# Artesk SemiCondensed

About Artesk

Designed by Valentin Brustaux, Artesk (formerly Artex) brings the neo-grotesque program into the realm of variable fonts. Simplified forms temper its strict geometry, giving it a distinctive graphic language where modernist efficiency meets contemporary technology. Its name nods to the grotesk lineage it belongs to.

Brustaux set out to design a typographic tool that would perform equally well in static text blocks and in motion graphics. He researched thoughtful, rational shapes that would optimize transitions between the extreme widths and weights of the program. Within its overarching architecture, Artesk incorporates modular, symmetrical forms. They sharpen it in static uses and streamline its transitions as a dynamic font. The result is a distinctive aesthetic that stays recognizable whether set large in print or animated on screen.

Artesk is an extensible program, engineered in a variable format and as 72 static fonts. It covers every width from Compressed to Extended and every weight from Hairline to Black. Each style includes 29 alternate glyphs, which bring versatility to its visual vocabulary and add dimension to any project.

→ Second release in 2026
→ First release in 2022

Designed by Valentin Brustaux

Valentin Brustaux lives and works in Zürich, Switzerland. He studied typography at the University of Reading, United Kingdom, successfully earning a master's degree in typeface design in 2007. Brustaux has worked for many type companies, including Adobe, Monotype, Optimo, and Tiro Typeworks, and for various western and non-Latin typographic projects (Cyrillic, Greek, Kannada and Telugu). From 2014 to 2021, he taught graphic and type design at the École romande d'arts et communication (Eracom) in Lausanne. One of his most notable projects is the typeface Tiina, which was released by the late foundry Ourtype and received the Type Directors Club Certificate of Excellence in Type Design in 2008, as well as the Swiss Federal Design Award in 2010. Brustaux has regularly collaborated with Optimo since 2012 and now manages client accounts and licenses.


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Artesk SemiCondensed Regular
246 pt




Artesk SemiCondensed Hairline/Italic
105 pt







Artesk SemiCondensed Light/Italic
105 pt







Artesk SemiCondensed Regular/Italic
105 pt







Artesk SemiCondensed Medium/Italic
105 pt







Artesk SemiCondensed Bold/Italic
105 pt







Artesk SemiCondensed Black/Italic
105 pt








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Artesk SemiCondensed Regular
242 pt

Sem

Artesk SemiCondensed Family
12 Styles

Artesk SemiCondensed Hairline
*Artesk SemiCondensed Hairline Italic*
Artesk SemiCondensed Light
*Artesk SemiCondensed Light Italic*
Artesk SemiCondensed Regular
*Artesk SemiCondensed Italic*
Artesk SemiCondensed Medium
*Artesk SemiCondensed Medium Italic*
Artesk SemiCondensed Bold
*Artesk SemiCondensed Bold Italic*
Artesk SemiCondensed Black
*Artesk SemiCondensed Black Italic*

Artesk Variable SemiCondensed

Artesk Var SemiCondensed


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Uppercase
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Lowercase
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Standard Punctuation
.:,;…-–—_()[]{}¡i!¿¿?‘’“”‚„'"‹›«»/\|¦•·@

Symbols
&%‰©®℗™°§¶*†‡#№

Standard Ligatures
fi ffi fl ffl ff

Discretionary Ligatures
ꝛu ꝛi ꝛf ꝛt ꝛv ꝛw ꝛy

Proportional Lining Figures
0123456789

Slashed Zero
0

Mathematical Symbols
+−±×÷=≠≈<>≤≥¬∞~^µ∫Ωπ∂Δ∏Σ√◊

Currencies
$¢£¥€ƒ¤

Fractions
¼ ½ ¾ ⅛ ⅜ ⅝ ⅞ 12345⁄67890

Numerators
H0123456789abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz()[].,=−+

Denominators
H0123456789abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz()[].,=−+

Superscript/Superiors
H0123456789abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz()[].,=−+

Subscript/Inferiors
H0123456789abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz()[].,=−+

Ordinals
Hao

Arrows
←→↑↓↖↗↘↙

Accented Uppercases
ÀÁÂÃÄĀĂÅǺĄÆǼĆĈČĊÇĎĐÈÉÊĚËĒĔĖĘ
ĜĞĠĢĤĦÌÍÎÏĨĪĬİĮIJĴĶĹĽĻŁĿŃŇÑŅŊÒÓÔÕÖŌ
ŎŐØǾŒÞŔŘŖßŜŠŞȘŤŢȚŦÙÚÛÜŨŪŬŮŰŲ
ẀẂŴẄỲÝŶŸŹŽŻ

