



BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

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BlazeVOX [books]

Buffalo, New York

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publisher of weird little books

BlazeVOX [books]

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Introduction

Kiss Your Elbow
or, only the sick appreciate good health

Do you know how many wonderful things the human elbow and forearm perform? Well a quick stop at Wikipedia <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elbow> will enlighten any interested person in this awesome hinge! At this point you may be wondering why the elbow is brought up in a poetry journal, well I took a nasty fall early in March and dislocated my left elbow. It has been a painful healing process and I am fully recovered. My elbow moved all the ways it once did and I can pick things up once more! It is very exciting, I know. If you may want to hear more, here is my artistic response.

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This is an excellent issue, our largest ever! I was busy picking and choosing for this issue while recovering. It was particularly irksome to not be able to fully edit as my heart wanted to do, but I was able to dedicate a bit more time to the selection process. So hurray! We have work from writers at every stage in their career, from first publications to mid career to the well established! There is a delightful interplay between all of these pieces that move around the vastness of contemporary poetry.

Our goal is to present poetry that does not suck. This is the only criteria for our journal, well that and an interpretive freedom on the part of the contemporary poet, prose poet or fiction writer, with exponents of a wide range of viewpoints

brought together to explore. And in that exploration we do not mean one specific interpretive approach. However, the freedom for a poet to come at the poem from a view that might well be extremely unusual but is actually bound up firmly with the content of the poem — an approach that is centered on communicating that content with as much impact and individuality as possible. And with that, I think you will be extremely pleased with this issue!

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Geoffrey Gatza

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Aaron Anstett

WHAT NEXT

Speaking of oxygen, it's everywhere, and thank heavens
all solids are visible, otherwise, abundant concussions.

Abracadabra, here to _____, the walloping sunlight
over debris fields and detention centers, bordellos

and burglar bars as x-d jet streams quadrangle wide, any-
color sky, below which x-number things drift on what

invisible hinges: newsprint unfurling in wind and car
crash imminent (birds in some flowering thicket do flicker),

each driver about to say _____ or _____ on cell phone
at the intersection of _____ and Complete This Sentence.

FLAMES ON A VESSEL

"Turns out Uruguay produces a fantastic blueberry."
-George W. Bush

Secreted in hollowed-out hardbacks,
mulch of their pages, letters confettied,

packed in space the shape of an "a,"
followed by a "b" and a "c," etc.,

26 upright repeatedly sequentially
throughout many libraries, ransacked absences dammed,

as in detective novels, each book emptied
but not in the outline of gun or bottle.

Absurd, even obscene, this non-sequitur epigraph
and one-ended metaphor of shredded text

following a title a fiery signal of distress.
With what is a tortured body synonymous

I wonder, warm, reader whose attention drifts, watching
details of a landscape vanish under anonymizing snow.

MY ADVICE

Sooner burgle the igloo of blubber than spare clothes.
Caught taking either, lie down and mime the horizon.
This will not save you, but it's your last chance to do so
with humans to witness. Best case, you're set adrift,
and then, into what great, strange stomachs you can trespass!

UNRESOLVED CONFLICT

I dreamed a pony with the face of Freud,
glasses just so, beard immaculate, chewed grass tufts,
dropping cigar ash, tail swatting behind in vivid sunset.

Foreshortened centaur, lacking human arms and neck and torso,
he made whinnying pronouncements I barely followed, my German rusty,
his munching fervent. My best guess:
America a mistake, a giant mistake, the clover luscious.

Andy Frazee

from “The Body, The Rooms”

1

My body rests in its perpetual motion machine, its circular cellular division, its
divisioning. The rooms

are not my rooms.
Their ministrations want me

to envy enclosedness, un-
dialogic fingers *Lives beneath a February sky, sinking certain words*
into the world, the page of worldly symptoms. and the arcs they dance, prompt
as letters written, alphabetic litter
written under condition *Comes to the*
world weakened from movement—through dream, my dreams partake of me.

and maps on walls,
no maps on walls, rooms
pale in comparison *(When I sleep alone, bed wet with slick of me, the sweat and come of me, snow in faux spring—*
rooms of the past
encamp with the *here.*

They memory-grasp.

To let them in, induce
the design *low-angle daylight through windows decades older than me—*
the entire ramshackle city, their songs
patrol me, echo off

dust motes. *a foundation of invisible stilts, imagined scaffolding.)*

Churn of wash, hum of heat:
I belong to taxonomy. Periodic table
my moods indicate

some visible space. Insects
in corners can't be

reached. Have they names? *My body seems something solid and permanent. And pure, pure as a god's mouth—*
the TV's dark. Once it said
ten dead. It invokes
a world, a corner of room *though it caves in like calendars, craves coffee*
and sugar, takes Prozac with its breakfast, with its toast and eggs and its

with some special maneuver
grabs an object-
part and drags it

inside my apartment-
gut like a huntress *(death of my father, then death of a friend—death of a love affair with—) (winter*

some terrible compromise
a million years ago. Some splice

humanity meant to them *sprinkling salt on the mirror of me, sowing the ground with—) (I call upon*
the thaw and reflective sun, refraction in the mirror of—). to preen the day's
shards and rust—and permit us
to envision the other.

Lock on door, door in
wall, wall in *Sets itself in front of the*
mirror and sees its scars, its pores around the nose—like some landslide, some lava flow.

books stacked in a corner. Near a lamp,
a fan. Near the fan, a
window. Venetian blinds. Outside: *It needs a cut, it needs a shave.*

My body dreams inside itself. At night my body dreams—

friends and fathers long gone, lovers and love, one upon one, one upon—.

I can never place the train
where the sound comes from.

A martyr to forget,
that sound, a Saturday

*Dreams of music—The spheres undefined,
though of rock stars,
performance artists—*

*Dreams of peace,
a feeling of well-being,
feeling comfort in its skin.*

its music keeps me warm.

And the room, a slit throat
the hall reminds me of *It consists of dreams and skin.* all its mechanisms *Counts on me to do what's right.*
Sometimes seeks a soul and comes up cold. behavioral

models, everything *(Hear me you*
Methodists, you mother and grandparents! Hear me Baptists, my they sister and brother!) *(The waning daylight*
makes me miserable!) *(And the sink sunk pollinate me into the countertop! the sink gleaming through the night!)*

Will lie silent on cold table. Wants cremation not internment. This is my last will and—.

Useless doesn't lie here.

The fan in the corner
the wind won't enter.

(A sight to see, parking
lot, maneuver) *Confirms the oxygen around it—says goodbye and hello on the phone or when it's buying milk to
help it grow*

into newer, bigger, badder bones. but enough
of movement. They correspond

to a heart, these chambers. Pushed
through the threshold *Ten dead in Iraq today—roadside bomb,*
suicide bomber—the elections draw closer as— again the threshold threatens *Likes sunlight, impending summer*
storms. to pin me among worlds.

Blood clot *the accounts of tsunami lost climb to stratosphere and past—*
into empty void, universal god-space. of my forgetting.

