

The Recluse



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from **Sons**

Show them a man

You will be

A word: dragon

Horned owl

Lion

The names bring

Moon light on gravel

Dressed in silken scarves

A pirate's sword

Beer and tequila

Glow in our skin

Hallowe'en glow stick
Broke in his mouth
Floating like violet mercury
His lips bright from the car window
Quickly inside
Wash him then search
Trash for the label to read
Relieving words: non-toxic
The dump
The dump
Of this shit place
This entertaining
Mindlessness eating
The plastic and washing
The glowing fluid I
Hold his mouth
Scared he won't
Look at me

Will there be fish to eat

One day

On this dead earth

Breaking flesh

And to feast

With a lightness

And assurance

Will our children

Have enough

An ancient question

And terror of not

Living up to what

The many tides of people

In us have made

I see him through a window
In the yard by the salvia
With a stick and wonder
What strangeness gave us
To see in the other
The likeness of our ways
How our acts show
Through the time sludge
Built up as performance
Now holding a pill bug
Inspecting the coiled density
Of the thing taking note
I wonder what it is
We are doing

And when it comes

To goodbye

No one survives

Except in memory

What we take

We keep inside

And tell again

The stories

Of an informing other

In us to let us

Be

Imagine him
As you one day too
The flesh gone to nothing
Scattered in some field
Of emptiness
A darkness through which
We go not
Alone but in them
So loved the world
Disappearing forever
A dream or so
It would seem
In that vanishing

laughter from the alter

we were all familiars in the obscenity of cities,
and to be gentle here, perhaps not so obscure
and to labor in a snail state, a minstrelsy disco
and to seek refuge, a spinning wheel at the fair
and to dive into the otherwise, breaking the fast
and to derogate the holy sentence, tongues spied
and to give thanks, my cousins bear me no ill will
and to define nothing, myself a willing accomplice
and to tender down the wayward slope, a loved boy
and to have leverage, like on occasion we did before
and to silence come early, this dawn abundant in blue
and to perform the ragged hip dance, i name you again
and to purvey the scene, a hawker of rhinestone trinkets
and to slip unnoticed, in clean swipes of brazen undercut
and to carouse with strangers, a feast of trains embarking
and to honor thy mother and father, this faded polaroid test
and to lazy the afternoon, the thunderous applauding infants
and to linger by the turnstile at noon, an unattended landscape
and to shadow my flight across the threshold, an exiled goddess
and to ply my trade without complaint, a wispy gone benediction
and to not judge me, when i take my counsel from singeing addicts
and to bury a placenta in an ashen grove, a bold rapping of knuckles

and to know officious failings place holds, as some kind of looseness
and to wile unscathed under a dunce's cap, each oared in her own birth
and to chute from the heavenly morgue, an inconstant arrival of dimples
and to white out within the imperial gaze, a colonnade of violets sentient
and to chase traces across borrowed pastures, a movie reel viewed asleep
and to homage the young men, stepping purposely in johnny hartman voice
and to disquiet the armies of disused spears, a brokerage in the damp shade
and to privilege the body as supplicant unscorned, everywhere a flailing limb
and to speak easy in voices delivered from postcards, no one amongst us pure
and to ride the two-wheeler to crisscross the storm, a titled vandal in long pants
and to be born with a full suit of aces, these things i remember in the gilded hour
and to show not fear when faced with thine enemies, a toast in the house of friends

the stand still world

time, my favorite escapee, tricks, appears as
narrator, then a broken brake coil, then
fifty, no know its sixty-five, now its seventy
children burned, top floor nursery, the Kumbakonam temple town,
southern India region, where is today, back in a parking lot,
would you buy, a brown messiah, reproduced on a white hoodie,
oh my, her grandson shies in her fervor, it is cute, black market
deals produced as scripts, between lights the
folly mistress, she thinks of some card games,
we might want to play to rope in clients, i think i
am admired, but the runners are stopping their
steroids & quitting, the Sudanese government is complicit,
the refugees are in Chad now, or Jordan wants one hundred fifty
thousand for one year's stay, a way to measure the life
span of rubble, once the family home, i have an
empty book bag for you to put these tales in,
see i am a griot collector now, i tell you these things are happening,
the complicity, the rubble, the scripts, the money,
the burns, the runners, the lights, the deals,
all circular errors, each so fixed, real, & also traces,

grace

"They shall

utah ochre

speak of the glory

a stellar sight for any

initiated or not

i heard

that there

a lady

did speak

of finer

things to come

she offered

you accepted

a pear,

 though it was not

yet ripe

 for the ride over

of Your kingdom,

is it like a big thing, this glory

is it like a simple lightsome or period or minus sign

and talk of your power"

 it is marketable, yes, i believe it has been marketed,

 sold on a common block, ice cubes and crumbled dynasties as legacy,

 is it small and black, this power

"He counts the number of the stars;

 by vocation i shall call my brother

parachuter,

 by desire i shall call my mother

minor god,

by birthright i shall call my father
salesman,

He calls them all by name."

by luck i shall call myself
poet,

by design i shall call my son
painter,

by wish i shall call that bright spot there, lingering past the din,
twin

"Men ate angels' food;

& it is

bittersweet

& this cup

is full &

marked

He sent them food to the full.

by tender

prints

i would

not offer

it away

Have you

travailed far?

Have you been to Bashan?

"But it was you, a man my equal, my companion and my acquaintance

lost, i lost you on the way to deliverance or

i bowed out,

my lover, my betrayer, my staff,

my neither, my holder of chokes

-----it is only faintly some mornings, i remember the
fold of your body-----

We took sweet counsel together, and walked to the house of God in the throng."

how silly

it all

seems now

but when

i thought

of it then

we were both

so immediate

In Aporia-

I'm trying on egos, [a justification for the planet's continuance]. Oh hello transgressor, you've come to collect utilitarian debts, humbling narrative space. Give me a condition and wheat grass, I his body is disintegrating. I his body is ossification. Death my habit radius, yeah yeah. I his body can't refuse this summons. I can't get out this fucking room. Tell me something different about torture dear Trickster.

Tell me about the lightness *my mother told me to pick the one i love the best* how it signals everything I ever wish to believe true just holy on my ship. I jump all over this house. this is it [what i thought is thought only, nothing more deceptive than]:
I his body keeps thinking someone will come along, touch me. As like human. Or lima bean. I'm cradling you to my breast, you are looking out. A little wooden lion you & Peter carve on Bluff Street is quieting across your cheekbone. Not at all like the kind of terror found in sleep, on trembling grounds.

It is yesterday now. I have not had a chance to dance in this century. Tonight I shall kill someone, a condition to remember Sunday mornings.