Accented Lowercases
àáâãäāăåǻąæǽćĉčċçďđèéêěëēĕėęĝğġģ
ĥħìíîïĩīĭıijĵķĺľļłŀlńňñņòóôõöōŏőøǿœŕřŗßśŝš
şșťţțŧùúûüũūŭůűųẁẃŵẅỳýŷÿźžżŋðþ

Stylistic Alternates
aaɑgbdhmnpqruBDEFGGMNPQR145@&

Language Support

Afrikaans, Albanian, Asu, Basque, Bemba, Bena, Breton, Bosnian, Catalan, Chiga, Colognian, Cornish, Croatian [Latin], Czech, Danish, Dutch, Embu, English, Esperanto, Estonian, Faroese, Filipino, Fijian, Finnish, Flemish, French, Friulian, Frisian, Galician, Ganda, German,Gusii, Greenlandic, Hawaiian, Hungarian, Icelandic, Inari Sami, Indonesian, Irish, Italian, Jola-Fonyi, Kabuverdianu, Kalaallisut, Kalenjin, Kamba, Kikuyu, Kinyardawanda, Latin, Latvian, Lithuanian, Lower Sorbian, Luo, Luxembourgish, Luyia, Machame, Makhuwa-Meetto, Makonde, Malagasy, Malay, Maltese, Manx, Maori, Meru, Morisyen, Moldavian, North Ndebele, Nothern Sami, Norwegian Bokmål, Norwegian Nynorsk, Nyankole, Oromo, Portuguese, Polish, Quechua, Provençal, Rhaeto-Romanic, Romanian, Romansh, Romany, Rombo, Rundi, Rwa, Samburu, Sango, Sangu, Sámi [Inari], Sámi [Luli], Sámi [Northern], Sámi [Southern], Samoan, Scottish Gaelic, Sena, Serbian [Latin], Spanish, Shambala, Shona, Slovak, Slovenian, Soga, Somali, Swahili, Swedish, Swiss German, Taita, Teso, Tagalog, Turkish, Upper Sorbian, Uzbek, Volapük, Vunjo, Walser, Wallon, Welsh, Western Frisian, Wolof, Zulu


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Optimo Latin Extended
Character Set

Adobe
· Adobe Latin-1

Apple Macintosh
· MacOS Roman (Standard Latin)
· MacOS Central European Latin
· MacOS Croatian
· MacOS Iceland
· MacOS Romanian
· MacOS Turkish

ISO 8859
· 8859-1 Latin-1 Western European
· 8859-2 Latin-2 Central European
· 8859-3 Latin-3 South European
· 8859-4 Latin-4 North European
· 8859-9 Latin-5 Turkish
· 8859-13 Latin-7 Baltic Rim
· 8859-15 Latin-9
· 8859-16 Latin-10 South-Eastern European

Microsoft Windows
· MS Windows 1250 Central European Latin
· MS Windows 1252 Western (Standard Latin)
· MS Windows 1254 Turkish Latin
· MS Windows 1257 Baltic Latin

Encoded Glyphs
· Basic Latin
· Latin-1 Supplement
· Latin Extended-A
· Latin Extended-B
· Latin Extended Additional

OpenType Features

OFF

ON

All Caps [cpsp]

Case Sensitive Forms [case]

This function formats the text in uppercase and adjusts spacing between all capital letters. It also applies the ‘Case Sensitive Forms’ feature which replaces certain characters with alternates that are better suited for all capital text, especially related to punctuation.

All Capital

(278) «Optimo»
hi@xyz.ch

H@I¦()[]{}¿¡‹›«»–—–·

ALL CAPITAL

(278) «OPTIMO»
HI@XYZ.CH

H@I¦()[]{}¿¡‹›«»–—–·

Tabular Lining Figures [tnum–lnum]

Proportional Lining Figures [pnum–lnum]

Tabular Oldstyle Figures [tnum–lnum]

Proportional Oldstyle Figures [pnum–lnum]

This typeface includes lining and small figures available in tabular or proportional spacing formats. Lining figures have an invariable height and aligned to the capitals height, comparatively to small figures who are slightly smaller. For contexts in which numbers need to line up such as columns or tables, the tabular setting is perfectly adapted as all numerals width is uniformized. Proportional setting generates numerals suitable for text; each number has an appropriate width based on its shape.

