

The Recluse



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The Poetry Project

Untitled, People on Train

I am looking at you look at her looking at that person over there because I am done looking at the person myself. I turn to you because the seat to your right is emptying. If I move to that seat, I believe I will see things more clearly. This train stops and the force of braking propels us all forward. I reach out for the pole at the same time that you reach out and become mesmerized by the ring on your middle finger. We lurch forward. I ask to try it on. I take off my metallic to understand yours more fully. In the place where yours was is now mine. The woman I thought was vacating her seat is still preparing her things for departure; so we continue to lean with our rings crossed. The brake releases and the ride resumes—the woman did not get off. Maybe next stop. You are looking at me look at you observing me when the train becomes crowded, when I have to sift through crotches to keep this up. The tunnels we pass through. A woman has fainted since the train stopped moving and all air was consumed, but the queue is too thick for her to fall down, so she is leaning against the pole. I put my foot perpendicular to the back of her shoes to keep her leaning northward. A woman asks the fainted one to “get off my gown.” I have your ring and you have mine. A second woman asks the fainted one, “What stop is this?” The fainted one having decided against crowds and tight spaces and loss of air rejects this stalled train and I want to help her. But it’s not possible for us to meet. You have forgotten yourself and now there’s a spot of wet on your shirt; you’ve cocked your head unconsciously. Had you asked me,

I could have helped you. Now you are hypnotized and I have to wait. It's easy: they are speaking Russian, except the one on the right who's deaf. You are fluent in sign language so read the signs easily. But the odd trill that the other two emit is inscrutable. It is a bilingual conversation; you are a monolingual host. The fainted one has returned, to the relief of the impassives tired of looking the other way. I move my foot. She gives a nod of appreciation then hands me section A of her newspaper. She's kind, but clearly doesn't want to discuss the act further. I am looking at you look at him looking at me trying to keep a blush from purpling my face. Your eyes are hungry. When I turn to see his looking-at-me for myself, the train brakes dramatically and the newly awake woman hands me a t-shirt (not the one she's wearing). It's the t-shirt of my dreams: yellow, half-cotton, half-polyester. The gesture clearly shames the impassives. They regret they hadn't been extraordinary. The awakened one seems to possess more than she needs—she offers me her metro card. I am watching a family watch the rapidly articulating deaf girl as she drills her counterparts on some urgent matter. A homeless man watches me drop seventy cents into his cup. "Here is your ring," I say, but to the wrong person. It is not you, but you were wearing a green jacket—I am sure. However, this green jacket won't accept the ring. It says, "Please keep that away from me," as if the ring triggers an allergy. He is looking at me observe the allergic one because he also thinks she's the one who gave it to me. The impassives seem to gesture

my being owed this disappointment. Looking at me directly. The train pulls into a station so smoothly that the doors open and close before most passengers notice. Too many hands reach for the emergency brake—it doesn't work. I am looking at you deciding to be the ring-giver. Yet you haven't counted on my seeing you. You hesitate and thereby reveal your fear and desire. The impassives read it and moan at the celebration between us. Titles of Zane returning to faces. This time the train's horn pounds through the tunnels, seeming to indicate that it won't stop. We have become express. But the voice that was to alert us of that fact did not come in time. You are watching the deaf girl watch the Russian women form conclusions about us—understanding our game of rings. I am watching the formerly fainted one read the anxiety on your face then nod with complicity. Whew. The white people are getting off: bye bye fainted one (ring-bearer?). Now we are all black. Ah. The train moves smoothly. I'm infinitely more calm. Well...why are the impassives still looking at me? We all should rest now. Oh...it's the metallic scene: they think something is wrong with me. I should have stayed tough when the train lurched instead of mixing with ofay people. Instead of giving that girl my ring. I stand when we reach Atlantic so Granny can have my seat. "God bless you"—she almost hands it to me—looking at them look at her looking at me.

Renee Gladman

English For You I

I am not going to begin to tell you how
to conduct yourself in this conflagration
but have you ever considered that neither
the clods below nor the clouds above
are getting any younger, and the right
balance of oils, jellies, and powders might be
Just the soporific your cerebral cortex requires
to begin absorbing the sliding calculations
occupying larger and larger portions of the sky
so that there is almost nowhere left
that has not considered any one of us,
And where does that leave us in this landfall
amidst hollows and swellings, layers of smoke
settling softly on the broken ponds

English For You 5

Ten Things You Should Remember

A shampoo and shave is not the same as taking a public bath, even though they are on the same street as the Provincial Government.
To take a bath you have to go to a public bathroom, which is constructed differently than a public toilet.
The best public toilets are tucked away in hotel lobbies.
You can eat in a hotel, even if you don't sleep there, and you can sleep in a hotel, even if you don't eat there.
Yesterday they opened a power plant in the green hills.
They also opened many schools where you cannot see them.
Are you an auxiliary predicate or an associate adjective?
Please hang up and wait for the roof to close.
He's a reporter, foreign correspondent, manager of military telephones. He wears a hat. He's hungry and dirty.