Wonders if it's animated by anything other than itself Something's meant
to change. Objects oblique
and serviceable (*blood vessels, meat—
tendons, nerves—brain and brain stem—pitted skin and hairy skin—* if the ceiling fan wants to
make a mechanism *hair*
from my head, ears and nose and arms). Some sort of animal— of my dreams—it should (*want to be some
poisonous animal too small to see* dream their solidity, their
corners and sills *and crawl up under a toenail, or down a throat, an
unawaking ear, then folds of brain—lying, laying eggs there*).

enclosure should posit its tenets:

A gloaming at end of day. Prescience
in their knowledge of my movements

*My animal of sounds and language, of sense and poetry, of meaning and non-meaning,
of perilous endeavor, perilous viewing, perilous making.*

my shadow should haunt me.

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A.D.Hitchin

Notes

The tyranny of this poem formed from halfway language; pistoned -
the taste of her skirt, the texture of her caressed nipples hardening in the sirens whimper.

I felt her reflections and took notes. Definitions of words forcing warm meanings, chewing moist cookies. A tentative title invented against her cloying eau de cologne and gentle breath. We might vanish between cigarettes or change of dress ...

Bourgeois ideas blushed bathwaters distorted blue. In casual silence she unwrapped the chap stick with delicate fingers and inclined toward me breathless. The whispers of a body no longer merely organs; an inscrutable mystery. The flickering screens interest narcotic wet.

Persuasion

Over-sensitive, highly strung, shy and
elusive I shuddered with an infants frightened subjection - eyes widely dilated
her lips transferred something half-remembered:

'Persuade me there is a reason for living; that there exists meaning'

language is flawed and demented she said, skipping ruins
and I could see she wore nothing underneath the light gauze of her dress
beech-wood lashes open, we danced, I tried to disguise my feelings
revealing them in the process; running over with exuberant childish affection
treetops swaying, clothes spilled feverish, her stretched out full length, the surf breaking crests beyond the window ...
.

Later we drank and said nothing, while she gently brushed me with her slight curves and
we smiled amid the dinner-parties absurd amiable talk.

Saint of Killers

scavenging dogs
lichen priest saint of killers
guilt god chain-link fence cop
melting into bloody gauze of locked doors and
horizons body bags
flanked by bombs, whistling stares of loitering consciousness, hobbling unfamiliar through Indian summers
smouldering thick cinders;
electrical signals biting cursed bullet spun false redemption - pistol drawn Mickey Mouse burps cola, straddles rotting
oil adder ...

god lives in the work of the fire sequined sky
shopkeeper preacher chews grit like Texan tar, then
spits.

Paris

trees glistening lacquered cracked mirror,
shadow cars and bicycles gaunt of devotion
by weathered windowpanes cafe she glows inwardly, an object prophet view of timelessness
black cigarettes delirium registers vaporish poker chips, mad drunk heavy garters ache fermented in Indian glass,
twilight hour explodes exodus espresso's inky molasses and the abortive throat of cities hollow Easter.

Looking at Clouds

Clouds never appear lonely.

Clouds, in my observation, most commonly congregate,

their bulbous billows and tufts touching, even

merging, as they journey across the skyscape. They are impelled by force and do not know where they are going, but at least they are travelling together.

If a rare cloud does appear alone it looks elegiac. Hanging gracefully in cerulean Hessian its wispy tendrils trailing cotton creepers like a divine climbing plant;

the upper- rungs of Jacob's ladder.

I often think I see people and objects in clouds; eyes, noses, mouths, animals, cars, kitchen utensils ... it is surely the vanity of the human mind that it seeks to impose order on something so amaphorous. To ascribe human qualities to it. A cloud does not *have* a shadow, it *makes* a shadow

as we make our own.

Resurrection

You wear crows feet like beauty marks. Mine reflect spun web. Marble glaze cat scratches with the potential to open into fissures. Seismic, old testament fractures the faithless plunge within ... never to return again. But your eyes are tender mercies. You clutch the wound tightly; an ungloved paramedic attending an emergency. I am a repeat offender sprawled again over paving, body tremulous, flickering in blue light. A needle glints between your lips wound with stitching ...

and I am sutured closed. You weave me back from memory. And my signature is the same and my objects are in their places and I resemble myself to all my friends and relatives

But only you can give me breath.

New Permutations

breathe again!

in pliant limbs, tendons,

ruby splattered peaks...

new permutations;

great sun bleached brushstrokes, every camber caterwauling calligraphies, arches feather-soft, ejaculating blood-citrus

flashes, springing ballerina lips tracing curved roman mysteries ...

our virgin lungs inflate;

crackling bloody birth cries

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Alec Newman

Agoraphobia

A Bauhaus bone house or banhus. No,
no elegant, clean, white lines,
but the Brutalist beauty of bare concrete
and glass and rusting red steel.
High and mighty, but alone in its own
inelegance, among the intimate crowd
of red brick Victorians gathered
socially along the coal black canal.

Silk Street, Salford, at 8.00am

A spectral bell is pealing,
A shadow of echoes heard,
unanswered and ignored. Save
for a lone carrion dog
returning to its vomit
in the ruins of the mill.

BILL GRIFFITHS

Noising out the three centuries
(of) a transit long-base cattle gridding slow
sounds like

x / x / x / x / x /

that unskeltoning of beowulfness

Music, music, return intuitive tunefulness.
Amongst moontorched mistletoe and oak's
snug, sleeping buds.

Sea's own spring season's tide,
swell coastal, bloat rivulets
and flood fertile the alluvial plains
of willow. Old name: welig.
Lie Avalon, Bill Griffiths, amongst
(the) hawk moth's withy beds,
(and) blue tip / red tip
butterflies.

Meditate in a tobacco trance
of widow-wise curls of smoke [...]
In vigorous youth, you,
the pretty, petty thief of poetry's museum.
[...] and swell Saxon craft
and recede Renaissance style,
weave wicker baskets, joy in making.
Sound like

x (xxx) / x (x) x
/ \ x x /

and sound like

oily lined.

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Abby Stringer

To my love

that fucking monster
revealed his vile face again
he *came* to me like he always does

go on
devour it
gorge on the pathetic carcass

scurry away my vulture friends
pretend you don't know me
save yourself, I am the sacrificial victim
no soul left for this feeding
the numbness suffocates me

that fucking monster
my flavor does not suit such a delicate palate
I was left for too long
and became acidic

that fucking monster
revealed her vile face again
staring back at me
her discarded lifeless eyes

Adam Siegel

Recitations I - IV

I
They were spying on you in the canyon I heard
That was when there were still other girls in there
They kept it out of our "sequestration"
I pretended I could not see it

To feign blindness was everything to me
It was the girls' equivalent

II
As they behaved themselves I thought
The empress serene so distended
It was not for the sour and gentle
The meal I prepared as they hovered

In canceled persuasion the girls left it open
This they did solely to further advantage
I wanted it to close down I wanted it finished
La chose I smelled it One would glide

Above the carpet that was when they were
Listening to me thieves dogs yes

III

All of them frozen or freezing or worse
Every recording a document oder umgekehrt I said
They were self-conscious enough to believe me
To see me down in there yes so justify me