H0123456789
H0123456789
H0123456789
H0123456789

H0123456789
H0123456789
H0123456789
H0123456789

Contextual Alternates [calt]

This feature adapts the position of a glyph after its surrounding context. For instance, a dash placed between two uppercase letters or numbers will be replaced by an uppercase version of the dash, slightly higher. This feature is usually active by default in Adobe applications.

A-B–C—D 1–2

A-B–C—D 1–2

Standard Ligatures [liga]

Standard ligatures replaces a sequence of characters with a single ligature glyph, they are designed to improve kerning and readability of certain letter pairs.

ff ffi ffl fi fl

ff ffi ffl fi fl


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Fractions [frac]

With this feature, any numbers separated by a slash will automatically turn into a fraction. To fit in fraction configuration, numerals have been designed smaller and their weights have been adjusted to suit the typeface.

1/2 1/3 2/3 1/4
3/4 3/8 5/8 7/8

½ ⅓ ⅔ ¼
¾ ⅜ ⅝ ⅞



Ordinals [ordn]

This feature replaces any letter following a numeral with its matching superior letters. French language uses the ordinal indicators such as ‘er’ for 1er premier, while Spanish, Portuguese and Italian require the feminine and masculine ordinals ‘a,’ ‘o’ for 1º, 1ª. Ordinals are designed to match the weight of the typeface.

2a 2o 1er

2ª 2º 1er



Slashed Zero [zero]

Originally created to avoid the confusion between the ‘0’ and the ‘O’, this feature substitutes all zeros in a selected text by a slashed form of the zero.

0 o

Ø ø



Numerators [numr]

This feature substitutes glyphs with their matching smaller alternates. The numerators are the same glyphs that are used to create fractions, their vertical position remains within the capital letters height. These glyphs are reduced in size and designed slightly heavier to keep them consistent with the rest of the font.

H0123456789–+=
Habcdefghijklmno
Hpqrstuvwxyz()[].,

H⁰¹²³⁴⁵⁶⁷⁸⁹⁻⁺⁼
Hᵃᵇᶜᵈᵉᶠᵍʰⁱʲᵏˡᵐⁿᵒ
Hᵖᑫʳˢᵗᵘᵛʷˣʸᶻ()[].,



Denominators [dnom]

This feature substitutes glyphs with their matching smaller alternates and low position glyphs. The denominators are the same glyphs that are used to create fractions, their vertical position remains within the base line. These glyphs are reduced in size and designed slightly heavier to keep them consistent with the rest of the font.

H0123456789–+=
Habcdefghijklmno
Hpqrstuvwxyz()[].,

H₀₁₂₃₄₅₆₇₈₉₋₊₌
Hₐbcdefghijklmno
Hₚqrstuvwxyz()[].,



Superscript/Superiors [sups]

This feature substitutes glyphs with their matching smaller alternates which are set slightly above the height of the capital letters. These glyphs are reduced in size and designed slightly heavier to keep them consistent with the rest of the font.

H0123456789–+=
Habcdefghijklmno
Hpqrstuvwxyz()[].,

H⁰¹²³⁴⁵⁶⁷⁸⁹⁻⁺⁼
Hᵃᵇᶜᵈᵉᶠᵍʰⁱʲᵏˡᵐⁿᵒ
Hᵖᑫʳˢᵗᵘᵛʷˣʸᶻ()[].,



Subscript/Inferiors [subs]

This feature substitutes glyphs with their matching smaller alternates which are set slightly below the baseline. These glyphs are reduced in size and designed slightly heavier to keep them consistent with the rest of the font.