English For You 7

Let's say the sky is gray, but all that is gray today
is a woman walking into town with a pink envelope
pressed against her right cheek. Let us say
she is a sophomore in the Military Academy
but she no longer remembers the words of her
high school anthem. Let us say every afternoon
between two and four there is a telescope for rent.
Let us say "barracks," "trenches," "storeroom
for drugs," and "wounded soldiers' amusement club."
Let us say that she has never been to Finland.
Let us say that it is only by an accident of history
that we tend to call both languages by the same name.
Let us say refrigerated noise has been invented.
Let us say we remember all the I's and you's who perished
in the Great Pronoun Wars of the last century.

English For You 9

Are you transmitting your past life
or are you being reintroduced to it?
Blossoms released in a labyrinth.
Skirt or stand, boast of or glory in,
priceless or precious. When the remains
remain an impudent thickness or cheeky density,
a conspicuous element in a chest of drawers
marked "National Policy or Hidden Premise,"
one cannot forfeit posthumous invoices,
testaments or legacies still need to be sprung
or rejected, bribes or trades igniting a shudder
or blackened rustle, perhaps a loss of money
or stolen inheritance, a collapse or stampede,
denunciations to sell in the market, purchased wholesale,
overestimated.

Screen Name

John Yau is calling, his name has come up on the screen of my cell phone. This makes me uneasy because I am John Yau, and I would like to believe that I am always answering to myself. I decide not to press the green button and see if the caller will leave a message. Since he has my name, and I his, maybe he knows what I was thinking when the phone started vibrating in my shirt pocket, pressed up hard against my nipple, my hands thrust in my pockets, and the air tingling. The shaking subsides, but no envelope indicating that I have received a message floats toward me. I fold up the phone and put it back in my breast pocket. It is Wednesday, and the long-necked geese have started returning to the chimneys of my hometown.

After I realized that I must be the only one who thinks of a cell phone as a cell phone, and not as an efficient means of achieving a heightened spiritual state, I wondered how many friends would tell me the true purposes to which they put their cell phone, and if any found it to be an efficient instrument of physical satisfaction. I decided to call my friends and ask them if they have used or know of anyone who has used a cell phone as a vibrator.

Since the advent of the electric toothbrush, the idea that a common household object could be used to achieve sexual satisfaction of at least the second rank is not a completely foreign particle entering imagination's petri dish. This hard oblong shape, some with extensions, could have been used in a variety of other ways, but I want to limit the scope of my research. There could be a new definition of phone sex that hasn't become part of our patois.

Might not the following scenario have already transpired countless times in places like Pompeii, Illinois, and Gutenberg, Kansas?? Sheila has gotten out of the shower and, after vigorously drying herself off with her new deep pile purple towel, placed her red cell phone in the appropriate position. After punching a series of buttons, she leans back in her Mies Van Der Rohe recliner, and waits for her favorite daytime romance to come on, a show that is broadcast from an island and therefore not subject to the same restrictions governing similar shows broadcast from places closer to her modest tract home. It is a little past nine in the morning, and Sheila is waiting for her boyfriend Tyson to call, as he does every morning whenever he is away on business.

Standing at a different latitude and longitude is Tyson, who has just jammed his cell phone deep into his pants' pocket. It is Thursday and he is waiting for Sheila to call him, as she does every Thursday that he is away. He is alone at the bus stop, trying to remember which bus will carry him to his destination. He is unsure if he should go north, towards the industrial park, its tasteful array of gleaming towers, or south towards the new amusement center, its computer managed drums of centrifugal force. The sun seems brighter than yesterday, when he was closer to the equator. His phone begins vibrating, slowly at first, and then faster and faster and faster. He is no longer sure what conditions prevail in the time zone that he has entered. Suppose it is Thursday only here, and it is not Sheila who is calling, but his brother who will ask him for a non-refundable loan, or someone from work, checking to see if he has his papers in order. He is glad that he got his and Sheila's phone customized. He was happy to have commissioned a friend of a friend whose specialty is ermine cell phone pouches. His phone keeps becoming agitated, as if its mission remains unaccomplished. Doesn't he have an appointment to meet someone? Isn't he supposed to meet a man by the name of John How or Chow? He is unsure of how to pronounce the man's surname, which sounds simple but a competitive co-worker or jealous underling might have set a trap. Even though it is past noon, he decides he must call Sheila, who has had more experience with the pitfalls one encounters when dealing with foreign names.