Scarlet the clothes I wore
The crown atop it all I warned them
The chief's admonition
Something I wore and wore and wore

IV

They put together in the street and
The expectation came It was that I could
Well service it Pewter and silver
They called to me I would sit before

Gorging and suffering the grease and its sheen
Everywhere on my face My face in that light
Suffering Pretending that the captain stepped
Forward To remove it To keep it well clean

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adam strauss

From Apology

1

I can breathe easily; I can use my limbs; if I were on Catalina I could pick fennel-fronds to freshen my breathe and also if I don't remove the inevitably there green flecks then make laughable if the people who see are really discerning about that; my sadness is my fault; my sadness is the duration of my mistake and not only that; my sadness is wholly incompletely good; I imagine I'd be sad on the beach; not looking as admiringly as I should at the kelp; I feel like I need help; I also feel like; my state of sadness is overcoming but that seems like a wrong word when I'm not even crying; I'm close to shudders; lovage at an emerald cove called Emerald could be fun; am I purposefully drowning myself in shame? I fear I'm imagining correctly how badly I've erred; I'm scared; outside is beautiful; I'm scared I've failed apology; blue; I wish I were adrift; an island in mist; not banished; outcast to a few fig trees and sea-wrack for scenery;

2

Stranded; blue;
Whales here and the
Southern hemisphere;
The best way to live
It seems to me now
Is to not make mistakes;
I mean not the one I've made
Which I'm not
Succeeding getting over;
I'm beginning
To conclude I'm a scumbag
For not getting over;
For being stuck
In the wreck between being
Aware and living learning better ways;
Being afraid to go on; going; blue; song;

3

No conceit can take back the error I wrote;
Iridescences; I wish becoming always means better;
Mostly water; mostly blue;
Shore lines; majesty; unsure lines; kindness;
Tree I am not; should be;
Undo rightfully demanding never did;
Passage; gap; I'm agape;
Implicated badly;

4

Breathe; breathe; breathe; breathe; breathe; blue; waves; tides; dolphins; taxiing to Catalina; blue sky; flying-fish; blue-shark just enough below the surface to be out of sight; a buoy which looks brand-new; even a different brand then its fellows down and up the coast; one and one and one and one; none other than me messed myself up to this present state I'm in; drowning in I-ness; no; alive; breathing; I do not want these words to lie; blue; blue; do; blue; breathe; fallen into space outside circumference; ken; no likening region; no; reason; no good enough state; I horribly mistakenly wrote otherwise; ignorance; unintentional; no less real; harmful; I'm scared my mistake will define everything else I am; what else am I which isn't worth dismantling for nervermore?

5

If I do not believe you should listen to me what am I doing writing so much? There is no muse to talk to; no address write; there is breath; breathing; half-lives; I want to mend; I do not advocate gaps for gaps sakes; leastwise this one; my fault; un-necessary; passage; necessary passage; necessity; quandary; garibaldi; beautiful light outside; light beautiful while lasting; lasting after day goes; moon; moonlight; moonshine; sheens harbor-water; bilge reflects the new moon; Aurora Australis further south than I have ever been; colds winds; offshore; perfect waves; powerful; current roiling round them renders un-survable; whales avoid this skirl bone-chillingly burling towards burly headland secedes in a snarl of lashing rocks; were you un-moored you would be zoomed off; moored; scoured; bone shows; blood ensconced in brutal conditions no shark would bother with;

6

My body ekphrastic; my mistake; my; body; mistake; not hysteria; nor “happly hysterics”; oats wave at a blue sea waving; rumbling; fine sand; glittering; littering; erring; ring; ringing; purls; piling; slimy; slicking no pearl; shine from shattered; hard light of salvation; then as now; somehow; precarious equivocation; in an unclear emergency; one way cannot say; I’m morphing into stutter; utter chaos unlikely; not as much information as could be possibly provided proves to be the fallout of the syntax lately settled into;

7

Arabesque;
Arab grotesque;
Daemonic; omniscience;
Post human
Posited as flowers;
Post heart;
Post soul;
Nothing
Before all;
Before all
Nothing;
Anew; a new
Way grew this
Garden; whether
One may witness
Grows
Remains for more
Experience; Ephebe and
Sorrow; slow

8

Arrival in this case means my departure;
Do; dew; homophonic dawn;
Equivocation's blank face mist veils;
Quarks demonized into atom-sized daemons;
Ur; after ur radically evades; is
All now evermore ever-after?
Truth and
Equality
Admit; what?
"Love lies sleeping"
On a
Green desperation;
Yellow flowers; verbs resuscitate world;
And; and from an ember
The warmth
From which
As in a vision
An egg;
Brooding
Over an
Abyss;
Infancy
Hatching;

9

Flightless ken; lightless vision; “visionary company”; love; chick fledged; at the ledge all landings start from;
John Keats I understand thee; beauty is for now not never; slow vision; my; my vocabulary exceeds any
complete sense; syntax makes suspicious; I am small; I am one hundred forty pounds; I do not wish to
exceed; just be enough; really; as in you know; everyone you know knows; plants sprout out this here planet;
grain so tender it’s green

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Alex Stolis

Suzanne Frischkorn listens closely

to every note of *exile in guyville* and when nothing moves but the clock
she reminds herself of broken windows and the half moon eyes
of her children

watching her every move. she waits to see the lesson in the way
an ash curves from an abandoned cigarette, reaches out to touch
his arm

feels the cold snap of truth. snatches of new york conversation
climb to the back of her memory and there's the sound of a dime
dropping into an antique jukebox.

the scratch as needle hits vinyl--a pop a click and everything starts
to sound like a divorce song. she falls slowly back into herself
and disappears without a trace

Michaela Gabriel is in love

with the wrong ideas--she forgets that pride means nothing, forgets
it is always easiest to think around someone else's problem.

when everything fails count the number of times you've been drunk
at the movies, talked back to the screen and realized nothing makes sense

like loneliness. fill the day with glasses and straight edged plans,
white lines will take care of the hours and the minutes will leak seconds

until there is nowhere left to turn but up. she's mad about the wrong man,
the one that pictures himself in the back room watching her brush her hair,

each stroke a breath that interrupts the silence. in the end there is nothing left
but to drive headlong into forgiveness, the top down and radio blasting

John Vick sees his own death

as anti-climatic, a cliché to be erased
from the page. Once, he had a lover
who lived in a doll house

just another sidetracked
romance with thin paper walls
and faded posters.

misspent words hollowed out
his best intentions but jim beam
fills the empty spaces

just fine, fuck you very much.
now that it's too late to make up
for bent promises

he wonders about the meaning
of gravity--wishes that things left
unsaid didn't really exist .

Ashley VanDoorn

“Rain softens roadkill for crows”

she writes while driving
while swimming and diving
through the oil spill
smothers some creatures.

She pictures scissors sipping incisions in another white room.
This is about the insulative¹ value of feathers vs. the naked woe-man.
Stitch, stitch—the flap of—wrist-hollow.
Is it sickening? The beak undressing the flesh from the bone.
Up to throat in wound. Dead going gone.
Dark eye against cloudy eye.