H0123456789–+=
Habcdefghijklmno
Hpqrstuvwxyz()[].,

H₀₁₂₃₄₅₆₇₈₉₋₊₌
Hₐbcdefghijklmno
Hₚqrstuvwxyz()[].,


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Stylistic Set 1 [ss01]
Alternate letters and figures

This feature replaces glyph(s) with stylistic alternate(s).

abdghmnpqu145
BDEFMNPQR&@
abdghmnpqru145
ĎĐÈÉÊĚËĒĔĖĘŃŇÑŅŊ
ŔŘŖàáâãäāăåǎąæǽ
ďđĝğġģĥńňñņŋùúûũü
ūŭůűųþ

abdghmnpqu145
BDEFMNPQR&@
abdghmnpqru145
ĎĐÈÉÊĚËĒĔĖĘ
ŃŇÑŅŊŔŘŖàáâãäāă
åǎąæǽďđĝğġģĥńňñ
ņŋùúûũüūŭůűųþ



Stylistic Set 2 [ss02]
Standard Serif a

The activation of both features replaces glyph(s) with stylistic alternate(s).

a
àáâãäāăåǎąæǽ

a
àáâãäāăåǎąæǽ



Stylistic Set 3 [ss03]
Standard Single-storey a

The activation of both features replaces glyph(s) with stylistic alternate(s).

a
àáâãäāăåǎąæǽ

ɑ
àáâãäāăåǎąæǽ



Stylistic Set 4 [ss04]
Alternate a

This feature replaces glyph(s) with stylistic alternate(s).

a@
àáâãäāăåǎąæǽ

a@
àáâãäāăåǎąæǽ



Stylistic Set 5 [ss05]
Standard r

This feature replaces glyph(s) with stylistic alternate(s).

r
ŕřŗ

r
ŕřŗ



Stylistic Set 7 [ss07]
Alternate g b d p q

This feature replaces glyph(s) with stylistic alternate(s).

gbdpq
ĝğġģďđþ

gbdpq
ĝğġģďđþ



Stylistic Set 8 [ss08]
Alternate h m n u

This feature replaces glyph(s) with stylistic alternate(s).

hmnu
ĥńňñņŋùúûũüūŭůűų

hmnu
ĥńňñņŋùúûũüūŭůűų



Stylistic Set 9 [ss09]
Alternate capitals

This feature replaces glyph(s) with stylistic alternate(s).

BDEFMNPQR
ĎĐÈÉÊĚËĒĔĖĘ
ŃŇÑŅŊŔŘŖ

BDEFMNPQR
ĎĐÈÉÊĚËĒĔĖĘ
ŃŇÑŅŊŔŘŖ



Stylistic Set 10 [ss10]
Alternate figures 1 4 5

This feature replaces glyph(s) with stylistic alternate(s).

145145$^{145}$

145145$^{145}$



Stylistic Set 11 [ss11]
Alternate G

This feature replaces glyph(s) with stylistic alternate(s).

G
ĜĞĠĢ

G
ĜĞĠĢ


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Stylistic Set 12 [ss12]
Alternate G

This feature replaces glyph(s) with stylistic alternate(s).

| OFF | ON |
|---|---|
| G<br>ĜĞĠĢ | G<br>ĜĞĠĢ |



Stylistic Set 12 [ss12]
Alternate Q

This feature replaces glyph(s) with stylistic alternate(s).

| OFF | ON |
|---|---|
| Q | Q |



Stylistic Set 18 [ss18]
Small symbols ©®℗

This feature replaces glyph(s) with stylistic alternate(s).

| OFF | ON |
|---|---|
| ⓒ ⓡ ⓟ | © ® ℗ |



Stylistic Set 19 [ss19]
Small arrows

This feature replaces glyph(s) with stylistic alternate(s).

| OFF | ON |
|---|---|
| ←→↑↓↖↗↘↙ | ←→↑↓↖↗↘↙ |



Stylistic Set 6 [ss06]
Lowercase math symbols

This feature activates alternate lowercase positioning of mathematical symbols.

| OFF | ON |
|---|---|
| 4–7×8<br>up+down<br><br>H+±×÷−=≈≠≤≥¬∞ | 4–7×8<br>up+down<br><br>H+±×÷−=≈≠≤≥¬∞ |



Stylistic Set 20 [ss20]
Multiply sign

This feature substitutes the letter “x” into the multiplication sign.

| OFF | ON |
|---|---|
| 32x50 cm | 32×50 cm |



Discretionary Ligatures [dlig]

This feature activates discretionary ligatures which are specific to the typeface. It applies all other designed ligatures that are not classified as standard ligatures.