To think of lives as repetitions [rather than singular serial incarnations]. To try to figure our your own death is as exacerbating as trying to figure out why as schoolchildren in mid-nineteen sixties Southern California we performed reflexive motions: cutting out lace snowflakes, reading Dick and Jane search for their missing mittens, imagining snow.

And this too, fiction. The book I would want to right. The restored fallen, heroic.

Did you expect a different grace from the world? Or upon exit?
I'm working on "tough". They think I am already. All ready.

Who is the dead person? Is "I'm sorry" real to a dead person? Browning grass. My hands on this table. A contentious century. A place to pay rent. Redemptive moments.

Am I now the dead person?

Dead person, dead person, will you partake in my persimmon feast?

The body inside the body astounds, confesses sins of the funhouse.

I too have admired the people of this planet. Their frilly, ordered intellects. The use they've made of cardamom, radiation as well. How they've pasteurized milk, loaned surnames to stars, diseases, streets and ideas too

Akilah Oliver

Ride

I'm catching a ride with friends

there's a few of us

this is a ride

it's ridden when you ride

you're ridden if you ride

if I am I am

I am if I am ridden

riding rides the rider

once a rider ride!

yet once the riding rides

get rid of the rider

this is a difficult

this is a very difficult thing to do

mainly I ride what I

mainly I ride who I know

mainly I'm ridden

and I don't know

This ride is in your ear

it rides your ear is ridden

I ride this as it comes up.

The others have been doing this for awhile

he's been

she's been doing this for awhile

she's a good example of what follows

riding follows exercise

much of what follows

has been kept unriden

practice rides the exercise

and it follows

everything is

rideable with practice

the heart is an exercise

she's a good

she's a good exercise

riding follows practice

this is riding

I am that I am rideable

Love is an exercise.

London, November 4th, 2004.

Caroline Bergvall

The Gourmand Reflects

I am the accumulated memory and waistline of the dead restaurants of New York and the dishes that will never be set before us again, the snow pea leaves in garlic at the Ocean Palace, the blini and caviar at the Russian Tea Room, the osso buco at the New Port Alba, the kashe varnishkes at the Second Avenue Deli, the veal ragout at C'ent Anni—

C'ent anni— May you live a hundred years. Maybe just a figure, of speech. But do I hear something bubbling, crackling, sizzling, boiling? There are 19,000 restaurants in New York, three meals a day for 6,333 days and then start at the beginning again, the chance every time the menu opens, it's going to say I love you.

Big Blue Chair

10-7-06

The reviewer was gushing that Mr. Alexie had just published his 92nd book and he was only 29 years old (or was it 29th book and 92 years old?) No, it was 29 years. Why do they always have to carry on about my age? complained the bright-eyed young author in his sincere Western tones. Don't worry, I explained (tapping out my pipe and wisely setting fire to the Irish setter), next year you'll be 30 and no one will ever give a goddamn again

Which brings us to the present occasion and luckily I am still here, almost bursting with good precedents.

When I turned 40. I sank deep into my big blue chair and began a careful study of the Hogarth print on the opposite wall, counting every crosshatch and waiting for the little dog to move. I was marginally employed and about to be divorced, but I congratulated myself on the grace with which I was facing this challenge, the unearthly calm I was imposing on this disorder. I settled deeper into the big blue chair.

And then, three months later,
I stood up.

Goldfish and Rose

An old man sits cross-legged on
the Boulevard Saint Germain and displays
his art on a white cloth: roses carved from
beets and goldfish carved from carrots.
People stop to admire them, but he
does not speak. He holds a beet
and a knife.

Two nights later, he is showing the same
roses and the same goldfish and the beet
he is holding is still entirely a beet.
What's his game then? Does he suffer
from sculptor's block? Does he maintain
a museum rather than a gallery? Does he
despise commerce?

Maybe he knows he's carved one
perfect rose and one perfect goldfish and
he is waiting for all Paris to celebrate that.
Why are they taking so long?
Must his art rot and must he die?
Well, that is the tradition.

Nostalgia™

At Uncle Li's
Golden Lotus New
Peking Tea Cup
I order pork egg foo yung
my father's favorite
fake Chinese food
and I eat it with a fork
off a chipped
blue and white plate

Then I light a Chesterfield
and go off to
register Republican

Save me!

George Green Has Half a Headache

George Green has been walking around with half a headache for hours now, determined not to gobble down two Tylenol, lest those be the two Tylenol that put him over the top, that break the camel's back (and the camel will require Percocet but that's his lookout) I share the apparent concern that the residue of 10,000 lifetime Tylenols has just been mounting inside the body, filling it like white goo in a baker's mold, and these last two will reach the saturation point at the neck and leave me standing immobilized in the middle of Seventh Avenue near the chalky George Segal sculptures, as cabs drivers shout curses that would mean automatic knife fight in their homelands. At least this may explain why I find myself avoiding strenuous exercises like getting up from sofas and bending over to pick up money on the sidewalk. Hell, it was only a five.

Life was simpler once, he creaked. No Tylenol, no Aleve, no Excederin. Just aspirin. In the Fictitious Forties, I ran home from school to bring the news to my mother: You don't have to spend a lot of money on Bayer because A) all aspirin is the same and B) Bayer used slave labor in the war, the Nazi rats. But she was going to stick with Bayer "because I know it's clean."

So George is still walking around with his head split down the middle. Which side hurts? Maybe it's the right brain, trying to push out a poem, so if you offered him even half a Tylenol, you'd be murdering his art. Can't do that. Luckily, he's braver than brave. Good man, George. Keep on throbbing.

Robert Hershon

Untitled

That season we were an alloy
in heat, turning around,
a cat in space
so tight
you controlled your cremaster
along my thigh, called me Sir,
frog-fucking like lesbians. We loved
people not organs
like our parents dropped
acid not bombs.
Omnisexuals eat everything.

Now I work for a woman
who slept with Basquiat
in the 80s, bought a Brownstone
with a painting. You emerge
in my thoughts like Café Reggio
in poems that are not mine, but fifty
years older than me.
I think of your ass wrapped
in gold Cellophane, neat
tight in Bidgood's gilded lens,
and in the post office I go
Whoa. Then I think
of the hole blown open,

a caviar mouth
or dumb bird.
I live in the city,
wait on line, open
my umbrella in the snow.

Josephine Clay

The heat is a heavy
woman the woman
is the low furnace the furnace
exhales, "Take off your clothes."

I start at the bottom like a cow giving up cud:
seaweed loafers, one dress sock,
two long dress socks, ten nicotine toes.
My penis is a lazy basset fast asleep
under long white hairs, between slow clay.
Hands stray like lame birds
over crumpled ears, my sly of beard,
chest like old bread. Aureoles of tired hair
ebb my loose belly like sea urchins.
Too afraid to touch
I try to call it into heat
with the peroxide of my sideways
mouth a split radish.

