luck*, is available from Unsolicited Press. He lives with his wife Lindsay and their children, Clara and Isaac.