| OFF | ON |
|---|---|
| -> <-<br>ru ri rf rt rv rw ry<br>rrf rı rí rî rï rì rī rį rť rţ rú<br>rû rü rù rű rū rų rů rŵ rý | → ←<br>ru ri rf rt rv rw ry<br>rrf rı rí rî rï rì rī rį rť rţ rú<br>rû rü rù rű rū rų rů rŵ rý |


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Artesk SemiCondensed Hairline
60 pt

The car was a boxy late model Ford sedan, white

Artesk SemiCondensed Hairline
36 pt

The car was a boxy late model Ford sedan, white over black, innocuous bordering on invisible, and very fast. It had been a sheriff's vehicle

Artesk SemiCondensed Hairline
24 pt

The car was a boxy late model Ford sedan, white over black, innocuous bordering on invisible, and very fast. It had been a sheriff's vehicle originally bought at an auction in Tennessee, and further modified for speed. Perry and I listened to the big engine idle, checked the dual scoops on the hood. I had

Artesk SemiCondensed Hairline
14 pt

The car was a boxy late model Ford sedan, white over black, innocuous bordering on invisible, and very fast. It had been a sheriff's vehicle originally bought at an auction in Tennessee, and further modified for speed. Perry and I listened to the big engine idle, checked the dual scoops on the hood. I had not seen one of those on the road since high school. "You like the car?" Perry asked. "It's all right," I said, my eyes ahead. "I've never been much of a Ford man." Perry shifted in his bucket, "You know something about cars? For city cruising, it'll do." I spent my childhood in Riverdale, New Jersey, thirty miles north from long, narrow Manhattan Island, which sits in the bay, among other islands, outcroppings, flatlands, like a silhouette of a right whale navigating a rocky passage; on the area map, among blank-faced formations, all like itself colored


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Artesk SemiCondensed Hairline
12 pt

The car was a boxy late model Ford sedan, white over black, innocuous bordering on invisible, and very fast. It had been a sheriff's vehicle originally bought at an auction in Tennessee, and further modified for speed. Perry and I listened to the big engine idle, checked the dual scoops on the hood. I had not seen one of those on the road since high school. "You like the car?" Perry asked. "It's all right," I said, my eyes ahead. "I've never been much of a Ford man." Perry shifted in his bucket, "You know something about cars? For city cruising, it'll do." I spent my childhood in Riverdale, New Jersey, thirty miles north from long, narrow Manhattan Island, which sits in the bay, among other islands, outcroppings, flatlands, like a silhouette of a right whale navigating a rocky passage; on the area map, among blank-faced formations, all like itself colored yellow for density of population, it lies like a smelt in a pan. In the old days, Riverdale was a lumbering town. No one who lived in it was out of sound of the big saws in the mill by the lake. Then one year there were no more logs to make lumber. But you may

Artesk SemiCondensed Hairline
10 pt

The car was a boxy late model Ford sedan, white over black, innocuous bordering on invisible, and very fast. It had been a sheriff's vehicle originally bought at an auction in Tennessee, and further modified for speed. Perry and I listened to the big engine idle, checked the dual scoops on the hood. I had not seen one of those on the road since high school. "You like the car?" Perry asked. "It's all right," I said, my eyes ahead. "I've never been much of a Ford man." Perry shifted in his bucket, "You know something about cars? For city cruising, it'll do." I spent my childhood in Riverdale, New Jersey, thirty miles north from long, narrow Manhattan Island, which sits in the bay, among other islands, outcroppings, flatlands, like a silhouette of a right whale navigating a rocky passage; on the area map, among blank-faced formations, all like itself colored yellow for density of population, it lies like a smelt in a pan. In the old days, Riverdale was a lumbering town. No one who lived in it was out of sound of the big saws in the mill by the lake. Then one year there were no more logs to make lumber. But you may never have heard of Riverdale. Nothing happened really there. It was a small and ugly town. The city had come back to me in a dream. Rising up through the tranquil sleep of a warm May evening in the noisy and busy New York, the reverie left in its wake a delicious sense of peace. All cities begin as a point of activity, usually a harbor,

