

Tim Willcutts

## Preemptive Elegy

Given your penchant for hyperbole, I'm guessing  
you only want to nap with me and your illness

is no more terminal than rock climbing.  
It's a wide gurney and the night has wheels.

Hospital gowns are largely decorative.  
Under foreign anesthesia. Umbilical. At the end

of the world, natural selection reverses its principles  
and the sick inherit the birth, glowing like a bouquet

on the tracks. Can I call it unrequited if you die  
or are you a sculpture returning to its stone?

I love the alternative Yous. Like canned goods  
parachuted by faceless sky butchers. Hunky dory.

## Innies and Outties

Be careful. It's private out there,  
all that usefulness,

each one exposing it to herself alone  
in a light that ought

to reach everywhere, in my opinion,  
and maybe it does,

but just today I saw the parrot  
I raised to be a man

and he flew right out of his stitches.  
Falling towards him

is the least we can do, the brevity  
it takes to catch up

barely noticeable in the dialogue din.  
Rising out of still water,

we make the still water move  
till we can dance to it.

What a metronome you were, a high five  
that wouldn't be left hanging,

a basket falling off my head,  
keeping time. I'd believe

some ridiculous shit to see you again,  
and that's my only excuse.

## Lagrangian Point

Two gravities cancel each other  
exchanging vows, making room  
for nothing new  
not even a new nothing  
a renewal expressed  
not in a donning of rings  
but in each picking a blinding lash  
out of the other's eye  
No revelation, just a mild  
*this is how it's always been*  
the familiar precipice  
the declarative question mark  
where silence hangs out  
where we set it on the table  
with the bread and corn.

## Opium Pipe Bomb

Opium pipe bomb,  
wipe me

off my map.  
Puff of fame,

foam of wave,  
if I fib,

if I wave  
a foe paw,

bump me  
off my pew.

Be a pimp.  
Weep me a wife.

Mow me a womb.  
I bow up,

mew a vow  
of pep, weave

a bum view,  
mime a bee.

I'm a buff imp,  
mopey pub beef.

My bebop  
waif of a wife

a fop beam,  
a web of pie.

“Opium Pipe Bomb” is a lipogram. It restricts itself to six consonants: F, B, M, W, P, and V

## Winter Bounty

Accretion. Depending on the cold front. A snowflake counts.  
The house may be sturdy, but the yard is an ex-swamp.

Remove one leaf from the leaf pile and nothing remarkable  
will collapse, assuming the pleasures of dispersal haven't torn

you too far from your faith-based atom. Eschatologize.  
Which is moot anyway. The sky can't keep it in any longer.

School will be cancelled and children will build forts.  
Although hesitant to call it rhythm, you sense the forgotten

mother ship tugging you back and spitting you out again.  
Embankment. Only partially man made. Snowplows

probe the block like tortured caddies. The grass vanishes  
as it does at sunset, and the net hoop flutters. Darling,

we stand on no brink, the attainable now so exhaustively  
charted all we can do is roll up our sleeves and start

attaining it. Snap! Even if mere nostalgia. I'd rather  
be swallowed than sip this. The abyss is reflected

in my cup of tea or else it's an artist's rendering.  
See, I planted egregious errors in the past with a view

towards correcting them in the present, absolution being  
the ultimate aphrodisiac. Kiss. Your face a recovering snowball.

Children can't see over the banks. The mailbox is buried  
and your letter's inside. No longer misled by applause

or chastisement, I join the world's smirking anonymity,  
that is, I'm quitting amnesia cold turkey and so should you.

## Eschatology, First Light

It's a lovely day in the meritocracy.  
I've got bullshit up my sleeve  
and a box of Plato's widgets.

The refrigerator whirs a two-step  
beyond its means, over and beyond  
the thicket's thickest periscopic peek:

a school bus undressing everyday at 2:30pm.  
Sean and I are home. Oh nostalgia for things  
that never existed until plutocrats waved

their cocked and loaded wands.  
Grandma's high fructose corn syrup.  
Yes, it would hurt to live without it.

It would hurt to be eaten by a lion  
instead of a well-regulated cancer.  
Like the first humans, I'm in love

with things I cannot understand  
and have learned not to question:  
electric razors and pixilated hard-ons.

I think my cell phone's blinking  
"new message" but it's just sunlight  
skipping off the plastic frame, a fish

rising out of nowhere to nib the worm  
at the foot of the ladder. That's how  
I'll draw it. Soon all these images

will circle back to the original,  
the first light, the one I'm drawing  
with the impatience of a saint.

## Everybody's Some Theory's Fluke

Everybody's some theory's fluke.  
Every fluke's somebody's theory.  
Every theory's some fluke's body.

And you held it in your hand.  
And it held your hand in you.  
And you held your hand in it.