All she wants is to stop looking and all she has is desire to watch
rain fall coal-gold on the rescue-crew.

Coal: / other oil /

There are all these slicks at sea.
And at sea these slicks are bombed.
Aviation fuel is dumped on the slicks.
Quantities of ground chalk, dumped on the slicks.
The slicks get dispersed with detergent.
And the slicks’ aromatics evaporate.

Gold: / dolorous /

¹ spellchecker prefers “isolative”

People dancing naked catching coins and kissing them,
holding them up in both hands clutching them toward
every overlapping god, and the coins grow and grow
flashing back and forth in the chanting ecstatic hands
of the people and they grow so large they swallow
the sun and all goes dark as a crow swallowing

her another's outpouring now shut to light

and her eyes want to close and her mouth opens out the opening
window she dreams the arms she is driving toward/away from
in plush covering isn't this gory thing² cleverly cleaned?

² thing: always a vehicle

the broken car excuse broke us up is broken as a broken record

on a soaked afternoon
lonesome isn't blue, isn't clear like you—
it's maybe-gray or eyesore orange

*

transported (transient port spotted)

*

you who looks for a guarantee outside
feel as a waterfall
you should be a/cross by now

*

one a sacrifice and one a sack of ice

*

broken in broken down broken out
break dance take a break give me a break
brake

*

chirping
honking

lemon-scented shelves
green-wave gutters

intimate
isolation

“reality” is rated aRc—
when you know where you are,
you’re inveRting it

re-tire her in a birdhouse
for a net-head she’s feathered
land and limb pen-pinned
peeling wall-papered (oblique
map-and-doll print fabricated)
scratched to scraps masters scale-
matter plastered patter-familiar
slammed slack what bleak bird-
bitten dust floats over worm-
terminal she misses messy as
a misty nest she’s missed too much
munching spineless refinement
isn’t it fishy how she flashes
the wing/fin what he i’m/parted

“we couldn’t be driven together so...”

Weather Art *We At Heart* (Wear Apart)

If the lake-whiff breeze of childhood
lacks verve but values chance to change? (her trek tracked by discovered
tackle beached then bleached)

A dark line describes scent's faint wavering intervention.

If a teenage rain intersects ink-minerals
and abstracts adult agriculture? (she sifted through her search a little
engine through rift injured rife)

A zone of worn-warm figures shield the chill-blotted field.

If middle sky is now almost a bottled
blue in which floats a sinking boot? (this season ceased reason loosens
her tongue-seized-tongue)

Supposal within grasp—stars pieces of foil—shifted wishes.

If lightning suppression is attempted
by introducing aged silver into clouds? (leaves the dock slimed with slippery
organic between-the-slats snag)

Artistic formations gain brain potential from earthquake up.

If enough charge accumulated
distresses results in strokes? (letters enter the net as sand
dredged accumulates she links)

Head-Heart poles drop thunderheaded experiments around eve.

If the narrative perimeter might
hurricane the worst in memory? (in caves she bubbles into waves
sinks and springs to surface)

No precise tornado delicately balances these various controlling factors.

If the developmental sun contests
future metaphor-worship? (the gritty bottom spreads rapidly
covering all her contrasts)

Inevitable subdivision on clear feasible borders, but distance continues.

elite lite

wilderness has become a symbol
extended because it surely should
lead to true wild—free to be storms
and forests to burn (but that is the
ideal (old but not for self) system free
to change without interfe-(refuge of
absolute ref-)rence—she refuses to
allow some measure of control
must consist of at least a fairly
compact unit providing an interplay
(p)reserves separate, specified
(place-)holder(-retained) escapes

(the gloved woman with the parasol
shadows the girl with the lacy doll
who stares away from the golden clasp
of the purse resting on the woman's lap
into the otherwise ignored bright bouquet
centered on the center table of the café)
in the corner painting at a cheap gallery
and she spends too much on it happily
and she hangs it in her little room
autonomous soon
(the girl is not herself) besides
(the picture is not herself) outside

Riddles for an Anchored Hot-Air Balloon

What resembles a reassembling of angels wielding savage weapons?

Right-wing: frozen fires barely shift inside a fear-box,
a float like a gesture but locked up
Left-wing: lift can't polish whims, dig, can't weld
the whale to the owl, hint hint

What expands to amoeba and contracts to shark-length?

Speech-cloud, be buoy between the liquid whip
and the trees' trial—bating how we're animal
reveals we're mythological

Prime-mates, when you ruse each other, who rouses the most outcast "if"
if you exist like rain confusing thorns, like "like"?

Say yes—yes saccharine, carnal yes—

What passes for the soul?

If time heals all wounds, why can't we live in time?

Amused by this truing mood, mind's mine field
is a parachute matching altitude

Does the garden cherub scare the celestial monkey?

Will white horses tortured rhythmless foam over the newledge?

Ghost in perpetual approach you are just like our friend—
mystifying gift—unstuck target tangled up in jump—

Bars Through the Intelligent Hearts of Cities

Milestones strip grindstones' grip
allowing "if" to exist with "if" we exist
we continue to wash our faces & blot them out
on towels we can see our faces inverted—
our faces watermarks, blank stains that blink—
the things we think we drink to.

Construction cuts our fingers gape when we write
we've got puss on our pens is a gaudy or raunchy
cliché the way we dream we bite down on blood
capsules each time we read & words spurt and drip
out of we mouths—well, we do not really bleed—
we are sealed and our seals reveal us unbloodied
& we worry we're unblooded because when we crack
we do not bleed, we capture fractions of how things
regulate = how things rule, collecting strange object(iv(iti)e)s.

It's impossible to believe except in deceiving we feel
more alive when we're dead
to time (when we don't exist)
& life is a transit-fantasy
pedestrian-peripheral
& surfaces for obvious reasons
we grew up with sound-syndrome
& now observe a daily rise
in the bottom-
feeder traffic if it were to be diverted
our rights-of-way movements
would casually clear-cut our
varieties of browse & competitive
towers would be shaded & the row

of powerlines marching
across the countryside could not be

- a. inconspicuous
 - b. decent
 - c. underground
 - d. strung
- divisions along

wet print rings the unwritten rim & the end of night wires a satellite whim:
what's good for our souls wouldn't get on our nerves if we reversed it.

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Brian Hardie

Honeyed Words, Voice of the Tempter

Coffee couches surf the denim
Plague, or sorcerers of belonging and a
Forgotten brainwave. Ticking slow,
A reggae slumber in an
Erie state of malicious
Pondering, deep in an Oregon
Horror.
Hearing you, inner void, is
Not a life to interpret. My
Silk life drains human
Nerves while the sirens moist
My palms.
They hold a dialect starving
For comfort in an accent treasured
By satin sin.
Truth subverts through whips alive
And the dull spikes need. Light moments
Intriguing the past. Hollow trees
Savoring the lie, strumming the
Eyes of anger pending rage under
Your cruel sky.
Is such like wind the grief of
Romance? And
Why such a burn in the ache
Of our heart?
Madness scattered black pedals
On the gates of intimate
Gardens. Ending with a
Melody sung flat to the hills

Put to rest by a trembling son.