A cell phone in another time zone begins vibrating and vibrating. A hand moves it to another location.

John Yau

The Dogs of Dirk Bogarde

What if I present myself to them
to quietly and agreeably confer
with happiness subtle, fingers fretted with gold wired
minimal theorization of minimum approach
or tired openly fighting
following low tufty path through the apartment-hedge.
I do not continue in truth adrift
without any effortful existence
then make it scarcely
of their play and their avoidance

In wood and feld and dale and dun, in woods
and to fields, both in field and forest, from
all directions, like a tilework
what I saw was their beau dictation
where parts grouped together at the faucet
like a shadow divine neutral
coloration work at the larynx drowsing

I spoke then as a dog that with the pale flowers groweth in the meadows
and into the game of speech
They are stretched in every street
tumescant splay-foot poodles
Pradaesque-asked: do you have
—like Sir Osbert—
gout? (in the baroque)
or rather mannerist
brought in the earnest olden
and familial atomic
blues

for a pint of honey
pours out
a gallon of gall
for a dram of pleasure
weighs as
a pound of pain
for an inch of mirth
enters
an ell of moan
shakes its collar
as ivy doth an oak
for a man to look for happiness
as fetch it
for whatever laurel is not different
sports a puffed helmet
or what happened to animals in a Europe
philosophically dying what happened
to the animals of Europe

(I
with obscurity, meditation, perfume, etcetera
with slowness and prudence, with seriousness
and accuracy and success industrially with complicity
and glut them with irremedial love while you were dying
and dryness, with disinterest and seduction and despoilment and
obscurity
with resplendence and accuracy
with reality
with accuracy
address)
the byproducts
as an object clinamen

They are the twenty-seventh of twenty-nine Lucretian proofs of the
mortality of the soul;
Techniques are stylistic.

This query meanwhile
with intervals loosened my jail-breaking sensation
without any effortful bothering
no Marxian sequence
what if I present to you—flick
the love
philosophically the sexual congress with men's languages
to the maybe there is no such things as a female situation
I won't get used to it
being embellishment illusions
laughing

One of the humans said in his summer
You are not
The emergency of money.
A human said do you do Topiary?
As another absurdist-farcial-tragical
I did this gravely.

It was the spring of my 35th year

of raising a transnational believing class
said raising the imagining animal
or how not to break
after the ghostly simultaneous last ragged
manifesto in breath preens
flat tires of old American cars
and change breaks my heart.

The key-print of a dignity
The key-print of a dignity

Cassavetes in seventy-five describes the pact of caritas
as well as the natural history of the idea of guts
its trodden colored bits
in broken asphalt alleys running creeklike

what is world but its screen tightly laced by
a hunger become worthy of turning
founded blame or sparkling befriended feminine
stray Roman dogs
the dogs of Dirk Bogarde
—what I'll call this—
understand
some slackened war

That the sense of the personal
permitting maximal referential variability
a nerve or less
enters poems using, so familiar and scandalous
utopia
chaotically histo-
arcadia
mimetically
there was scented sauntering
Homeric flowers, privilege legendary next
excellent tender
—into two equal portions—
botanical writings—their leaves slightly drying—

II

The animals of Europe went into a movie by Visconti and became people.
You have to hate them and their beauty also, their
Maquillage and bias-cut
thinking.

The wood is out. We're burning
Bark. O please send the animals back. I will put them
In a band dessine
Read on the train
By a boy in a red sweater
Smelling of griffons.

They are living in their rotting chateaux like we lived in wood cabins. Piranesi drew them
living this way but some of them don't know Piranesi. They have no water and where do
they wash their dishes. Their animals are delirious with all the suppressed philosophy of
fascism. They roll over on their wirey backs, on their short chains, they roll in their scraps
they grovel with humour and they can open the kitchen door when they smell meat. They
simply hopped into the truck. The animals of Europe no longer desire synthesis.

They, antithetical, die in the heat in their kennels on their chains in
the draped salons of over-budget art films
Earnestly
And I plant upon them the fruit trees of the châteaux
Like anyone else
And I have simply stopped reading

One animal says to another animal it is not safe you must not return I love you. Another
says to her sister animal when you go you will never return then she dies in a camp.
Another is a child and she stops living because of deceit. The animals in their velvety

dressing gowns have thought bubbles. They break the incest taboo during a long cruel close-up and you can't help but watch. The father animal is not an animal he is a person and he is confused about money. They keep trying to return. They are only animals. They have titles and meanings. They ride trains. Dirk.