When I met my first wife she was a girl
who wouldn't remove her dress but could tease
me into the best wet tortilla until I cried
and showed up late for practice.

Pigeons at the crackers in my wadded trousers.
Sweat or urine down my leg smells like damp linden
wood and dough. A lady has stopped talking
into her phone. Two men watch,
eating hot dogs, neckties curled
over their shoulders like baby spinach.
The hot light between buildings beats
on my pate brittle as hymen.
A special shunt keeps my abdomen
from filling up with miss-pumped blood
and bitter fennel. Someone snaps a photo.
I am becoming lighter and whiter
and thinner into the flash.

Soft Brain

his soft brain smiling
a bountiful glossed metal
worn by loving abuse

Doubling

Being there at the spin off from the trail
to mastery, put a little horse on it, with a
swinging horseman. I am a left handed activity –
accountable to berth, grandeur, and the commonplace
at what point behind depth of otherwise perfect lips
germs, doubling, as “the look of” and “the fact of”
missing over-spray, dead-on in formation naturally,
quick-like as if there weren't enough time –

Untitled

angel smoke reduced to mirage on the glass,
each convex reflection, separately throws corpulent light,
the moment thin as parchment, sparing the goat –
scholars orient beauty around a specific symmetry,
difference apparent between being shown, being seen –
a red deficit: “The skin of the scrotum looks like
the skin of a prehistoric animal”, she says, takes a drag –
two stones in the shreds making headway, change in the mouth

In Parts (a)

This radical disintegration of parts squeals gesture, erasure, assertive tearing away or open a hole in the scene, the grid everybody sees – To be vulgar, mass and volume, flesh is modular, peeling back themselves reduced to an immense silence, a thick mucus in the throat, proxy for pedigree, all pleasure being equal, you are not supposed to look good if you have desire – the best guess trapped beneath surface tension, cursive against cursive, seminal in the plain air cross fade taxi unmade, stretched, contractible, catching light in the pass - staving descension, becoming apart, what seems to be nothing, this is what happens.

signed verso

it is probably in his pocket
"cast

+
at the place where there is the nice touch
even the semen is fermented...

+
" an icon with miracle

" *signed verso*

who knows what the body needs

knock on the wood of the bar
piss in a bucket and watch it evaporate

"you are a well-tempered clavier"

(positional silence...) given sans-serif

"out of his realm on the campus
he opened the field and built the university around him

"ab- sorb

" *signed verso*

you have a strange head of hair.

Slumming

Some say *what work means, what means work*. Others are too cool for that; they have your last year's clothes that your mother didn't want you to wear anymore because she got you something bright and new at Kmart. Lucy Lippard says "the working class girl has to drop into frayed jeans to make it into the art middle class." You show up in the same vintage rags because you loved Cyndi Lauper in 7th grade. They can still tell you don't belong. What gives? Their CEO dad's apartment for them on the coolest street on the coolest block? Maybe what gives is their "loft" in Bushwick's burning blocks. *How cool is that*, they say. I never recovered from the one who suggested I wasn't working hard in college, because she never saw me in the library, me working three jobs and going to what they called a 'B' ivy league with the prepped schooled. In default. Because I thought education should be free. I tried re-listening to my Metallica records to make it right, and James Hetfield's wailing and the immense working classness of the music
still

didn't
help
me.

Don't get me started on punk. One of the Ramones was a Republican and he was from Queens and he was working class, too. There's the trouble.

Some
days
things
don't
make
any
sense.

Don't even try it with me. I don't want to see your trucker hat. That Metallica singer's dad was really a trucker, so give it up.

**Keep Feeling Saturation, Passion Burning, Movin On
(or AM-radio-dial-more-than-a-feeling)**

Yeah, yeah, I know I told you I was saturated in one song. My life is saturated in one song. Do you ever have that feeling when your life is saturated in one song? Every day of your life this quarter, you wake up, and are consumed in one song? Did I mention quicksand, nightmares of gum glued to the bottom of shoes, the Human League in a sub-current moving backwards? I don't need this. I never asked to be held prisoner by one chorus here, one refrain there, seeing through Bakerman as I'm riding my bike down sidewalks, forgetting that one big bump in front of Hunt Real Estate-or did they smooth it down already? Do the have-been songs float through the hemisphere & find an unsuspecting pub of a blick in me & decide, yep, there goes the passion we should be consuming. There go our music notes floating by in real maple syrup. It's not fair. I asked for an eternal key of a then c then subtle a, but it looks as though it's like, notes interrupted. It's like the margins get blurred anyway. They say sad songs make you cry, but I say they blur the pages anyway. Maybe your heart hangs out like el corazon bingo card, each hanging artery gonna be plugged into sad distortion pedal one, consuming feedback pedal two, nostalgia trip number 3. It's not fair. It's not mistake #3, it's this song that's consuming me, there isn't even any ringing in my ears. It's trying to tell me to listen to the truth of my life. Because the sad song is making me crying (cliche #3.) And I won't. Because the sad song means so much (cliche #3 too.) I won't just now. (But the sad song tells me I should. But the sad song is too sad to make me listen to the sad song.) You know the old song. The old cliché that won't stop whispering, your no-it-all acquaintance telling you, the more things change the more they stay the same. Venice Beach graffiti telling you in a-long-ago-time that is also consuming me: the more you know the more you know that those who don't know, don't know. I don't know why this song is consuming me, everyone wants to know which one, can I like say late-seventies early-eighties? Can I say someone stole me and now I have to be consumed by some stupid song? Can you say I don't know? Can you say cliché to the nth degree? Can you say keep feeling saturation, passion burning, movin' on? Can you say they say that sad songs make you cry, but I say they blur the pages anyway? And oh yeah, the margins, too. Insert your own desperate bass line here.

I couldn't say that *clowns (clouds) caressed you,*

the dysfunctioned name of a b-sided Culture Club song that left my brain decades ago, before the annoying nostalgia, vertigo and what-was-it-again, slammed my consciousness, not raising any damn(ed) thing other than *Nostalgia Is Pointless* but try to tell that to the classic rock stations, *What Do They Care*. Of course everything's built on the limestone-steel-sturdiness of nostalgia, what would we do without wispy advertisements at three am on the channel it seems no one watches that advertises cotton candy one hit wonders on an album that costs three numbers that are the same, usually the number before ten. *I was nostalgic for nostalgia* is what my bossy neighbor told me disdainfully, telling me quietly but shouting in my imagination that that you can't bring nothing back, i don't know what goddamn nostalgia is other than wanting what never happened but wanting it to replace what did happen that you can't change so you want what never happened but seems to happen when the songs from the 70s come on the radio when you're at the exit on the LIE that you can imagine, for just a moment you are adrift in a part of your old 'hood in a small town before you lived in a bigger one. you know that songs that make you nostalgic for something that you never needed nostalgia for but there they are, as shrinkwrapped (rapped) as ever, desolate in forty degrees below zero in something like *Sara Smile* by Fleetwood Mac or *More Than a Feeling* by Boston or *Closer to the Heart* by Rush, all songs I never remembered because they were before my time of consciousness, raised above a head that was barely four years old, I knew I heard them in my time before being four, nostalgia for the sake of reliving of something that has lived but hasn't in a crystal clear but kryptonite but foggy bathroom window way (what do you call that kind of glass anyway?). I wish I had something to say back to my neighbor who said that nostalgia was a bunch of wimpy bullshit, but I can't think of anything to say that will cut through his foggy type of glass into his living room. I thought it was something we had been through before, but now I'm not so sure.