November 4th, 2008. Manhattan.

Electoral candidates inscribe native

Love letters, painful

Synopsis- a call for,

Demanded.

Leaves, souls, hearts, parks, all forget

radiant words, thus, prayers follow

Behind with tears rolling about to nurture

Regret. Forever meaning a

Peaceful way inside a prance through the

Path of central risk, and a complacent

Vein funneling what could not be

Sold, now thrown, in clarity, to the lost boy markets.

Down the street, to the bending corner, gentle

Whores strive to detain the Boston sunset,

Binding the journal selected to never speak. This-

The rate I voice via lurid Westside taverns. In a few films

On lucks pleading, bleeding heart, I

Bid farewell, addressing the soft eyes that

Forgot to blink when feminism passed by.

My Place In Central Park...

Hear these eyes, perceive your providence... steadfast doom! Cliché tri-state thinker of the past, and undergarments worn to arouse. Shells found on stormy shores among lonesome islands. Planes above. The flames of New Hampshire conceive the children of my sexual insight. Pages perplexed and confused by the shrieking songs of a melancholy mother. Alone, walking, and empty strollers. Flaming poets rhyming on the backside of rustic overtones. Snow flakes serenade the Vermont pedigree, mistaken perhaps for a dream hungry and craving the nightmare. The dangerous waves pick pocketing these grains of sand spin around my frail and flimsy future. Flamboyant fossils recover underneath the heat of an incomplete, breathing tide.

Regret Of The Drunken Text...

Agnostic fears believe faith is a
Love not able to be torn from. The innocent
Houses lined in the park deceive the
Scripts written by a
Homeless sensation. From coast to coast,
To the avenues of sorrow, mistaken foods are sold on
Circumstance, tattooing the sensitive
Voices on the opposing spectrum. Abrasive pigtails send
The ill fated intentions of souls suffering
The harm to hurt. Informal attires of the poets sadness
Is to forever confide in the hope of another. She
Foreshadows the loss through the sensation of
Desolate theories. Dripping from the pipes of my
Stomach, burns are lathered with oils of hostile
Scents. Thus Pain is cured with the flexible arm of
A single-handed solitary aid. Consider the oceans filled
With perished liquors stimulating the fluids of imagery.
Indecisive Florida shores observe the indulgence. Glossy
Eyes do not intrude on chances,
Only the original daring plead.

The Classic Pangs Of My Love For Tracy

Polite weather vibrates through and around your sudden change and beautiful maybe
Conscious or no I think faulty reasoning grates the cheese the feathers
Flapping on wings above the waves crashing down in unison crying my
Name. Pathetic dresses wave in the wind by a privileged compilation of thoughts
Building blocks and patterns at last deceitful. A partner of sorts is
Fought on a plank built by choking tribes of the unexplained. My
Worries are treasured in suspicion. Bleeding the mind funneling the
Sunshine alone. Screaming while he burns. My one chance relies on this word being said in
The pause of a whisper. The feeling of how a good alarm is lifeless.
The phrase could headline the late night comedy special. The
One to laugh at, expose, abuse in a sinister drilling to the
Center. Music seeps through the cracks of historic streets. Southern
Cities I suppose motive me to conspire artisan streets
And crowded funeral homes. I closed my eyes and saw everything I
Needed to in dreams for sober softness. Drunken rustic burning
Coals blistering my flaps that endanger. Time reads my
Palm. Lines of children and weddings and debt and death,
Nicotine sedatives coat my mouth. Absolutely amazed and
Taken aback by ticking time. My eyes need shade and mascara.
Again the articles state the minds brought to me by commercial

Social circles and rampages cycling through ten past twelves.

A soft coffee conversation

About the relief of my passing. Happiness should be brought

By this convicted self. I'm falling and not listening, finding

Limbs to break as I plunge through....

Three poems

Poem

PoetsoftheWorld

Serial 1 - 8

going, gulping into the batshitplacid
misty dawn, I ... or, you...stumbled
over oneanother over a rock covered in
distant lichens.

But we woke up in the city. We are in a city.
It is around 9:00. There is no room for rocks
which are anything other than rocks in a city.
This is why love is trrrifying. Vinegrows over
old vines grow over old graves. A friend sd [epistolarily]
“The death of
incorrrigibility
does not yield/the death of
hope, as
the death
ofa
driver
does not yield
of direction.”

In Turin, I hear, a woman sells sooty
kerchiefs to the weepers. In Kansas,
somewhere, there is a ship/which
they sailed across vast metonymies.

Last night, in the gale, considering
the once or twice that my oversized sternum
has cracked [Has been cracked], I

plucked young carrots
from the flooding earth.

POETSOFTHEWORLD
for sun ra

for sun ra

...

Hale Bop is real
and it is the
internet

Walt Whitman
~~invented-discovered~~
the blurb

desafortunadamente,
 martians, lovers, russians, dreamers
 Today is Tuesday
 Decembre 30th
 It is 41 degrees in Chicago, 3:60 PM
 I swear to god
 A poetry imploded
 somewhere
 (the supercollider in Bern)

I [Loomings]

Loom of citylit clouds back and forth
walking with a winter sunstroke aimlessly, slack
jawed. The woman who lives in the busstop.
Chicago and Damen
In its latitude and it's longitude.
Where we believe it. covered head to toe in white cloth
, a makeshift coma,
clinging to what warmth is there. rend hair
rend skin breathe shallow, fallow soy-sown
eyebrow ridge. O wintery swamp. Feign sleep
all, all, all the weight of an iron lift bridge on
the south end of the city raising to let a yacht
pass under.

Heading out to Lake Michigan
heading out to the gentle seas
of wealth, smearing the keel
with crows blood, writing a poem
there,
maybe

A sunburnt calf resting on a box of pastels
A sunburnt calf resting on a box of pastels
on the whitewashed deck. A sunburnt calf
resting on a box of pastels on the whitewashed
deck in the bright sun attached to a man. A
sunburnt calf resting on a box of pastels on the
whitewashed deck attached to a man dreaming.
A sunburnt calf resting on a box of pastels
on the whitewashed on a whitewashed deck deck
attached to a man dreaming of Ma Rainey. A dream of Ma Rainey
resting her head on the calf of her lover. Her lover laying on
her belly. The sunburnt crests of waves. Palpitations.

Ochre turning bluish over thousands of years from the moisture in the rocks.

II [Eurydice]

The tea takes to the water
in its small thro at in yr
small thrown voice, orpheus.
holy these jumbles of match
sticks, unignites, full precessional
elephants adorned with teakwood

head adornments, moths laying egg s
where they will, royal birth (s)
royal jelly. Poorfolks laughing
poorfolks building their own coff-
ins; tending to the bees, tending
too their sweet fingertips. One another
in the nesting doll geometry
of memory. The path of electrons
is the path of electrons.

III [Space]

Due to some delicate
bow in its molecular
structure
a protein de- natures.
(thread and ash)
(the chambers and the winds)

A grammar of the telescope; on the crook
of yr elbow in (its vastness) saying:
“I’m not” or “It’s not” or
“let’s us lay here and listen to the suttry box”

The birds' being; no better for it.