Lisa Robertson

The Rome

Massive, the cream in pan
square
lard maybe
and then it has to be
what pits you out
with spits of love
no cream can imagine
call it humdrum
points of origin
the ape's got planetitis

We Have

When in summer
sure to be a waste
not that it wants to be
but they want to hear
when in summer
and the "be sure"
want to hear
a long cloud
a puff
something that drags
but these are crayons
and if they wanted to
wouldn't they persuade you
to paint one

Mother's Children

Doped in the coming brightness of hail
what could have been wasn't. isn't
teeth are shins and greaves are deliberate
even children smelled its bloom
is birth a fickle vocation
better than smiling out from a thorn in your pupil
Apollo's promise cost him tomorrow
marrowless pipelines find solace in cream

Medicine Man

Eye pennies worth a dollar undone
moss prefers rocks it depends
fur lost in comb-overs howls like minarets
plectrum undone forty leagues beneath
a desert toss if the ball is mud
true fortunes corkscrew softer skulls
with theater on my side splits undone
rhyme is reduced to the wave of a beetle
gristle too tight for the crotch to swallow
maybe inventing penalties is homeopathic
maybe eye penalties settle scores morbidly
when her flesh cures we'll all be children
a course taken a grade undone

Chris Carnevale

from Dawn On

A mental friend threads skyline
Drawing a breeze diagram of a screw
Unforgettable no-name crash sign naps
A mental friend invents new wheel
Unforgettable no-name diagram of a screw
Blue singular invents new wheel
Arm fold chest neck drape
Prop head on legs, switch legs
Lower selves, elbows neck drape
Just below as seen in
If small breasts frustrate make list
Adore each leg, if a boy, feel kindly
Write down every embrace, that's okay
Emit ionize Es free suffering near
Talk places around a room simplified tops make noticeable
Forget after awhile free suffering near
Talk places around a room devices to say to
Bottoms dust the air simplified tops make noticeable
Forget after awhile you R (there) where U are
If small breasts frustrate, way thigh
Write down every embrace, if a boy, feel kindly
Parlays, way thigh
In with at harp on
Address in dog, drizzle mutt's coat
Gradual out of vagrant f-stop history's sneaks run throughs
Come hither, by city, drizzle mutt's coat
Breeze love's sweep wearable air
Stretch ex-tension a little room to move (in)
Not fuzzies arm target
Breeze love's sweep good to go
Not fuzzies A little room to, move in
Hurry, morning self, good to go
Gradual out of vagrant f-stop, light with close-ups
Up to today's day history's sneaks run throughs

Come hither, by city, beauty navigates
Early foggy and slit cloudy
Attention dip wrap
What's more, hinge boxes
Ridges trim carry folds
Feels live in Uh-huh
Says, wishes, pebbles tweak pane
Once it's air, uh-huh
Says, wishes Some list, huh
Once pebbles tweak pane
Once it's air state-of-the-art true
Attention personalize slit
Ridges trim hinge boxes
Shelf life personalize slit
Skimpy trays
Donut copycat
Back into as as it's think
Audience donut copycat
Grabby flyer, everything known
Not much eat at do what had to do
Movie open wide orifice, everything known
Not much eats at, toy interviews
Throwaway movers do what had to do
Movie open wide orifice, know-it-all
Back into, think beginnings
Listeners, hands to heads, as as it's think
Audience rickety shed
Opinion snows rue
Ruby-hue source denial tasting
Buttery and suave, melting, gravity name drop
Dippity simpleton, dust special
Days follow, so, so don't ask
Utter spot-quiz disbelief vowels
Want becomes need, mispronounce
Days follow, so, happiest
Want becomes need vowels
Leaning sightings, so, happiest

Ruby-hue source denial, mmm, goodie-goodie
Dippity simpleton gravity name drops
Convince, open and shut all smile etude, mmm, goodie-goodie
Sway landscape time-release
Audible cameos patio concierge
Thong postcards, removable tides
Import domestic terror patio concierge
Vintage portage black keys build-in flare gum
Ivory strikes apt butt
Desolate whisper, pink vice grips, build-in flare gum
Ivory strikes ages lemon
Tech orangeade on-off apt butt
Desolate whisper, pink vice grips, clever angles, gray
Thong postcards nip buttercups
Hardware details, removable tides
Import domestic terror adjustable blue
Fingers do legwork face makes nice
Spinoff syringes casino profile miss
Unaware any facts, destiny time-free
Dish contract language split baby
Shake head Not really
No stops, imprint
Spoken horizons (pass on)
Shake head, nod nod
Spinoff syringes stairwell afternoon
Dish contract language destiny time-free
Ask, why? general stairwell afternoon
Unearthly reason
Hold deposit content
Shadowy blood borrowers friends for
Something in there deposit content
Saves adages, do up
Sweep oughta eyes close
Recall cutouts loco flesh motive
Look ways ignite do up
Sweep oughta eyes close
Recall cutouts loco flesh motive

