

Michael J Pagán

An Inventor

I think I've written something about this before—
somewhere—but, let me live once more,
in case I just be swallowed up, after words
and in the absence of feet, like clothes
on hangers and empty shoes,

step by step, over slippery shoes; harsh gabble and handless
china mugs in a low-ceilinged, crowded room
with a muscular throat—a sort of spasm!

And the quartet is one of the loneliest things
in the world—quadriplegic past:

“Don't look back, don't look back, just come on.”

I was at that game of plaster animals—
it was violent. . .

“Just for tonight, for once, the gang will fail
to wreak its promised revenge; shoveling, scrabbling,
grabbing, ignoring rotting fruit,”

An ancient, crumbling world:

“We must walk from here.”

“But, what is the sun doing up, here?”
(We walked in the wrong direction,
or was it the sun?)

It's gone up, lying across the wrong wall,
in the wrong spot, in the wrong room—like a bug. . .

locus(t)?

...

Could I begin now?
Could I start now?
Writing
a book on the theme: *I Saw My Head My Land?*
and begin cutting?

Shifting, changing constitution patterns; moments
of awareness, moments of crisis, moments of
atmosphere and physical splendor?

If it is quiet, of course.

The Land of Bright Ideas
In all the useful arts, the world is going
backwards, or standing still.

Ambulatory, the world is adapted
to walking, moving about, or from place
to place; not stationary, right? Not

fixed—innominate bones—not
fixed, not rebuilt or debugged.

I am the one who is here, who will ask:
but, in what shape?

“A shape, slightly ajar,” I’d say. “A bugsmash
on a windshield, leaving behind a mess
in the shape of a bird.”

Can we remember someone, correctly?

“Mental taxidermy? No, I use the one left behind, that belongs to history,” said the slightly ajar shape, “left behind, then found in a field after a tornado, fresh and clean after the aftermath of the rains.

Perhaps tonight I’ll work on *The Creation*, somewhere that stone is lying around, the problem: I draw so big I draw from the shoulder rather than the wrist. . .

However, I’ve already seen bits, and it’s marvelously good!

I Seek to Net the Wind

Do I emit that kind of greedy noise?

I was shelter, but you were home.
Now, I'm only a block.

I knocked on the door to see
about tilting the house.

(silence, then)

The wood was old and brittle, there; to be
alone and quiet there:

“The air is good here.”

“I like air.”

“We all like air. We really do. We do have that
in common. We do still have that.”

“I still seek to net the wind.”

The whole world was a living creature
and her heart—when I drew out that radiant
drawing, with its ability to sing through
the whole thing with that marvelous
rhythm—it would've been chaos. . .

a violent pause, *violence*.

“If you'd like to build a house—build a house
and don't ask anybody.”

Like a great wave, her heart, crouching
over a rock that over and over has made
me weep instead of dying; if only I could
breathe and then see further. But, I only sit
here like a bag, empty, on a porch, breathing
the night air—a great monument to me.

That was the right moment—*The Denial of Death*,
I named it—with its colors of and in and above the houses,
this I imagine is accurate, honest and simple
and I imagine *accuracy*.

Let me put on the gramophone and try to quietly try
to recall something of it:

A circular house with character, like one
that's old—fat or skinny—aged, double-chinned
and fighting for breath. . .

“You wanna remember your life?
Remember it musically.”

Always in the background, playing;
or at least, during moments that feel
monumental

“Oh no, I'd like to hear it—the wind.
Like a soundsystem.”

But, it doesn't sound—the wind—like a soundsystem.
It sounds like real people.

Faking being homeless: dirtying shoes, clothes, etc.
Making signs. Hair always stringy and wet, we
ended our days on roofs.
The backs of her arms pale as perfect
gloves swinging back and forth.

Whatever that world means.

So, I'll stop now—and the rose-colored world, how
interesting—because all day I've fought
with memory: beautifully shaped, with plainly sexual
clarity, like simple sentences.

A vision of flames, a madman's trick, where
an “I love you” is always hard to come by.