Dear Red Hook,

What is it with you and your pseudo coolie status? Exactly how long has that been going on now? *You don't remember.* Great. Yes you do. Didn't your newly created sister, Carroll Gardens remember when Moses' highway separated U 2 forever? And then that one new bistro seemed to start it all. Or maybe it was just your sister's new name. In the beginning U 2 were one and the same. And it was the greatest secret there ever was that you could or imagine that you could, taste salt, while viewing a pretty private big glimpse of Liberty—just like the movies. Red, you could console yourself with the loss. At least you were still immortalized in those movies that everyone remembers but nobody remembers the titles of—the ones about the ocean and waterfront and mafia and all that fishy jazz. The ones about, you know, people working, living in water, dirty, and the rich ones own it all, but don't live there.

But now they do.

At least some of them do.

Especially at your sister's place. And the real shocker, for you at least, the ones whose dads owned the heretofore unnamed entertainment corporation, they want to live IN you, RED. They want to BE you, HOOK, line, and sinker. You're like, I don't get it, back then everyone wanted to get out of me, but the ones who stayed had a fierce sense of loyalty, not resentment like some of them do out in Queens past the last 7 stop, I can see why, what they hell can they see from their train stop, I don't think Liberty even nicks their clouds. Now they've got people taxi-ing in to that Italian bistro place. Uh, HELL-o! They got Little Italy over there! Why come all the way over here for tomatoes and spaghetti—for a taxi fare of what, 20, 30, 40 bucks? You can get a plate of ravioli somewhere else here for 5 bucks people, 5 bucks. I've got artists telling me they "like the edginess of Red Hook," no lie, my sister showed me a clipping a few years ago from the *Village Voice*, artists saying just that. I don't know what the hell edge they're talking about, have these artists lifted more than 60 lbs? They got any fish stuck in big boots in water? Do they know how to carry anything from a boat to land? Did they negotiate with, yes, the Mafia (that's all anyone wants to talk to me about, can we like get over it already?) but there was not glamour to that, just straight up I pay, you pay. And anyway it's all outsourced to New Jersey anyway. So there should be nothin' to get dumbly excited about. The newspaper calls all this gentrification, but nobody here looks like no gentry. Dirty ripped jeans and baseball caps and sneakers that shoulda gone in the trash like 20 years ago, and trucker hats on people who cannot be truckers for the life a me. Those guys' arms will snap around the first freeway turn, no kidding. The dude who dressed liked this, the dude's dad owns that company. This is gentry for you? Don't look like no gentry to me. NO sir. You know, Carroll, these artists, can they draw their edge on YOUR side of Moses' freeway? I'm still trying to hang on to my own, the last glimpse of, yeah, clichéd liberty, before the condos block my 20/20 vision.

Stephanie Gray

Light Touch

for Alan Davies

This is the light that is
not light—

it is the player's
parsing of light,

irreverent and energetic,
giving access to the locus,

a blue hole filled
with a blue field

that allows for forward
motion to become

a gem in the germ
of a notion:

A way to invent a new
way to say new.

Virtual Manifesto

Stay excited. Sleep a lot. Dream
about dreams. Turn it down.

Lie with impunity. 11:26 on 11/29.

Spin a yarn. Lie to me, honey.

11:29. Ambergris streetlamp haloes
haze East 14th. Some leaves still
cling to the sycamores. Rain moving
in. A damp clarity that smiles.

We were drinking chenin blanc.

You were cooking cauliflower with
chestnuts and I was practicing bar
chords on your guitar. Sing a little
song for me, amaryllis tomboy lips.

Kiss me with your third eye, poker chip.

Jeffrey Cyphers Wright

Directions

I

follow the street to the water slump standing
on the corner in dark blankets half-lidded
bidding on the long spaces

between mountainous clouds.

turn left on the stovetop burner firmly turned

the way an ace hides placeless

on the cusp of your sleeve
or of model number mis-entry loss
and crosstown ambitions.

This city's foremost socially conscious mystic molding and kneading

hot sprung copper under beer-soaked I-beams discounts

freudian analysis w/ bruised knuckles and moves frontwards

the jelly of failed articulation.

(Cronenberg snowballs really)

A hard-packed jangling morass of flung text.

The intellectual takes up a radical

position here (call it X)- now here comes

the fool with tonnage of world song worked out

on cracked slate.

enter to exit -

you had better document this flexed moment.

taut at the expense of it's own oxygen.

II

permutation of racket -

blackened jacket two-thousand and eleven with heavy application of leviathan rouge.

i thought we might amass a vast collection of old cameras

mortar them w/ car horns

provide some oblique moniker

then grow progressively embittered together.

it's romance.

it's socio-pharmaco-anarcho-sparko-eco-political consciousness.

plus god. plus a refined awareness of the boundaries of other humans.

there is a counterpoint analogue to smog in the compulsion to budget one's time.

it's the hippest prison in the solar system.

III

lymph limbic
liminal serration

disapproval settling
as dust or accruing

upon the surface
(slow sonorous rage)

as rust does dimming down the sheen

and blotting out
careening needs carried since birth -

qualified, qualitative jumble,
hex, symbolism - insert scream or extended guttural monosyllable

employ linebreak engage

in wordplay in 99 ways to unrepentant strut pinpointed

as art as artful as artisan as arsenal -

you may as well kiss as speak or deplete the meanings whipped to froth by academic

stamp

and lo and behold rampant channelings and mandatory daywork

i swear we beat this horse last century and harnessed it and thrust

the bit under its bared teeth but please (insert protracted exhalation) (exhort for sleep)

there's nothing sweeter than inertness.