Look ways ignite spin worry
Shadowy blood borrowers return empties
Pick up voices friends for
Something in there (points to head)
Diphthong thread
More what of, finish with home
Source close call, breathless *oops*
Likely singalong
Awk side
Corn from pop
Revs, they are
Awk, to admit
Revs, pop
Corn want (to admit)
More what of make time for
Likely breathless *oops*
Comfy until, make time for
Fan-like ballet leopards comma
Very airy, may vary, scale street shade
Late night loops between
Useful, scale street shade
Nowhere fast, till breaks
Money talk talks money a Houdini
Umpteenth bungalow, till breaks
Money talk talks money, lips sink
Easy to understand a Houdini
Umpteenth bungalow, concern un
Late night loops, rush delivery
Lid, between
Useful, slice picky
Yummy bungalows reverie geraniums
So to speak, happen to be people
The bang bangs One second split
Double crossing threshold, questions How
Brushes The talk begins
Speak a good read movie with weather
Sentence to, picture this, be on, every page

Brushes, enhance verbs
Sentence to, picture this, movie with weather
Head summer, be on, every page
So to speak, more anything
Double crossing threshold, one second split
Happen more anything
Breezy
Send downsize, babied people
Spread unless breakable
Orbs, except that
Handout glimpses breakable
Orbs, glow or not
Dreamy except that
Handout glimpses workable
Grow up crayons call
Cloud of mowing car pose
Once bitten, said to
Lift a finger
Record shoulder, leafy news lift
Clinically proven, erase shoulder
Forgot, one look Over
Hungers rift buzz fluorescents
Do the math, find shoulder, bad spell, smiles
Under shoulder, off books jaw drop
Hungers rift, place, can't the face
Record shoulder, fasten orange
Forgot erase shoulder
Writ shine fasten orange
Given and taken mind like
Rebend at assembly, nails with scenes
Remove idiot prior enter outward
Pull or cut to, nails with scenes
While (away) U wait, not doing, else is
Corner taken allege habitat
Eely mostly personality, not doing, else is
Corner taken, path not
Beat all prices Allege habitat

Eely mostly personality, that as may
Remove idiot prior, sharpen hole
Detach flap center outward
Pull or cut to snow swirls
Leaves sounds meandering footage
For all intensive purposes not taken likely
Nowhere home child version of special
Nothing come of, polish
Wave Goodbye, beloved particles
Stand-in corner no way
Love-fill air with drool, line legs
Wave Personal reasons
Love-fill air with drool no way
Bicoastal personal reasons
For all intensive purposes emotionally decidedly
Nothing come of child version of special
Thrills glamorous excited emotionally decidedly
Tongue runs partly cloudy
Narrow minds going going on still life
Show up bags, footstep traces
Late that night, going going on, still life
Head for Mexico cherry gorgeous weightless
Night girl thing (make it through), lagoon endorphins
Forgotten eaten gorgeous weightless
Night girl thing (make it though), functional normal
Visible lagoon endorphins
Forgotten eaten near evaporation
Show up bags, pen rundown
Become egg footstep traces
Late that night lets fly approach
You know what they say
Blue streak, click on floor, stop smile You want?
When story breaks, bubble nuts and bolts
Apply to, some ways, whole idea
Comfort, change planes
On inside on outside, draw the eye
Blade thin ecstasy dream up

Comfort hits sweet spot
Blade thin ecstasy draw the eye
Chase hits sweet spot
Blue streak, click on floor, move on, haunt
Apply to, some ways bubble nuts and bolts
If U don't count, move on, haunt
The up and up

Ted Greenwald

The Verneuil Process

Not a true automatic sky, but a good enough beginning of icy cirrus clouds. It stretches out across the bay and over to the other side where real ocean begins at far righthand at acute angle. Go to observing the weather. It takes opacity to capture light. At the end of eye, a crenellated perception. Along lateral lines it moves via flapping and sinking to central water column. And there grows very quiet until passing the giant crunching turbine and hopeful bait. Then thrashing in elevator and light fracturing along tissue.

A thin metal cast is laid over the wooden frame of the old building. It conducts fire from one railing to the next, and later, a porcelain sink will have been stained. The wall is cool and smooth to the hand and traces of the former hallway are seen on the floor. One kind of paint over another and in between a conglutinated mess of colors. Often the words you make up are the actual words you've been looking for in that 200-pound novel you call the dictionary. Or maybe it's a few loose sheets of a notebook detailing the design of the carburetor you saw on the sidewalk a few chilly days ago. From perception to memory to expression, and back again. Like vibrations along the interior ribbings of a pre-cast material.

