

# You Don't Have to Read This

*by* John Olson

I get it. Poetry is an effort. Language is an effort. Words are an effort. Reading words is an effort. A big effort. It takes energy. Attention. Focus. Who has that? Nobody. So truly. I mean it. You don't have to read this. If you're already reading this you can stop. You don't have to continue. Go do something else. These words excuse you. I excuse you. This isn't important. It's not going anywhere important. I have nothing to say. I have nothing to convey. Go make jello. Go fishing. Build a kite. Raise a kid. Have sex. Take a shower. Brew a beer. Bake cookies. Get drunk. Go to college. Learn how a differential equation can be represented as a linear operator acting on  $y(x)$  where  $x$  is usually the independent variable and  $y$  is the dependent variable. In this instance  $y$  is a finishing school,  $x$  is a perturbation, and the result is a Mexican hairless. But if you're still reading, if you've come this far, I'm impressed. You are among the truly committed. And by that I don't mean to imply that you need to be committed ha ha, but that your attention is quite amazing. I wish I had more to offer you. An image, for example. Picture Wyoming. There. I did it. I created an image. Wyoming. Do you see it? The hills? The buttes? The rocky outcrops? The ponies racing toward the horizon? The trucks barreling down I-80 toward Rock Springs? And to think. All I said is Wyoming. And there's Wyoming. Do you see how easy it is? To create things with words? But unless you can get someone to come and read the words you put down they just sit there. They don't go anywhere. There is no Wyoming without someone to read Wyoming. To imagine Wyoming. To see Wyoming in your mind. To feel Wyoming in your soul. Thank you. Thank you for reading this far and sharing Wyoming with me. Thank you Wyoming. Thank you language. Thank you words. Thank you syntax. Thank you logic. Thank you illogic. This has been rewarding. And now it's time

to get up and do something else. Play a guitar. Get famous. Stand on a stage. Scream into a microphone. Hop up and down.