Jeremy Hoeveraar

The Night of the Living

Diet of popcorn.
This is my destiny.
Strong actions and vicious missiles.
Betrayals, mis-steps, half-drownings.
Dinosaurs rampage.
They are after me or my loved ones.
The next scene is government bureaucrats.
They are after me or my loved ones.
We wanted to mind our own business.
They want to mind our own business.
A threat is on the horizon.
It could be event horizon.
A big bang unleashes more dinosaurs.
Not the ones living now,
I mean mutants.
Big bodies, big claws.
They are bombs.
They began on this very globe
on some obscure ocean island.
They try to soften us up
through hints of torture and terror
but slip into torture and terror
which works on a few, but not all.
We hide in our lead-lined pods
on another obscure island
and fashion nets of resistance
using coded communications.
Not one of us has the whole alphabet.
Each knows only one small part.
This is making our code-talk difficult
but rather fun. We like challenge.
And the mutants, they're on the run
at least for now, at this moment.
And the popcorn here tastes terrific.

Remember the Heads that Filled You

I wake up with a marble head that loves three things
but I'm tired and don't know where to put this head
so I sing a song and drown out the peacocks
stick my elbows on his maps of America
fall into dream, like him. Fall out of dream, like me.
Marble head falls into the dream. Love/hate.
Tears well from the babies' eyes. Eyes open? or closed?
His mouth loads up on raspberry jam. Speech gels.
Air equals hysteria. Cheeks jump out of skin.
My hands separate from their wrists, flap flap.
This takes care of my goodbyes. Leaves him.

To William

When you're Burroughs you're not chatty you're laconic
gunfire everywhere this is not a dream it's all outside you can't
escape it either I was in gray flannel armorplate ordered to
hurl at the chute of the pinball machine to set the world
straight with my balling the strikes my steel levers controlling
the bells.

I was being assinihilated.

Oozy fluid digesting me slowly the maw ahead ringed
with hagfish teeth set to tear into bone I recited the pledge of
submergence and looked for escape-hatches out through the
asshole climbed into the stink rode it off past the Sphinx.

She stuck out her tongue and said See You.

I was in a cathedral it must have been city blocks wide
and higher I saw in the fresh flesh-blue Arctic sky Orion
making a moon on the quantum particle video show where the
platinum blonde with skyscraper hair and broom eyelashes
was leaking for money to help out the poor dark children in
Separate Location.

I heard them clank.

My pockets turned inside out they turned into wings
ding ding transported me up to the rapture where no Jews are
allowed so I landed back down on my head without money and
no hope I knew I was home.

Phyllis Wat

from **The Structure of Escape**

The frame of a Bresson movie is a jail
the escape is going outside that jail
it all starts with the noises one hears,
becoming one, knowing what the noises are.
that's freedom.

There is an act and the demonstration of an act.
the demonstration occurs in speech.
its act precedes or follows it in the frame,
step by step, painstaking step one after another,
the door opens itself.
the painstaking step is the expression of time as now
the future always, recurrent outside the frame
which becoming one knowing what the noises are
is escape.

Rayograph, a motion of light without the camera obscura, created by the photographer
Man Ray.

The most intense form of silence is hearing,
as insomnia is the precarious longing for sleep,
eyes leading to blindness. I feel, old man,
seeing, in the calligraphy of sudden thoughts.

How can you let a donkey die for your film. in a final gesture, a wandering lamb from nowhere, sniffing its feet?

Is it because it can not act?*

* The French director Robert Bresson preferred non-actors in his movies, preferring to record the person's physical being. In his film *Au Hazard, Balthazar* the main character is a donkey, who, at the end before our eyes, in real time, crouches in the middle of a meadow and stops moving.

In this part of the country where hedgerows grow
and snow asserts its silence, endurance is the only lust
that morning brings...

Her right hand was a stump, but her mother
Tried hard to keep her from turning left-handed;
There was dignity in her education, her head
Found its yoke; the fine knits of years
Told, "Good girls don't use their left hands."
Even grim satisfaction was not in her mother's eyes.
The girl learnt how to face life with no hands.

Maritime Fragments

A diamond loaded ship is passing by
pushing back the shores

...and they'll hail the boats, Maricula,
"Hey captain, stop captain,
Maricula in labor,
every nine months and ten days,
with twins;
the boats are all ready empty,
waiting,
you can't catch fish alone, Maricula."

A thousand years under tar trees – windowless,
in pain, a bunch of bare assed children with mediterranean lips
are making lewd signs towards
boats
full of silk - silk sailing away,
which will never sink.

And I, in my room overlooking the seashore,
Not looking out of the window,
Know that the boats sailing out in the sea
Go loaded with watermelons.

Love of Words

A part of,
apart from my lover.

As words separate, I draw close
as words draw near, I fall apart.

the song of the boy hustler

Laid in your nest
I became a bird.

Murat Nemet-Nejat

Byron's Time Sheet

He gets paid for clerking in a bookstore. That's what he gets paid for.
At twenty-eight he's going grey. But he doesn't get paid for that.
He's clocked fourteen hours on his time sheet for one entire year!
But he'll never get paid for it. No. He'll never get paid!

Good Lord! Byron's set sail. Never to return. One lame foot
planted firmly on the deck. Never to return. A dismal shroud
draped on Dover's cliffs. Dalliance with him is involuntary sport.
But he doesn't get paid for loving his sister, the likeness
of himself. Not with fame springing overnight and Caroline Lamb's
scene at Lady Heathcote's ball. He doesn't get paid for that.
Not with Dr. Polidori and a staff of retainers fleeing the snub
of Mayfair's beau monde. He doesn't get paid for that. No.

Good Lord! Byron's thrown himself on a chambermaid in Brussels.
But he doesn't get paid for that. What he earned from *Childe Harold*,
Cantos I & II, was spent in a fortnight. Never to return.
Friendships with him are always passions. But he doesn't get paid
for sharing a boat with Percy Bysshe in the turbulent waves
on Lake Geneva. No. He doesn't get paid for being fortified
with brandy and laudanum and stepping into the dungeon
at the Castle of Chillon. No. He doesn't get paid for that.

Good Lord! Byron's appetites have pursued him over the Alps.
Never to return. His travelling coach is equipped with a wash tub.
But he doesn't get paid for that. Not with Burke's sublime
in the sheer drop before him and avalanches every five minutes.
He doesn't get paid for that. He doesn't get paid for two years
in Venice in the Palazzo Mocenigo on the Grand Canal. No.
Not when he's standing on the Bridge of Sighs with the Occident
in one hand and a turban in the other. He doesn't get paid for that.

He gets paid for clerking in a bookstore. That's what he gets paid for.
At thirty-two he's going grey. But he doesn't get paid for that.
He's clocked fourteen hours on his time sheet for one entire year!
But he'll never get paid for it. No. He'll never get paid!

Good Lord! Byron's set to work on *Don Juan*, "a little finely
facetious upon everything." But he won't get paid for it. Not if
he's taken as his mistress the wife of an Italian count. No. Not if
he's storing guns for the Cabonari. He doesn't get paid for that.
He doesn't get paid for yachting with the English colony at Pisa
or witnessing the burning of Shelley's body on the beach. No.
He doesn't get paid for swimming out to his schooner, the *Bolivar*
to exorcise his violent remorse. No. He doesn't get paid for that.