If they are seen clearly in their form then advance warning. Advance warning expires when insubstantial building materials. When insubstantial building materials shoddy quiver dreck. Shoddy quiver dreck it impacts here in my park. My park is concentric and most gentle green when most needed. My park is the center of attention and keeps out expiring styrofoam lined with concrete. It is gray lined and gentle green inside. If it felt and across miles it is felt and on calm sailboat pond. It is felt here and set off alarms here in gentle green protected park. Within my park always protected and underneath solid granite core. If you don't believe me come see outcroppings. If you don't believe me then see small needles breathe and shoddy quiver dreck, touched by. If felt by this. If across it feels and sees.

Not a true automatic sky, but the next blue phrase goes inert. Satellites and spacecraft edge across dark expanse of tongue. The air formations it creates: slow erosion from head to tail with small crystalline detours. Remote sensing is as distant as a stalagmite forming or how a ruby is made. Nine on the Mohs scale and very close to diamond, even deeply colored fancy ones. A dark triangle appears in each cut tourmaline. The Umbu River Valley Mine is in far northeastern Tanzania. See through large hexagonal gem. See through ruby to you.

Giant silvery plastic waves against silver sky and silver light gleams down rock and metal canyon. It indicates toward ocean but is not quite actually there. A manufactured gesture to opening and tall plastic shields building renovation, useful but becomes animated interaction, function but becomes light-catalyzed form, paralyzing in conjunction of similar color with almost-natural sky: a sky forced into being by emanation of puff smoke from tall stack or small pipe at back of transportation. It will give of itself in pieces until taken down; it is unintentional and to vision, appears as close to given.

Marcella Durand

I Am the Teacher of Athletes

I.

I am tired from causing a ship to pass.

Can I rest my legs on a mountain path?

There are woods in relation

to deeper than usual ponds.

Sport in relation to parking.

War in relation to song.

A series of pratfalls makes everyone laugh.

Has everyone finished their seafaring poems?

I want to leave drafts for America.

Like most other folks

alone in a long string of pearls

most ocean has never been to see the shore.

Right there as if a ship of war in a mariner's brochure

a lovely girl in a swimsuit emerges from a pond,

better than being murdered in your sleep,

"I'm under bond to do to you no thing,"

she says, "Do not conduct water

from your face—it will diminish your authority."

Say nothing more than thank you and you're welcome.

II.

Further north, thundering loud Episcopalians

at the wild fig tree press hard for answers.

What is our penalty?

Where does our starry admiral keep watch?

What is an oriental word for wine-jar?

I could prove there's something in the air

by taking off my clothes

now do you believe me?

Instead I lost so much time

flanked by heavy trees and brush

in the nude that I met some greeks.

Agamemnon. He was very important.
Tranquility, excitement or whatever.
The light that comes from the sky,
he learned, has a reddish tint.
Too bad he lost so much time.
Film was dangerous in the old days
but movie people have to live too.
Lock the doors and windows of your room.
The animals are shooting with color.

III.

A skull appeared inside your face,
then the applause broke out.
Maybe your show could be about God
in a high, dull building,
a clear defined net of half-naked windows
stab the light to the floor.
There is no furniture for the impossible.
This is only eternally true.
The sun shines through the chief.
The chief walks close to God.
The lambs are ruining my favorite song.

IV.

A vast ocean weed has moved
through a private garden,
bright corona of the zero-responsibility corral.
There are no organ donors on the Riviera.
There are no *slightly* effete British lords.
There are no supernatural savings banks.
There are sleeping and waking daughters.
There are cars in South Dakota.
My car is an emissions caregiver.
Put my car on the ground and back off.
If you aren't gone by sundown,
love to the children
I hope they have not struck twelve.

How painful it is to creep.

Send them my sympathy, my disappointment, and my flowers.

The story is always the same.

Three brothers playing at night

pause for twenty years

to sit for a portrait.

It is a portrait of a police commissar riding a lamb.

Now do you believe me?

Poem

For recreation I put on
the small volcano
a song about the one
who got away.

The sun comes out
with every feather
where it ought to be
but one of us was dead
in every note they sang
to feed the hummingbirds.

You're sometimes bright
though between
you and me
you don't have any
food, you said.

Came their reply,
there are some
BLOODY BUNS
in the cake tin.

Afternoon of a Foreigner

Sweet fawn on the tile

describing a spirit

assailing the fawn

you ought to learn English and carry a gun.

The world is not your former tavern lawn

You may not enter to talk for the night

You may not enter here

Nor enter to rest

You may not enter to talk for the night.

If you have something to hear

about weeping, *hear* it

or someone might tear out your eyes.