IV [Apple River; Lethe; Jordan]

Three catterwalls from the tall river grass
three steps from the tall river grass
to the rock where I lay my head;
three heads in my head on the rock
as I doze off to sleep

When I woke up again, a muskrat disappeared again into the water.

V [Marche]

There are armies-- I don't know how fortunate-- that invade with the returning monarchs.

And wondering “who’s hand is that holding her hair?”
The air around us changes holders.
The baldness of any given arboretum
[a smell of talcum somewhere]
bone dust in the bed of the Euphrates

There are armies--
I don’t know how fortunate--
That invade with the returning monarchs.
Oh, the pollencollecting collecting on brows,
helmets, boots, and nosetips.

VI [Renga]
by scott pierce, david chirot, an unnamed one, an unseen hand

a verb is not always
a god. which is un-
true (i.e. ‘being’).
the poem is the vein
in the muscle on
the minds. bones

warmed as they are by
being cupped in his hands
the flakes of snow like huge butterlifes wings

crickets--
only once do they
interrupt eachother

narcissus in the cold;
reflections don’t stay still
for long. shivering.

VII [Burn yr self up completely: An Allegory]

At the confluence of
the Kennedy and
the Eisenhower,
in spring rushhour,
[well, it was Autumn, really]
Malachi Richter lit
himself ablaze for
a poem. The poem

was called No More Poems.

VIII [your]

slowly eating
a plumb; you
came to mind

Curt Hopkins

Night and the Body

Y caída hacia arriba – O. Paz

It falls upward
Splashing onto the sky's face
And pooling like hard liquor.
The bronze bells
Torn like cardboard
Ring in the long wells
Infinite and crass
And the night is eaten
Torn into a thousand pieces
Sheeted into machinery
And chewed up in the gears
The puff of breath
Mutilated.
Mourners watch the body
Borne off on the waters
In its little ship
Shining with arms and armor
Magnified in vitreous descent
Then calls pitch off cliffs
And roads crack and fail.
The dead man would fix
A brass plate to his bow.
'At least I loved.'

A Desert Place

I planted black grass
In a glass plaque beneath a tent,
Rent by heat and wind,
Wounded by a boy of ten
Whose thin wand rose and wound
Around the choking, binding broom,
While in the polished plate
The blind, blown sand
Scoured the image of a face.
Here the sage ends hours
And our twilight lions roar at safe remove.
Draw whichever plans or patterns you desire,
Sand shifts and winds lift the skin off
The little places where we make
Our marks and scare ourselves.
Moons cast waving hills in silver
As they pass and flicker into filmed life,
But these are only moments, *entr'acte*,
Nocturnes lurking in a figured space.
Desert day says in this spine
The waiting magenta feathers of a flower
Are concealed, curled in its dry needle.
It's a simple thing, being, but it's hidden.

San Bruno

At Psara on the blackened slope. – G. Seferis

The fog has rolled over the hill
Into San Andreas,
Misting the reservoir's mirror.

Indians wander up
San Mateo Avenue
From Singh's Island Grocery
And Roop Kala Jewelers.

I can see the egrets pacing the reeds
In the slough by the airport
In my mind's eye.

Christie Ann Reynolds

I arrived early and wanting an instantaneous self

A little plastic man you sprinkle water on
and boom. Grows.

Wanting the same of horizon, season, lover

I clicked my heels to sparks,
became an anonymous alphabet maker.

Rain came in isosceles triangles and saturated
my profuse hatred for numbers.

I wanted a numberless fiend
to find me attractive and plant little letter babies in my brain.

We would eat fireflies and illuminate the many virtues
of tango and wedding cake.

We would import crepuscular and octagon into everyday
language.

Diaries would overflow with spores of mold.
Newspapers would crush to dust in a page turn.

Grass would grey with thoughts of shoes.

Our letter children would proudly become hostile
soup-shapes and enter people willingly.

An expletive written beautifully across the bed

I amount to nothing but your hair. A side swept
Helicopter sound of pocka-chockas and the snowflakes

You wrote of. Their disease-like shapes and their infiltration.
This is you, too. A colorful superstition of oil. A black jack.

An expletive written in the pillow with drool.

How I'm jittered by that one red string
In the tree. Is it idolatry? Symbolic of _____(you)_____?

*

(o red string, an expletive written flutterly in a tree,
a promised line,
a floating medallion in the blood of a branch)

*

Gently. Eventually. I amount to a shoulder. A hip and thigh bone.
White knuckle.

You understand now: I am a child.

I am so young but I promise you a face.

I commit to being a defective soul. I invest
In precise motivations of sorrow and if you change,

It will all just be a few crickets dying between us.
It will be like the horse head on the wall.

Absent galloping.

Our lives will be like the shattered tea cup
Gleaming even in deathlight.

*

We enter an experimental cathedral.
Our steps an organ-press.

I will offer my hair to the clergymen and dangle
Between their thighs. A child bell.

An invisible kaboom of church making.

You won't mind my tremble. My curtsy
And lip speak.

I pull the world down.
I own a field and bomb it up with bullets.

It is our cathedral and in it,
I am a burning wing.

An earth weapon
The sky discarded.

The Palm Inside of What Flows

Blood we said. Sweet girls. They speak
With it on their hands and the one with the petals.

September wears her as a dress. September learns
Her like a spool. The octagons

Of evening swallow pale faces. Lagoons. We achieve the lagoon
And pull ripples asunder.

We climb the light rays but they are bending
Into our bodies like men.

The blood we said. We said we are sweet child-girls.
We are watercolors of drainpipe and oil slick.

We are amounting.

Time Machining Again

There is nothing about arriving that I haven't mastered.
Opening the window. Stepping in. Opening the pant leg.
Stepping in. Arriving at clothing. Arriving at hello,

I am here to teach you something important.

Alone the bell drones. And bees, we think of bees
In her palm. The morning she set them free

On the lawn. Spreading apiaries like a redundant
flower. Arriving now, a birth

And a forgetting. Sliding of sound into stethoscope.
Hearing the word chiffonier between heartbeat and inhale.

And wanting France, always wanting France
to arrive in a touch.

How one day, I will climb into a timeless valise
And demand to be known as the only person who ever slept alone.

Constance Stadler

Renting "Becket"

I. I do not go to wakes.
Viewing the inflated, porcine
 loved one
Mumbling somethings
to the black ones
somethings hideously insufficient
 and never, really, true
'Taking it all in --
the gnarled, the sobbing,
the natty suited corpse

The ritual of concretizing
the dead as supreme vulgarization.

There are many who do not
 go to wakes.

But Ritual -- rote, automatic
 purgative
that is something else, again
something eminently needed
and pathetically human.

In those moments
of hung time
having fallen, once again,
into the vortex of sense
 and soul
of incredulity, of blackness
of tears, of remorse

of daily life impaled on
the spit of humanity
I seek solace
I rent "Becket."

- II. I was ten years old
the first time I saw the
vast screen filled with
crimson titles blazing
on simulated golden silk
set to strident
trumpeted heraldry

An announcement
An invitation.