Artesk SemiCondensed Hairline
8 pt

The car was a boxy late model Ford sedan, white over black, innocuous bordering on invisible, and very fast. It had been a sheriff's vehicle originally bought at an auction in Tennessee, and further modified for speed. Perry and I listened to the big engine idle, checked the dual scoops on the hood. I had not seen one of those on the road since high school. "You like the car?" Perry asked. "It's all right," I said, my eyes ahead. "I've never been much of a Ford man." Perry shifted in his bucket, "You know something about cars? For city cruising, it'll do." I spent my childhood in Riverdale, New Jersey, thirty miles north from long, narrow Manhattan Island, which sits in the bay, among other islands, outcroppings, flatlands, like a silhouette of a right whale navigating a rocky passage; on the area map, among blank-faced formations, all like itself colored yellow for density of population, it lies like a smelt in a pan. In the old days, Riverdale was a lumbering town. No one who lived in it was out of sound of the big saws in the mill by the lake. Then one year there were no more logs to make lumber. But you may never have heard of Riverdale. Nothing happened really there. It was a small and ugly town. The city had come back to me in a dream. Rising up through the tranquil sleep of a warm May evening in the noisy and busy New York, the reverie left in its wake a delicious sense of peace. All cities begin as a point of activity, usually a harbor, and settlement concentrically grows around this point in increasingly wider rings. Manhattan is unique in its shape and circumstances and in its growth, which resembled a thermometer. Riverdale had no center, just Main Street. Bad weather would come in one day when the fall was over and would stay for the six following months. I prayed for my dead dog, but I didn't pray when Emily died. God would make an exception. He would let her into Heaven. In the early summer of my fourteenth year a lorry pulled up outside our house. I was sitting on the front step rereading a comic. The driver came toward me, covered in a fine, pale dust, which gave his face a ghostly look. "Cement," he said. It's not that I was being shy. It was just that—well, for one, I don't even

Artesk SemiCondensed Hairline
6 pt

The car was a boxy late model Ford sedan, white over black, innocuous bordering on invisible, and very fast. It had been a sheriff's vehicle originally bought at an auction in Tennessee, and further modified for speed. Perry and I listened to the big engine idle, checked the dual scoops on the hood. I had not seen one of those on the road since high school. "You like the car?" Perry asked. "It's all right," I said, my eyes ahead. "I've never been much of a Ford man." Perry shifted in his bucket, "You know something about cars? For city cruising, it'll do." I spent my childhood in Riverdale, New Jersey, thirty miles north from long, narrow Manhattan Island, which sits in the bay, among other islands, outcroppings, flatlands, like a silhouette of a right whale navigating a rocky passage; on the area map, among blank-faced formations, all like itself colored yellow for density of population, it lies like a smelt in a pan. In the old days, Riverdale was a lumbering town. No one who lived in it was out of sound of the big saws in the mill by the lake. Then one year there were no more logs to make lumber. But you may never have heard of Riverdale. Nothing happened really there. It was a small and ugly town. The city had come back to me in a dream. Rising up through the tranquil sleep of a warm May evening in the noisy and busy New York, the reverie left in its wake a delicious sense of peace. All cities begin as a point of activity, usually a harbor, and settlement concentrically grows around this point in increasingly wider rings. Manhattan is unique in its shape and circumstances and in its growth, which resembled a thermometer. Riverdale had no center, just Main Street. Bad weather would come in one day when the fall was over and would stay for the six following months. I prayed for my dead dog, but I didn't pray when Emily died. God would make an exception. He would let her into Heaven. In the early summer of my fourteenth year a lorry pulled up outside our house. I was sitting on the front step rereading a comic. The driver came toward me, covered in a fine, pale dust, which gave his face a ghostly look. "Cement," he said. It's not that I was being shy. It was just that—well, for one, I don't even remember the event. It's a blank: a white slate, a black hole. I was able to date the occasion with complete certainty because that afternoon I had been sledding with my lifelong friend and enemy, Perry Boy, and we had quarreled, because his new Christmas sled would not go as fast as my old one. Snow was never heavy in our part of the world, but this Christmas it had been plentiful enough almost to cover the tallest spears of dried grass in Mountain Side Park. The following day, my dog was dying. I brought her water and food and placed them near her, stood watching intently—but she didn't move. The car was a boxy late model Ford sedan, white over black, innocuous bordering on invisible, and very fast. It had been a sheriff's vehicle originally bought at an auction in Tennessee, and further modified for speed. Perry and I listened to the big engine idle, checked the dual scoops on the hood. I had not seen one of those on the road since high school. "You like the car?" Perry asked. "It's all right," I said, my eyes ahead. "I've never been much of a Ford man." Perry shifted in his bucket, "You know something about cars? For city cruising, it'll do." I spent my childhood in Riverdale, New Jersey, thirty miles north from long, narrow Manhattan Island, which sits in the bay, among other islands,