*

When the church was young

with jolly nooks installed

into a theater of well-lit rain

as if that Roman were about to mew

Hail, Farewell Hail, Farewell

material hands that divide and rule

a violent resource of red mist

good for filing through

Sweet clerical book in the lilac bush

you ought to learn English

and carry a gun

You are partially ugly

as a wild bird

that people do not like

in the Bank of England,

unending mass of spilling leaves

from penurious bending willow

fall to a choir in maybe a chapel

maybe a corvette

maybe a chapel
lined in fresh news
that ought to be made impossible
ready, present, meadow, fire
Painted red meat is *inside* the nut
until bought in the field and sprayed
through a window of glare
a little sad music to wind the clock
free to the air for some to hear
where the world lay open, yes
to a sermon's matching hemisphere.

*

I would like to say
it would have been kind
to tell you sooner
there is no word
that is always false
in a kind of black frame
like hands to the harp-shaped lake
go pale metal ambulant fish
that cannot be allowed to pray for rain
they swallow the grease but not the fat of rain.
The sea is wide! intones
 the heaven is high
 the ghost leaves home
for a whaling career it says
to a flashing, empty chair.
This is how you disappear,
endorse each room
with a metal word of kindness, *ping*
like a business check.

This is the King James version of this poem,
A little sad music to wind the clock
You may not enter to talk for the night

This is the little sad music of this poem.
You may not enter to rest.

A Chair is Not a Singing Man

for Eugene Ostashevsky

But the table is deaf like a metal rail.
Plus flat as a board like the deaf.
I know you hear "the beef needs salt"
but the table understands " " "
Hands, where have they been—
what are they like?
What does the early evening
have to say and hear
to get a meal in this town?
Some table you can spin
with your two hands.
For all your life
it will not play a tune
as would a moving player needle.

A hand is not a singing hand.
A chair is not a singing man.

Macgregor Card

Blue Lake, When Younger

In Michigan, the smoking board and log
go as far back
to intricate chairing
on the hills at night.
The lights were sheep in the air
which was often cold in Michigan.

I can hardly think that here,
such an air-made idea
as the body of a small sailboat
on which could fit
and could have existed
the buildings

The words were there,
the faint letters were not.
It was the import of a daring child
who abandons the mother
for a woman once pregnant.

But not the marriage of a Grecian polyglot
or even a dream to be in confidence
of the first meaning
in the dampened movement of offering.
Just the trees, before the trees.

Last night I dreamt of Tokyo
in the paused emptiness of season.
Is such a dream to have
happened in Michigan?
For the hair or the space
or the cotton in Michigan?

Creek

Who had told me the
mountains close around?
Even in the white
the reflection
of an implication of
from one side to another

My eyes can't stand
even to look at the sky
lacking clouds
in the snow
from a rooftop
or window

I wrote Erin a letter
and first came the space
desirous of something
(exodus) to look at and
later came the lake

Down in the sand
I had forgotten breasts
and in the forest
against the practice-water
taken it all into my lungs

Teeth chew the grit there
I ate pies there
none were enough
"I wanted to leave there"
was the integer which crowded
all the spaces in

A long grow of emergence
and now I come around
and drive
through the buildings
up the hill
I was of course
from here

Away and Where is the Beginning

The moons are this dry
in the equality-lining
in space
another night in space
where the hills are smaller
and only 45 percent groves

Even at dawn the hate
limits numbers and fives
the light is on
the plain is on
a hill but flat
having a standard strategy
even ovens We don't know!
it is risen up
and arise us what lies

By burning and equal
youth winter fish
the sun is hot, is mud
from which unfit movement
the stop basically
heights. And the stop

Don't listen to me
advice giver of aging
the whole atmosphere
instructing put together
and, sky, what is meant for winter?
I am the addressor
let the question ask the fountain
how much the climber aches
and left sticks
means the legs are work wear

This Year

Here, we don't care about people from Texas
How can we?

 In the freezer-fire and nectar?
This machine won't go
in the cold

Provided: ways to
reflect the skin of the man in the water into which
he looks
since The Russian Countryside
must be a cold fissure
of cracking fly-agarics

The finishing school in another youth
was the minefield dodge of the city in
springtime

I begin to understand the quadratic expulsion of an other
God, though I never came back
from Spain
Yesterday, the apple orchard was a fine way to be American

Rebecca Kosick

If By Here

No small hero I
in the shape of a clod
float obdurate mineral substrate green
a short way up the Stanislaus
having schmoozed
and practicing treading water in a shady whorl
you and your short legs
name one long pool
Last Best Western on the Road
a day ago

National then
in the forest around us
operatic an aura
amoral and ludic
cupped the quell
of a smooth-sided sea
its hopalong heat
the bee's thick short summer night
made us rush genial at least
at them to die
hard to the trees under which

Cut to breeze
scuttling leaves
if an inverted and liquid book
peeling to news
of a drive-by attack
this time from outside in
nucleus on nicotine on skin
Knowledge is self-serving
at any remove
we are not they
you are not exactly named

Nero in the affidavit
permission to practice
canceled on the backswing
a pneumatic hinge pauses
closing
strung out
on its davits
with a tearjerker

kick. But if I had then thousand tongues?