A tale of two friends,
one man, a curtmantled bruise,
pursuing approval at the teat
of defeated superiority
one man, having nothing
to pursue, save hollowed
imperial seductions.

A collaborator par excellence
who falls hopelessly

in love

with the "Honour of God."

- III. I was so lost.
I returned to the apartment
off Tremont Avenue now
on the prowl.
Now, hunting down "honour."

And each day, at dusk, my mother
came slowly home
Crossing of countless miles of
restaurant tiles, swollen
and seared.

And every night,
vomiting her agony she
took me to her bed,
for warmth.
My father came for me each Sunday
a sober, dazzling vision that
was gone by Monday -- dissolve to black
a bilious heap.

Maturation arrives
I live many lives
The apple...
so close to the tree

Post-pubic crusade
Where was MY "honour"?
Where was MY cause, my
Reason to be?
It was all so beautiful
by the lee.
And yet, the melicerous
King Henry's taunt
lingered

'How does one seek honour
and live as a collaborator?'

Flash forward
Date:2008

IV. Epilogue:

Dear God
to this day
I cannot pray
Nor do I 'honour' you

dear god.
....y'almost had me
That

was a good one
oh, 'thy' aim is true

Dear God

ifonlyifonlyifonlyifonly
If only...

I had a fucking clue.

voyage

in the absence of light
I reach out to the dim
faint, fading
evanescence
of a midnight star.

cold light.
stark.

Soft shivers
run their course.

this haunting division
light from light
the death of the light
aborts time
stills
new life.

leaving imprints
in the shadows.

morning near Cape May

There is a Hopper print
in a rental house
near Cape May.

Strangely
it replicates
the very place
in which it resides.

Soft sun
on a sun-blached
deck of non-description.
Neither invite, nor rebuff
just there.

And so I walk through tidal pools at five AM.
The vast expanse of the Atlantic does not
assail, then.
And no ships appear on the horizon
With promise of rich spice adventure
and other illusions.

Sandpipers skittle dance to quivers of froth.
Droplet parapets of yore are pregnably dissolved.
And communities of hours are a knee-bend away.

sand crabs prowl most fruitfully
grand minnow ballabile
mermaid slippers immodestly saunter
an urchin begs for solitude

my moveable molluscan feast...
ah Dave, there's your starfish!

Everything bears this imprint of impermanence.
Each footfall carried away in murmur of foam.

And like every child I scour
the shore for the special ones ~

mother-of-pearl teasing
the perfect black fan
a tangerine surprise.

When the brine is washed off
You will lose your patina.
But now you are perfect.
Full ripened dead seashells
Not a shard in the lot.

It is time for black coffee
and the chattings of morning.

I walk past the Hopper
cupping my wealth
a breeze kiss on bare leg
it will be warmer today.

... frémissement un coeur, qu'on afflige...

Time

Distance

The remarkable capacity of the human mind to eradicate

what is most dear

will never separate us.

You cup my chin.

My left hand bends softly around your exquisite neck

as it has done

Since that very first time...

Fingertips dig deep into your hollows of response

Caressing without mercy

The fibers of my whirlwind wand lay firmly on

your belly.

Tense, taut, quivering in expectation

The aching gyre

Your liquid sonorous sobs

We are one again.

We begin.

Tear, tug, jerk,

whimper

scordatura

arco, arco, détaché, collé

portato, tenuto,

legatissimo,

legatissimo

legatissimo

The moans of Saint-Saëns shatter

the darkened linden trees

at the feet of entombed lovers

undulating in their shrouds...

screaming

at the voracious insatiability

of renewal

of our union.

Laughing

at the helpless penetration of my

peau de chagrin.

And,

as ever

whenever

I lie you down.

'like a monstrance

(Mon ostensor)

your memory

(Ton souvenir)'

steeps a muted body

sheaths its mottled soul.

Dennis Barone

Now and At the Hour

In the desert I saw my old teacher. We sat together on a bench near the few trees in that desert. He took my left-hand with his right and with an out-stretched finger of his left he pointed skywards. I saw the immensity of the heavens there in the desert night, and then I began to understand the small gray line between something and nothing, the balance between the stars above and the crystals at our feet. We are no more than those crystals at our feet. We are no more than those crystals and no less than those stars. We are nothing and we are everything. We are as we are and as we will be and as we were and we are here and we are there and we are now and we are then and we are all and we are nothing.

We march as we must march when told to do so. And then we march some more. Not one of us marches to a different drum. Each one of us steps to the thrum-thrum of a single drum that beats inside of us and outside and all around and everywhere. There is nowhere to go to escape its pulse. I wish that it weren't so: that its beat and the beat of my heart and your heart and everyone's heart were not one and the same. To separate is too desperate an act. No one has contemplated it: to mention it here, a risk, even an act of courage perhaps.

The mud thickens and an odor of dung seems to surround us. Sometimes we come upon pools of stagnant green water. It is always the same beautiful green. So many have already died, but nonetheless I believe that my chances to survive are estimable.

At the front, before my first day drew to a close, I, too, became mud. My mind short-wired and melted there; my legs, turned to oatmeal. Six months before I sat in a classroom memorizing the necessary names and dates, pledging allegiance, and thinking complacently of the fair set for our graduation date or those warm stews of ostrich feathers and carrot greens.

She's been here three times already this morning, and the more I tell her the less she seems to understand. We speak the same language, though you'd think one of us came from a distant land or stayed forever stuck in the gibberish of infancy. She treats me like a child, and an unpleasant one at that. I tell her again that nothing she does can shake me. It has all been tried before.

Our captain tried to make men of us and to impose some sort of order on the situation. We'd move near the dunes and then have to retreat. I saw my old teacher in the desert. He waved a white flag and wanted to parlay, but our captain wouldn't have any of it, and commanded us to march forward. We'd get right up to the dunes and the big weapons fire there and then we'd have to turn back.

I told her so this morning, but she wasn't listening. Her son has enlisted. Let's see, that would make me his uncle and I told them so much about all of it, but they didn't listen to me. Someone brought cereal and left and then came back.

We had to secure things: our route, a zigzag. These are secret things. They came and got me and took me. A long time later I had to leave, but by then I didn't want to go and couldn't think of where, but they told me. And the ride seemed endless.

After two days of this a few of us broke off, loaded down with grenades. Nobody said a thing.

I knew she couldn't keep a house straight because when we talked she couldn't keep her sentences straight. She'd ramble on too long about one thing or else she'd jump about without completing anything. Though on occasion she'd repeat one word over and over again, weave it into a sentence and have it pop up again two sentences later – like the word blue. She'd say, "Boy. Am I blue?" And then forty-five seconds later she'd say something about the aqua blue water at the city dock.

The captain yelled to us to watch the wire. Her brother, my brother stood there beside me at the door to her room much later while I thought of the captain and the wire. Who tripped it? But I threw them in time before he said watch it and he must have followed us because we heard him say it.

The captain tried to make us into men. (Her brother, my brother looked like a boy. That couldn't have been the son who enlisted, though – that would be hers who looked so like us but did not stand at the door. One of them wore a uniform. I didn't recognize the stripes, but he asked me about the call to arms.) The captain hadn't finished school, either.