Good Lord! Byron's landed in Missolonghi. Never to return.
One lame foot planted firmly on the ground. Never to return.
He's been named by unanimous vote to the Greek Committee.
But he doesn't get paid for that. He doesn't get paid for advancing
loans to the patriots and parading in native dress. No. He doesn't
get paid for riding out in the rain and returning drenched
in an open boat. He doesn't get paid for throwing himself at destiny
and leaving his heart behind. No. He doesn't get paid for that.

He gets paid for clerking in a bookstore. That's what he gets paid for.
At thirty-six he's going grey. But he doesn't get paid for that.
He's clocked fourteen hours on his time sheet for one entire year!
But he'll never get paid for it. No. He'll never get paid!

Janet Hamill

Leonard Cohen sings "Famous Blue Raincoat"/July 10,2006

In his other song, you can hear a Jews harp

A lamp lit and soul set free
One year and a few days ago
Voice and lungs
Limbs and heart
Stopped in a hospice in Houston.

Not Panama or Queens, New York, New York
but that big slick town
That made you feel at home: Houston

Where we sat eating chicken soup in a Cuban restaurant
Chatting up the world. I will no longer hear your laughter
Or wach you eat chicken soup or not drink beer.
Just a day and a year

To realize that the last chance to say hello
May be the first time you say goodbye.

In memory of Lorenzo Thomas

from **An Alphabet Suite**

Arsenal

Who neglects his beard? Who cares?
What is a beard? Who cares?
Spears, arrows, bayonets, bombs.
Heraldry. Hawks' beaks.
Love handles.
Love handles each and every hand.
Saluting.
Flags and jests. Jest. Flung.

and then the cache of weapons.
Tawdry. Tacky. Trash.
Broken guns, rusty knives, dull bayonets. History is all about
The leftovers,

Shards of stories—battles started,
And lost even with the bravery of soldiers; the heft of ther weaponry.

Oh the boys playing playing
massed and armed.
An arsenal of norms.

Either way the sand gets dirty.
And people die.

Bullocks

To jour. Today. To you. Two timing. Yes, that's it.
Two times.
A flight at night is dandy. No, daunting.

And what are we to make of these heavy items: Humvees,
tractor trailers, flat screen TVs?

These fat furry creatures with their mobiles always on on
and then there are the sweating palms of the soon to be lame
left behind, the losers.

Face on the dance floor; face on the kitchen floor; face in the toilet.
Sad times, oh dreamers. Sad times.

How harsh is childhood?
Who cuts off knees?

Fop

Oh Yesterday
Oh verily
And all that squishy gear—a channel runs from top hat
To toe edge.

You hear them talking talking
His height, the curl of his lips
Once he was pretty now he is merely handsome (Warren Beatty)

Funny with fashion, the ritualized cannibalism
All the way
Up the chain.

Where the checks are written and the handouts made
On holidia in the mountains, by the sea, on a ranch high in the Rockies
Where no one hears you pray.

Gladiola

Bountiful garden is heady with color
The left behinds shiver in giant vases
While the bereaved simper, whine and cry.

The white ones are taken home
Roses are for the grave.

Who loves ya baby
Who loves

Stalk in one hand
Blossom drooping.

Fire startles nest.
Fox fades in background/

Circus

God I wanna hear your sound.

You have to confront it.

You don't have to wipe the tears or the animal sense from the door

You have to console what expands beyond language with powerlessness

as the casket is forsaken second to second & dearly with half dawn & night

as a living variant of salvation

the steps of the libertine's stairwell are green

you can find me in the club I am social and whoring

as, in the Purgatorio, it is always nearly morning

& no one can ever abuse the word free

I run the streets the streets don't run me.

You're going to be very embattled inside your own tomb.

Worry less about if its your home, noiseless Homer

neighbor to her for whom your love was richer when listening

& don't let me down.

Anna Nicole we
something, live up
to the teachers restrained in their beating of us
& those who aggressively struck.
Chiffon portal time travel wormhole of silk
in the wardrobe a new poison apple
hemp rope to tie the robe closed as you go to the window
champagne in the land
& the sunrise obscuring the teacher his
hair in the glare his
face in the case & our Narf.
This is an impermissible navigation of social space
it goes on & on
of all wild horses asleep of Apollo so still upon
bronze summer doors to the break of dawn break
in the caretaker's heart
& the teacher?
I make it rain on him.
I make it so his is the last voice I
hear when I think
because he can only just change the world
he instead works to make it much worse.
Anna Nicole you have floored me & now
we are moving too fast for the turn
of the teachers who turned us on sweetly
who let the whip go
in a dead-winded day & it sill flew away
grown-ups, in between
maturing & babies. Grown-ups
in between
maturing & babies—
ace breast of the boy pierced and merry with arrow
would make him sing nothing
would make him
no joke.

Boy's Life

I put my chin in my hand
pincer-fingered like pulling the head off a flower
& shake the rose down to its core.
It was only a smelling salts core
with no knowledge of towers
for me there's no melody now
like pulling an eyelash deliberately out for the wish
absent ale in the colorful bucket
wishing wells fuck the eyes up
pretty good, shake my face for myself
in assent does that sound at all to you like violence
or only continue to speak want to hands on the Sabbath
then just for safe allocation
leaves not belonging to trees nor to plants nor to flowers
they crowd in my chest.
Straight boys like me here in southern Ohio have never talked truly of Spicer
thawed river water is green, my tongue too is green
& the shield in my body
I never knew, now, seeing it worn
how the tin sings of all its protection
the roof of my mouth is that metal & this clanging meter its face in the world.
Afraid (in the sense that I'm over the desk prone &
holding the space (having cleared it
the shooting star falls & I let my face go
the wishbone an actual 'C' in my chest that I break when I suck the air in
Its like a little heart attack!
As if there would be no putting our heads together in here
as if there were anything else

Goodnight Voice

As a simple container of impulse I hew
to her book
want to version its sudden fluidity
through it back boring & make something false I could
care for, I could be that kind of poet
an idiom made of spent porcelain and wearing their bracelets
no more than this air. I slide the thin
ivory bands from my wrist
thus name the beloved how stupid I haven't
a facet enough for that light.

I had a sense I was empty meridian
waters, an old Olivetti
whose doorknobs describe what's ornate about them
by not opening onto new rooms
evergreen only a child any ornament clings to it winsomely still
its not by my measure
which is someone else's
solution, or lost as the soul
facing front in an outward formation
conceived militarily, sadly so, still, comprehensively
ordered like art taught to children.

