Déjà Vu

—Corey Plover

A new class is about to start, and not really feeling like more sleep you get up to go. Outside you’re surprised to see the lecturer pacing up and down the corridor, apparently deep in thought. Not wanting to be forced to justify your irregular sleeping habits, you try to pass by unnoticed.

One foot outside the exit, you are stopped in your tracks by a voice calling out your name. Swivelling around, your lecturer is stiding towards you, flourishing a folded banknote, of unseen denomination. “Is this yours? You must have dropped it?” You’re pretty sure you hadn’t dropped anything, but diplomatically you end up replying “I don’t think I’ve seen it before, but if it’s just been dropped it’s probably mine.” The lecturer looks at you disapprovingly. “Tut tut. You should have said that it wasn’t yours, but that you nevertheless had a vague notion that you’d seen it before.” You find yourself starting to apologise, but the lecturer cuts you off. “Tsk tsk. Don’t apologise. Take the money. Always take the money.” You gratefully accept, and shuffle away before things get even stranger.

Safely around the corner and out of sight, you wait for a gaggle of blonde cheerleaders discussing the latest Hollywood gossip to strut past, before gingerly unfolding the note, eager to see how many lunches you’d just bought yourself. The note is a genuine $20 bill, but that is not what interests you as you hold it up to the light. The note appears at one stage to have been used as substitute paper, for on it someone has jotted down some information, written in the form of two separate lists.

As you study each one, and re-read them, you find yourself thinking of sacred common names.

Decorative ball of fluff  
Christmas cracker  
High kicking dance  
Wife of Son Goku  
Bird of prey  
Male reproductive glands  
Expanding bullet  
Small antelope  
Reject with contempt  
Cylindric drum with no snare  
North African semolina dish  
Marshall BraveStarr’s horse  
French Polynesian island  
*Top Gun* spoof  
Large oblong yellow fruit  
Calculus

Chess piece  
Dog (slang)  
Fastens  
Fragment  
Government takeovers  
Kazakhstani journalist  
One-fifth of a gram  
Owl calls  
Parched  
Particle  
Rip  
Russian assembly  
Shade of blue/green  
Smoking device  
Sonnet  
To ride on handlebars (slang)