

Raymond Farr

A Particular Feel for My Subject Matter

I.

This idiot of shame is proving a worthy  
fleck of potato to peel away stress.  
In the meantime, I eat all my thunder, mopping  
& glowing with Talking Head zest. There is  
always the manor on Dykstra & Wu to love us  
& affirm us, to abnegate the Kleenex, sd Billy Jean  
Baker. But Saturdays & Sundays I smoke  
Panatelas in a smoker's club downtown in Houston.  
To be foolish is to be an adult smothered  
in anchovies. To be satisfied is to watch the strange  
angels topple from tree boughs smothered  
in anchovies. They careen to the earth  
with 21 g force! Their faces are bright as 10  
ripe persimmons! One of them's a woman  
caught in the act of haughty condescension.  
The woman is a lemon, soft & bright as  
Avogadro's number. She watches her Pepsi  
sweat on the night stand. & answers her  
email—one finger shoved—  
Like spring  
Or summer  
Or winter  
Or fall—  
deep in her vagina.

II.

Someone is watching the crows tonight  
covered in minestrone. They mutter *What's  
tallow? What's all the fuss?* knowing nothing of  
orthodoxy. My thoughts, as rank as mildewed  
honey, arrive salty in winter, having written  
this poem. I leave the door open, the breeze falls  
behind me; behind me stands iconoclast, Arthur  
Rimbaud. His face, in the glass, leaps  
like a dog to a heap of poisoned flesh & half  
broken images. Every one there is holding  
their breath. But no one says boo.  
& strung out like miles & miles of nothing to  
point at, I snap. & because I care for the kids  
on my block, the street goes up one way,  
like spider webs or shameful fiber optic cables,  
but not back down the other.

My Thai Religious Computer Nature Poem

I.

In this  
digital edition of self  
we think is the ink  
I reassemble  
my head  
howling VERBOTTEN!  
VERBOTTEN!  
*like a lizard*  
*on a window pane*  
every twelve hundred seconds.

I am rough as  
two oars made out of pine.

I die a little  
looking after you.

At the pond in the distance  
I linger too long  
holding a steering wheel  
shaped like my head.

But look at  
the fowl!

How they seem to want more  
while asking for less!

II.

The egos of chess men  
are solid as igloos  
distilled  
*out of kindness I suppose*  
making life  
a gift of  
our Eggos.

The milk of  
human[ ]gone  
sour in tepid radio waves  
we are little-leagued  
with honey  
in the history of bees.

In a pixel of  
dreamscapes  
*this cowboy song*  
*is all I know.*

I am leading a butterfly  
down to the gravy boat.

I am wood at the piano.

& out over the desert  
*while all the women came & went*  
*barefoot servants too*  
I answer the silence  
we blur  
with a whistle.

III.

You hand me a soda  
& then go away  
& vaporize yrself  
as someone makes soup  
out of  
the Marx Brothers'  
duck.

You step into a zoo  
not backwards in time.

Is yr time machine  
brkn?

I am a broken down system.

*I am one who looks on*, signed the boys  
at Bell-Howell.

I leave you  
this époque lacking  
an off switch.

I hide in the ruins  
of digital misinformation.

Someone we trusted  
has played us  
for fools.

Is our dream-state a Wal-Mart?

Do we dream we are sane?

We are  
nothing like Oedipus—  
sitting around  
staring at mother.

We are holding the hills  
by the balls  
of our feet.

IV.

In a whirlpool of blood—  
in a sits bath of urine  
flecked with clotted hemoglobin—  
*facts are dirty, facts are strange,*  
*facts don't do what*  
*you tell them to.*

We hear notes  
wafting from basements.

We role-play giraffe & jackal.

Someone must speak.  
But no one looks back.

*You picture yrself*  
*on a train in a station.*

The punk art of punk anti-lyrik  
gives you  
the finger.

You stand  
& count dollars  
attempting a schism.

You settle the carp down  
& go see a shrink.

& crossing yr fingers  
with ice bergs  
in mind  
you tweak up yr space heater  
till the room  
you are in  
is one hot inferno.

V.

The oceans are rising.

They lag up yr pant leg.

They climb to yr knees  
& beyond  
making  
a phone call.

& you don't believe  
in the still of the night

come bats.



Embarrassed to See It, Encouraged to Feel It

At this distance  
I talk about

elevated cell counts  
& silos a rat inhabits  
----  
in poems.  
My love seems

an index.  
& so small

from this height above the city  
where time has no hands

& sex is a product  
sold only to those

----

with the sheckles to pay for it.  
My mind is no matter.

I orbit around  
in my Virginia Slim cigarette head

& face.  
My poem is elastic.

& this makes me  
thankful & proud  
----  
to be an American shot putter.  
An irrelevant cartoon.

Finally, my anvil is here!  
My teeth are the babies I save

when reading aloud  
a poem by Mark Strand.

Hail to you, Groucho Marx!  
I am painting a similar mustache.

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I observe you  
from my place in the scaffolding

as seven men enter  
& sit silently.

For what right-minded dog  
is *on the basement*

*stair and coming up* if not  
Hound Dog Houdini

----

that word-chewing cur?  
I am dreaming of anvils.

& the corpses have  
names I change

with a nod.  
But this gets me

nowhere closer  
to the origins of music.

----

So I rollick in bed  
with *The Meaning of Meaning*.

& once again  
the subject is knuckles—

a rodeo of bones  
dancing on ice.

My answers fall down  
folk-style  
----  
in the soup I hallucinate  
equals a waterfall.

I mean I am acting.  
I hear nothing but static

emitted like ice cream  
from this pimped city wall.

If I type out a page  
on the street by my house  
----  
slipping & skidding  
in dark Harlot Canyon

the luminous moon  
eats its own shadow.



My mind is on Demerol.  
The essence of which

has no visible  
breaking point.