Someone may be on their
angel horse casting about in the
clouds for a sword, someone may be
coming out of occlusion to alter the course
of the world, some collective may be
in the streets forming beautifully soon
& we'll all be redeemed
but last night I dreamed of the turbulence
all these excessively decorate, filigree

color schemes golden with rose
gold & bracelets the oneirist's poverty
rivals the real
a sable comb shattered its teeth
on the matter & I came to speak
in the voice of another so speak to me
attitude, vocal tones, body language,
openness, presence, learnable,
teachable, improvable
place in the air

Deeply assailable preciousness
your shattered clasp sadly fit
when I tried it
I tried too the vatic, the inquiry,
atomized sentence broach
baby's breath hardscrabble hater
& humanist dove cage with dust-column bars
the voice that was hers
became what I heard then
hearing nothing
I sang on the wing and that sucked
vainglory cooks up its sugar vaccine
truant to any one thing let the jargon die down
or become like a person too free
in their changes to freeze the marquise
in a marketing shape my familiar desire

If I could no longer develop hay fever
I would still lay in the pages high grass
to think of the birthstones contrived & impure
with which I would make up my bright colored grill
shut inside with a bad summer cold.
There are millions of decorous lies and on me each becoming
less true lacking purpose or merit
I choose a stone that resembles consumption

am conceived on its lullaby sectional several times wet
the puddles are no diamond sea
like a siren without its establishing shot
of a bloodbath, without any buttons to push
they shine on my wrists as my hands find the keys
and depress them, goodnight voice, I'll see you consumed
where the speech of my dreams is adorned in your necking
& necking, so little distress.

Dana Ward

There was the sound of our voices

and the spaces they could fill; even saints
were susceptible to erection; speaking into
a vase made a vase-shaped sound; there
were creatures living in the earth and sea
without number; we covered our windows
with white shutters; census-takers wore out
their shoes; fun was to be had but had
to be sought; pouches carried colored
stones and jacks; the tailor shop window
only displayed pins and tape measures;
How does one play this best, we asked
the champions; there was a barely perceptible
trembling inside every house; How does
one get ready for the morrow best,
we asked the champions; some clued
us in on which ones would become delinquent;
new year greetings extended into March;
we loved the sun as it rose, and the chairs
we placed in the field to watch it

We threw a stone on

the first shadow to pass, then we could
build the home; between breaths there wasn't much
that caught our attention; there were birds and herds
of increasing number; we dragged our axes through
the earth; if there was a Helen, we surely never
married her; there weren't enough whiskers for
a beard; the cicadas supposedly had the voices
of starving men, but they never touched our food;
dreams afforded our sole pleasure; we woke
with our thighs stuck together; we were certain
our curtains were thick enough; in jars that had
been sealed for centuries was only air; there is
Poland and that is enough, we said; we had things
we thought we'd throw at oncoming tanks,
but only laundry trucks drove our roads

The ship departed;

the brightest of lights were shone our
way; we were decidedly elegant when visiting
our houses; materials consisted of cotton,
linen, and burlap; conspirators fled to distant
valleys and caves; we consoled our infants and
exchanged heavy silences like bundled goods;
we measured the width of our bare shoulders;
some returned, some were simply never heard
from again; some smashed all the dishes;
the diamonds were pawned and reappeared
on different hands; walking sticks and breathing
were hardly there; mud slid a long way; sounds
reached everyone, but no one heard them
the same; the room full of waiters slowly
emptied; some could carry a tune; some were brimming
with ejaculate; mines and roofs collapsed;
pillows were brought to rest our heads; the secret
was not revealed for years; detonators vanished

Christopher Marlowe Explains Accusations of Counterfeiting

With theatre in crisis and most patrons vanishing
we playwrights have turned counterfeiters, practical crafts
like shoemaking or blacksmithing nauseating to us effete sons
of such laborers. Our expertise is in counterfeiting reality but
with no money to earn there we naturally turn to counterfeiting coins.
With as much a right to coin as the Queen, who remains indifferent
to our circumstances as displaced workers, we gather
our infinite riches in a little room, find men to mix metals
and others who are cunning stamp makers. It is a small
but very persistent team though suspicions run deep between
us quarrelsome cutthroats, yet to be convicted of any crime.
But enough of this surveillance talk. Let me buy this next round.

Evan Kennedy

from **a filmmaker's handbook**

[red breath]

my legs--the actress cries in despair--they are so very strange--cut to--three lines on a shoulder or expectation--cut to--an organ--of the body--not instrument--falls--falls into the stomach--or where you don't consider her--the color red plays to herself in the mirror--arrives as lopes--we are caught in--pulling through clay--red is a color you dig through--name six things that repeat--railroad tracks were laid down and convenient chains--increased traffic--making it harder to get around town--the french suggest long shots in a cramped apartment--birds offer brightly colored flowers and beetle shells--the actor rolls a cigarette--she watches his hands--he pulls at his chin in the mirror--he feels old--she says--I love you--or I need a ladder--no large movements are made--the film should end--in a town she has never been--or the actress looks directly into the camera--

[or the film was french]

the actress pulls her hair back--always misses a long curl on the left side--right if your looking at her--the actor was not on the set today--she thinks of birds before flight—cut to-- airport bar--cut to--actress day dreaming of--places of transportation--blue is an indoor swimming pool--cut to--body falling into spindle--interruption of color--a table near a window--cut to--a wrist and large ships--*I am telling you how I*--then her head falls off--hits the table and onto the floor--*how long were you two together*--one tends to extend the length of a relationship after it is over--to say--*yeah we tried*--how one returns to music--to move--open eyes--scrap knuckles against rock--go swimming--*go swimming*--blue is a color that ask you to move through it--there is a knock--doors allow you to be quiet and awkward--jump cut--actress locked out--on the stairs--

[the film was french sometimes polish]

the film was french sometimes polish--white is a homecoming--or the polish language--she can't wrap her teeth or tongue around--boze kochany--jezus maria--she would yell at the children--to say language--to say for one to say stay--stay--or the parade lengthened the day--cut to--just married--they enter the room--dip bread into salt--drink some wine--to ward off--cut to--a subway--the actor says--that was a blank--the next one is real--are you sure--*are you sure*--as quickly as an angle of color--cut to--a kid again--snow and birds--cut to--a dream of a plane ride with ancestors--polish--they do not arrive--or a couple of times but this is the wrong location--white we all know--yes but I wanted less of it--cut to--a scene betrayal or love depending on the day the picture was taken--

[there was trouble on the set today]

who brought the mannequin painted yellow with fur around the ankles--we are not prepared for this scene--lets take a break--drive to the next town over--find a bar and a diner--the director wants whiskey and has never liked pie but is willing to--where's the actor--out to sea or a poker game--I'm working too hard to be able to--says the actress but it is lovely being in love--I've loved--this is dangerous ground--let's get off it now--so they ice box it over to--the sign says package liquor bar--drinks on newspaper designed tables--there is a pool table and a juke box--his best birthday--name six film underdogs--I had an idea for a scene--objects and bodies flying--no sound but--or the actress comes home--goes into the kitchen--suddenly starts breaking smashing everything--in the next room the actor is standing across from a woman in a mirror--no sound but the beach boys'--"wouldn't it be nice"--too many thoughts at once--they mix and become a film--tomorrow scenes will possibly make me feel better--sometimes the actress speaks to others as if they were someone else or as if they were in another city--I suddenly have two parents so I have to be going--the director says--is it finally time--to get this umbrella--the actress says--yes--I'm going swimming--

Stefania Iryne Marthakis

from **Newcomer**

To be before hormones
in dim glades sleeping
murmuring in their sleep

To be balancing on a log
in the rain while
outside your friends okay everything.