Dogs play
their skeptical scratch we
our parliament of chat
our serene country drives their certainty
that something eventually surely will come to us
singly in threes and wandering in pairs
bears of sabbatical wonder

unafraid impromptu (and for dessert—
waffles?) Years rain on the suzerains
of right
as if Pushkin in action
could crack up
the pencils evaporate
glass where I lay parallel
to a universe of sun
to be taken away
and the tumbling wheel balks
before the winning ticket is prized
weather stops dead
end-state accordioning preconditioning
the pleating
episcopal pain intelligible as reverie projected by yearning
a possible window on
Two pale rectangles
wide as day

must think of titles

Meanwhile we cooks are busy of course and perfectly situated
warbling
like home runs and potatoes
gung-ho and snug underwater where ice for the box
originates and refreshes
settled, cubed, zeroed-out

Through another door a touch of Vegas
appendage followed by fur
dangles here if by Here we mean diction
in noise dictation on the nose
of the affrontable ocean
so-called so true to stand upon
apposite
or look into isn't it
the perception of apperception I'm too busy
to inhabit a perfect world happy
Traviata lisps wholesale over any
old aspens
premonitions of prediction
voluptuous to an ultimate
fall because sex
in a thirty-second dream is
as in Bach discrete
code for glass
brick decomposing confident of the task
ahead many
and many more days strange haptic
but also supposes aimless young disciples of beer or beef
milling hounds of all stripes
chemically pressed in anagnosis asleep
to the loud hum-chortle of my bursting conversion
to fragments and certainly
impervious to touch
Close that door

Once, twice in the ear
a bear among bales was searching
not the sound of a brain toiling
But now that you're in love
decibel serene
calm sleep restores
bloody stumps to suits supernumerary
and fields of clover
completes purchase repetition
To the question of the burden
of capital in the Whale
of the species
some mealy equivocation
(to Kumbaya
no articulated stance)

To the bear
an explainer's rifle stands
life
obvious as lead
flaws (an incomplete flowing) rather than leading
off to one side
a trail marked with pellets
a perilous pigtail at the window overseeing
pale insurrection its Pauline detours the end
guards the beginning mother of
dread

The organ dirge reminds you you are not the one
neither headhunter nor juror nor convenience store
clerk
but it doesn't matter

We live for spring nights of happiness
I meander down the field
and the lines are already there to be drawn
flexed, prepped, ringing beyond a horizon receding

every day
living to say on a sliding sea
or psyche of the century lit
once in your name
now ice
object of the world museum
past smoker's wheeze to survivalist heaven
wholehearted dioramas love
big game
Nick's name
at the woodsman's half a heart

Blood there
not the sum of me but no great advertisement either
breaks to fill a pattern
a gate clamps down to prevent my eke
into increasingly swollen trees
crazed and shaven
where the bear is who can't be broken
only tithed

pills pop bottles
the silt of posterity

Cereal milk bowl spoon how soon
and easily ideals are corrupted
humming
over music theory book
whose dirty surplus
son of tireless brightness events
will rock
socks iced
in a plastic bucket
will fit soon enough as stub to stall
our capitalization
proliferation (if not extinction)
or perhaps we were close enough now to the moon

having lost the palm of our grip
so to say one is a lunatic
is accurate but insufficient
You leaf!

Spring birds reassemble like butter
in the chatter dome
tired of innovation and seeds
self-rummaging
as one hoarse crow adds to and varies
the sentences again
Acerbic the lullaby
is pacific but untrue
men are in fact
hapax *and* legomenon
crying all the time
girls “storm the heavens”

And as you return to your riddled pillow
it occurs you'll never be 100 percent positive
your mother was not a witch
(or bear, for that
matter) having brought you this far
into the operation
without a fair
explanation
as a nest full of golden infants trips
almost daily off so many successful
nights badly nailed
to their days
whence once
the attic hatch swings free
drops, cracks
returns green in poof squall to jalopy full
of Jehovah's tireless Witnesses
who
on the usual vertical errand are quick

to wind-up when a wind comes
seriously in need of a platform
if not a rationale
halfway round a horizon and stalls
knuckles under instant recall
the proverbial window proverbial
capsize and fall
roaming the earth
repeating it all
from that day to if
by here

Jean Day

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Please address all correspondence to:

The Editors
The Recluse
The Poetry Project
St. Mark's Church
131 East 10th Street
New York, NY 10003

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