

Gary Sloboda

Extinctionist

Chin to the rafters. Candle wax at dawn. I dreamt of losing many jobs. With a nickel rod lodged in the lumbar. Soul scrubbed raw. In the dank puddles. Hunted sky.

Pastoral is larceny. The hobbled crow repents. And petroleum derides the astringent scent. Of tubes shoved up nostrils. Of the nation's radiation. In the mother's milk.

Some want to feel good about this. Look at the spontaneous joy. Bursts of fireworks and flame. Nails like the pink of contrails at sunset and dawn. They wave at me.

The stagnant trees. The motor homes. X that marks the spot in the heart of the suburbs. Where big rigs line up to haul the waste away. I always felt the water was sacred. (No?)

Specimens on the tablecloth. Their stifling smell. Like jamming a shareholder down another's throat. Chased by ethylene glycol. All day swam in the river. Of lye.

Maybe you try. Perhaps think. Let the last trumpeter swan drift over the holding pond. For it's sunny over the generators. The bugs gone wild on their frequencies.

Sea of my cell phone parts. The hulls of mothballed ships cast vast shadows. Over the marshlands. Like repeating a tiny hammer on a tooth. It depletes the cartography.

Promised land: I've seen the zenith so I'll take us there. In horn-rimmed glasses that reflect the light from high-rise buildings. To you I will return. My heart's not here.

These guns are the mouths of futility. Never had no issues. Until background levels were exceeded in the blood. The guard dogs sleeping. In the fumes of old age.

Even the little ones know. In ripples of the mandolin. And weeping fiddle. Towns in the tour book. I show them. Like explaining rare flowers. Driven deep underground.

Localized

The streets were infested with botched operations. And brightly colored hairnets. I forgot the key to get back in. Where the hologram noose swayed in the pixels. Between us.

Original Buffalo Wings and New Age Massage. Healed the faith. Of have not. Groomed like a governor. I slept on the discarded couch. On the sidewalk. Cohered with mold.

The sheen of leather in the track lighting. The sound of knee and hip replacement patients. Moving towards their pills. A demographic policy. Of tapping canes.

Sheared of the heart. Of revelations. Colonized by our appetites. As the bride vomits discounts on cruel words. Into the hydrangea bouquet. Some try to grab it.

Absolved by offenses. Like aftershave applied in a splashing motion to the ugly man's face. The residual angst gathers. The days pass on the storyboard. Of greasy foods.

Support cables shake on the pedestrian overpass full of commuters. That river runs blind. And white light beats on deathless birds that linger there. Upon the unsent postcards.

We severed ties from old thoughts. Children offering chocolates were summoned back home. By tongues of dead cardinals. The thrum of blood in the brain. Will fail.

The lovers lied. It felt like a theft. As swallows pinched harmonics from the heavy air. Police were called. Stitches in the ears they tried to tear apart. Would not.

Bloviator

Partial sense: people are not property. Roommates failed at their erstwhile careers. Happy and alive. In workpants. Wearing Buddha t-shirts. In the streets of home. Alternatingly intricate and bold. The cops patrol this sector. Heavily. Sore from love. And assignation.

A boy hums. A cozier kind of hymn. How the cat invites the wind unto its mane. Watching shit go down. Or not. Joint-ventured shale fields. A national tragedy. The fertile plains obscured. Portions of a rainbow. Drawn in heavy chalk. Tracked on shoes.

Local goddesses sneer: drunks at a table. I am hopelessly afraid I will never come back. A luminous grief. On the fruit vine. Crawling with aphids. Falling through air in a kind of slow motion infinity of the moment. The delicate flower dance stored in the brain.

Through the passage of empty houses. In remade towns. No brethren. Water of life was last seen there. Not knowing half of it. Stood on the rocks like a freak conception of media. Painted mauve against the combusted sky. Population's histrionics. We're toast.

The sympathy machines have failed. Original thoughts: faked. (Necessarily.) A dignified messenger leans on the gate. Saying. It was said. The liquor of light has consumed us. And thought declines each invitation. Of the rustling trees. On avenues of acidic rain.

There's a hacksaw lying in the shed. A kind of composition. It questions attribution of my words. How before the war. Drank summer from a fruit jar. Lost eyetooth but found a personality. A divine autism. How I spit and spit. Then purr. When I finally spit it out.

Sir Francis Drake

Before the amiable mental slaves called it home, there were stands of palm trees like tattered wigs along the shore where the cold sea delineated the city's dusty bezel, and where carbuncled old men would think and smoke above the bird shit constellations, assessing in the gathering clouds the sails of arrival.

Partly cloudy, 65 degrees, dreaming of carhops: who has not arrogated the laws of fate to the circumstances of one's present hovel? Like a rationale for a universal tattoo or how the archaic but persistent math of despair is written on a Ziploc bag of rainforest alliance produce, its certification being license to contain one's guilt.

Ideology of abundance results in a passive annihilation of this land so full of radiant flora and genuinely good people that its map is buried in the mind as I wander with my destructions, feasting on pelican tacos and metallic wine. Only here, in the inhospitable tundra of memory, smoking the resin of New Albion, will I do no harm.

Sunflower

Bell of the wind: I enter the daydreams of the bloated seagulls above the manmade sea that churns the lights of the metropolis. The horizontal engines of blue and brown, vast and layered like a Rothko, turn the lens inward. On the pergola of the doublewide, chatter percolates; laconic prophecies all thumbs around the fire. My hands crumbed with party snacks, a buck drops dead in the eye of a hunter. And synchronous fowl signal the interpenetrations and intentions of the fields. With the pacing of a monk, I wander out to where the sunflower stuns the black and bluish hue of late night. There is no spiritual solution: kneel down or wither in banality.

Bluesy

Derma-braised air. Collapsed on Swedenborgian. Felt desolation of social context. Counted my fingers and her hands were missing. Just out of reach. Doctor would not see her until she was blue with red splotches. Never looked so bad. We touch. Can't rest.

For what good do we wander? Trails climb precipitously narrow. A leafy ovation stalls us. We're set up for taking down. Dust of river in mind. And the poppies' ambivalence. Wings grapple wings. Overhead. The continent starts in on us with panoramic flavor.

It's not a ballad we hear. It swings with a trombone line innuendo of catastrophic sexual relationships in $\frac{3}{4}$ time. I'd love to hear it again in the house she burned down as we were born. Where we've been told. They all swear. Her shadow was nailed to the wall.