The body a handle

And every now and then loved ones call us into open air

saying in their sleep

One way or another

Everyone asleep with split ends in their hands

To see out of the house you see out of
into the yellow grass you look at.

In Phoenicia to be

a pony or an elbow

To have your heart open like a pine cone.

The orange sun rushes among the tree trunks.

To go home to where
sleep whittles an arm down to the size of a finger.

The key ring should not be a den of thieves.

Nathaniel Farrell

from NEIGHBOR

031008
040126

beach/chair/house/window

FRAMEWORK

The less you (I) leave the house the more autobiographical the work is bound to become. Now I have given you something to work with. A true confession, though as soon as it's stated, it's over, I've left the house.

In fact I've gone to Florida. Soft like a clam in the world of *gusanos* and fake tits. Critical, yet wanting a tan. Watching judgment and nastiness as it swirled around and spilled. I'm sorry, I said, when what I meant was, keep your stinking body parts in your aura, this side is mine and you are crossing the so called borders not boundaries as you've just now defined or may I correct, touted them. Americans know nothing you said, even you, with your two kinds of people. You the stinky kind.

If you are alone on the beach there is the problem of swimming if you have brought with you your valuables. As nicely as you ask, Anyone is a problem, and any couple suggests the problem you have, as you are alone, the problem that is you, who swim on the public beach but are underground.

We 'as poets' reject cliché so have a hard time saying 'let go' which is for sure, something we should try. As a poet with a day job, 'bowels' and 'vowels' is the joke useful for teaching Spanish students who have no distinction between B and V, as a motivation to not say the word for asshole when you are trying to express the category of letters. So yes, 'letting go' indeed unfortunate phrasing for a revelation, though does well to connote the normal functioning of a physical need.

I am ahead of myself. "*But I must return to my narrative.*" Let me take it back, back to the first line of this, spew, log, manifesto, confession, definitely not a poem!

If I tell you that not leaving the house makes the spew more autobiographical, it suggests. . . I haven't said. And by now I've left the house. To a place outside where I am spying to see her, through the first floor window, on a chair doing something house-wise so I think, soon she will have a child.¹

Something about the lady doing something in the house. I've written so far mostly of men. Some women: the one with the nice cock, otherwise, women here have been underground, i.e. mother born of baby born of scream. The women who are underground, in flats, flat, flatly underground.

Or if I am a woman. Well I am underground.

But I was out of the house.

¹ It turned out to be difficult for her or so I suspected when she became publicly and irrationally obsessed with the movements of her neighbors and they could at any moment cause catastrophe.

city/garden/public space

PROJECTION MAP

He is steady in failure; what a great monster he could have been, steadily loved and reported on. The philosopher becomes a social scientist and that too, secures our sinking feeling. Because Evita's gone we repeat beautiful, beautiful . . . meaning we can't believe love continues when it doesn't reach us. Because nothing reaches us, we age angrily, our anger grows fungus under our feet. Can we eat the vegetables grown in such circumstance? The wine, the wine.

We rested on the city because that made sense until the housing, limited, smelled of lives we couldn't remember or imagine. We tried to imagine a world where population was a problem for the very first time. Population, either way, was always a problem.

He became a social scientist because the population of his city no longer supported the solution embedded in the Idea. Suddenly everyone had the language of expertise and the furniture to prove it.

He wanted to be both dirty and clean, unexpected and reliable, so as to make a respectable salary, a family wage for the family he didn't pay for. His not paying stood in for a detachment but was removal.

The wage was a problem because the women were the unreliable. Apparently they could do it all (it all got done!) and then when the testers came they notoriously failed. Perhaps anyone can build a house upon a house.

After that failure it was nearly impossible to find sex. The women turned to each other and discovered public transportation and restaurant restrooms. Desire transposed to public hygiene and stories: presidential crime. What to do with fetish.

It's not really a problem to abandon the self. The replacement, however.

Because we can't decide on a city, we mention a name.

Imbued with the weight of the future, an unknown word.

The joke of violence, the licking of wound.

The relief in bas relief.

cellar/fence/garbage bin

BREATH

Complaint city, compliant city
horse/car, plane/bomb
sheet rubs ever warm
flowing toward pigeon

He is here at home
that's how I keep him
where he won't fuck me
I make him coffee

A wage slave with
an annoying neighbor
our "brotherhood of time" is
too groggy to answer his door

They confused that someone so heavy
is taken like that
taken by the wind
therefore harder to arrest

What does it mean to be hard?
I am not hard
I made the coffee
I aimed to please

But my way is this
way, of grass rather
than path, light dark
competition for the soft

at slant between
this ancient habit to resist
the sun's behind, devil's sweat
blue wispy puffy curly

PROXIMITY, INTIMACY, AFFINITY

Since they are lines we line up along,
we place ourselves more carefully
than you'd think.

The line that is three points
necessarily goes
forward however

detrimental
to Neighbor who
placed outside

has become something
unrecognizable who
sells then

moves towards
schisms so
true becomes

likely when children
are only cause
for conversation.

When one gets the chance to finally speak with the object of desire the longing, now its broken,
should be kept out of the conversation. It is no longer. Obliterated by the contact, a stake into the
heart of your demonic urge.

I for one have forgotten how to speak at all so no longer bother to defend my own reputation. See
as the levels decrease in my bottles of booze and the discovery of sleep dismissed.

Gaunt where were innocent eyes--that people live [as] such [in] big beige houses. Their garden is
nice. Nice predicted (I have that song) is not predicated.

Proximity is a curved line that moves to affinity but affinity isn't intimacy and intimacy evades in
the utmost proximity. So when you say, "we go to church for intimate space" I will say that is
because of affinity (the belief in god). For this you need to believe in god and so we ask, why and
why not believe in god. Therefore we make no sense with each other though tonight we would
really like to.

On the other hand when you believe in God none of you make sense but you make sense with
each other.

I for one
cannot stop
drinking coffee.

Try as I might to envision the square from which the corners are not churches, I have failed to
replace them.

Rachel Levitsky



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