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Artesk SemiCondensed Hairline Italic
60 pt

*The car was a boxy late model Ford sedan, white*

Artesk SemiCondensed Hairline Italic
36 pt

*The car was a boxy late model Ford sedan, white over black, innocuous bordering on invisible, and very fast. It had been a sheriff's vehicle*

Artesk SemiCondensed Hairline Italic
24 pt

*The car was a boxy late model Ford sedan, white over black, innocuous bordering on invisible, and very fast. It had been a sheriff's vehicle originally bought at an auction in Tennessee, and further modified for speed. Perry and I listened to the big engine idle, checked the dual scoops on the hood. I had*

Artesk SemiCondensed Hairline Italic
14 pt

*The car was a boxy late model Ford sedan, white over black, innocuous bordering on invisible, and very fast. It had been a sheriff's vehicle originally bought at an auction in Tennessee, and further modified for speed. Perry and I listened to the big engine idle, checked the dual scoops on the hood. I had not seen one of those on the road since high school. "You like the car?" Perry asked. "It's all right," I said, my eyes ahead. "I've never been much of a Ford man." Perry shifted in his bucket, "You know something about cars? For city cruising, it'll do." I spent my childhood in Riverdale, New Jersey, thirty miles north from long, narrow Manhattan Island, which sits in the bay, among other islands, outcroppings, flatlands, like a silhouette of a right whale navigating a rocky passage; on the area map, among blank-faced formations, all like itself colored yellow*


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Artesk SemiCondensed Hairline Italic
12 pt

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***The car was a boxy late model Ford sedan, white over black, innocuous bordering on invisible, and very fast. It had been a sheriff's vehicle originally bought at an auction in Tennessee, and further modified for speed. Perry and I listened to the big engine idle, checked the dual scoops on the hood. I had not seen one of those on the road since high school. "You like the car?" Perry asked. "It's all right," I said, my eyes ahead. "I've never been much of a Ford man." Perry shifted in his bucket, "You know something about cars? For city cruising, it'll do." I spent my childhood in Riverdale, New Jersey, thirty miles north from long, narrow Manhattan Island, which sits in the bay, among other islands, outcroppings, flatlands, like a silhouette of a right whale navigating a rocky passage; on the area map, among blank-faced formations, all like itself colored yellow for density of population, it lies like a smelt in a pan. In the old days, Riverdale was a lumbering town. No one who lived in it was out of sound of the big saws in the mill by the lake. Then one year there were no more logs to make lumber. But you may never have heard of Riverdale. Nothing happened really there. It was a small and ugly town. The city had come back to me in a dream. Rising up through the tranquil sleep of a warm May evening in the noisy and busy New York, the reverie left in its wake a delicious sense of peace. All cities begin as a point of activity, usually a harbor, and settlement concentrically grows around this point in increasingly wider rings. Manhattan is unique in its shape and circumstances and in its growth, which resembled a thermometer. Riverdale had no center, just Main Street. Bad weather would come in one day when the fall was over and would stay for the six following months. I prayed for my dead dog, but I didn't pray when Emily died. God would make an exception. He would let her into Heaven. In the early summer of my fourteenth year a lorry pulled up outside our house. I was sitting on the front step rereading a comic. The driver came toward me, covered in a fine, pale dust, which gave his face a ghostly look. "Cement," he said. It's not that I was being shy. It was just that—well, for one, I don't even remember the event. It's a blank: a white slate, a black hole. I was able to date the occasion with complete certainty because that afternoon I had been sledding with my lifelong friend and enemy, Perry Boy, and we had quarreled, because his new Christmas sled would not go as fast as my old one. Snow was never heavy in our part of the world, but this Christmas it had been plentiful enough almost to cover the tallest spears of dried grass in Mountain Side Park. The following day, my dog was dying. I brought her water and food and placed them near her, stood watching intently—but she didn't move. The car was a boxy late model Ford sedan, white over black, innocuous bordering on invisible, and very fast. It had been a sheriff's vehicle originally bought at an auction in Tennessee, and further***


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