So she came in again and said to her brother, my brother and to her son, he's all-bones. Who isn't?

Later they made me do the same thing, though the cereal was far worse there and the number much greater. In those first months there seemed to be thousands. Some died, but not many, and at one point some left. One day it was and one day it wasn't. From a window, I looked out at the gate. I recall waving goodbye.

Then that ripping sound, one acetic colon torn from a soldier's spine, a hand – it could have been anyone's hand, it could have been everyone's – reaching in and ripping it. Who would have believed it those weeks before in the town, in the school in the town, the classroom? We had our lessons then and they were the same as yours now, every chapter called *glory*: the most gruesome hand to hand combat imaginable.

My doctor didn't understand me. At first he had been my captor and understanding wasn't so important at that time. The hallways had to be swept and they gave me the broom. I did the sweeping, thousands of us in the halls and hard to do as fast as he wanted it done.

My nephew showed me his arms. She brought more cereal and I told her. They didn't want me, didn't listen to or understand me. This is easily understood. What's left of me? His epaulets he showed me, thinking there'd be some understanding or camaraderie. Then a hand held out.

At the dunes we held them off long enough to obtain an objective. A reverie overcame me and various parts separated from me, hovered for some moments between heaven and earth. My teacher appeared before us and promised glory. The captain lay face down in the dune. He had finished or was so by then.

A hand lifted me, pushed me along, but did not understand. And so she pushes and doesn't know why I arrived, an ugly reminder egging on a son even though unable to see, to stand, or to be understood.

With only one month left, we were lost and now my niece tells anyone who asks, "He's doing just fine." Her problems so easily cleared up. But her brother, that would be my nephew, has not been so engaged. Has he escaped the hymn to glory?

We went forward, not marching that time, but crawling. Someone said, "secure," and there beyond the edges, a ledge that led to nowhere marked by a wire. "Watch the wire," our captain said who must have followed but also chose then still to lead. One of us rolled over and threw and another went on and reached in and then pulled: the most gruesome act that can be imagined.

She'll be leaving on Monday, she said. Then we'll both be leaving, I thought. In the middle of the doorway she paused a moment, looked back maybe – said so. What she meant wasn't the same as what I did but she didn't know that.

So we left camp and marched thirty kilometers into the desert. We sat together near the few trees, passed around – something: oatmeal again, some cereal for lunch, too, she brought. Back at the hospital they never gave us knives. Here I get one, but have no use for it now.

So many hours stretch by those windows, pulled taunt across each sash. I give them my name and rank and nothing more.

A roll toward, a turn into, and then the darkness -- a trickling sound and then gushing like the fountains at home when first restarted early each morning, so early and so many of them down by the green sward near the river's fertile bank.

Is there a possible elsewhere? A grandchild, grandniece to be more exact enters with butterfly wings attached. Her socks are argyle. Her wings do not move and yet she flutters.

These years in the autumn damp ... longed for a pattern of iron. It is a very comfortable thing to remove a costly mistake. The attack encouraged, in effect, the experiment to succeed. Bells tolled. They would abolish conflict. In a spirit of harmony would be begun the most organized power.

She moved over and leaned in my direction, her wings almost touching me. As she leaned back, for a moment the light from the window had been blocked.

Finally, profit – despite the loneliness – rerouted persistent desire. All these forces led to twice as many locks. And during the routine grinding who were willing to define standards and apply them? Who were willing to be held down to less than half the amount?

For a moment I tried to clap once or twice. She had turned on her toes and made a delightful buzzing noise.

New and perfect intentions carried this crowd to three years of realignment in both mundane paper and illustrated savagery. That split could not be shipped across the best-loved estates. It seemed that to tear down its most worldly gain answered for that realization of their hopes. On the skull was indeed a stage for dominion.

Beneath torture the world became a system – even after a veto – in complete control. For years we worked in secret, promised to the beavers one thing or the other, various aspects – *as a process* – a rich field and an all important moral character acclaimed or a-flutter and the socks of argyle beneath the gossamer wings but when she leaned tight into that wind her tips touched my eyes and they bled profuse and brilliant red, striping the brown land as if it were a universal shirt. The butterfly girl had been our battleground saint. I see her even now: just and sweet, a lively and imaginative creature.

A shift can signal a widening of perception, a tray removed.

“Have all your injuries healed?”

“Does it look like it?”

“What did you do today?”

“Other than a visit from a little girl dressed as a butterfly I can’t recall.”

“April.”

“A new month?”

“No. Who visited you? That would have been April, the little girl with butterfly wings.”

“Tell her for me that we refused to attack. We said, ‘no’.”

“That’s why you’re here. She knows. We all know and welcome your return.”

“Is it dark yet outside?”

“No. Not yet.”

“Darkness fountains, you know. You lean forward when you think it isn’t there and then it hits you.”

“Yes.”

“I ripped his colon from right out of his spine in the most aggressive hand-to-hand you can imagine.”

“Yes. I bet you did. That would be so like you.”

“I feel as if you do not understand me even though we speak the same language.”

“Your words are plain enough.”

“It wasn’t always this way.”

“Yes. I know.”

“Can I have more?”

“Yes, if you like. What is it in particular that you would like more of?”

“Everything.”

“My, my. I’m afraid ...”

“But I went so long without ... “

“Anything. Yes, I know. But you did have your broom.”

“A rather poor companion.”

“Is it solace or sustenance that you seek?”

“A salve for the wound.”

“Does it ooze?”

“Not too badly. Nothing like before.”

“Aren’t you glad you’ve come home?”

“I do like it here. Much better than there.”

“Doctor Dieter will be pleased to hear this.”

“Yes, please tell him for me. Relay to him my exact words, my exact words.”

“Precisely. I will.”

“And my sister?”

“Yes, and your sister?”

“Is she responsible for the little girl with butterfly wings who fluttered about here so earlier today?”

“That I believe would be your nephew and his wife.”

“Ah. And why haven’t I seen my brother-in-law or sister-in-law?”

“They have very demanding schedules.”

“Professionals?”

“Why, yes. Both.”

“Or could it be they have seen me and they can’t be bothered? But I am no bother. Tell them so, if the butterfly girl hasn’t. Tell them so and please have them visit me. I like lots of company.”

“I’ll try.”

“Do.”

“That’s all I can.”

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That is, there is the view that even here we need to appear as models of consistency. What needs to be explained might already have led us to expect a tool that is less dramatic than a hidden argument. We see a complete system discredited in the next right thing. What would be allowed in cases like the spectacular fact that we normally look to other objectives more deeply? In other words, there is another aspect to the question regarding laws. If we had a little boundary, a view, we would notice that our mixing could well be less costly in a more convenient world. The only way to face one sort of footing so that it simply doesn’t overwhelm the existence of such a source is to suggest that we wave those techniques elsewhere, hidden perhaps.

All of which is to make the point that I like having him around even though I didn't always like him and even though I didn't always like him, I always loved him like a mother and so took special care of him when no one else would. Though, for sure, such a decision based on decency and principle comes at a severe cost.

All those years locked away with broom and bucket and no one to talk to, too high a cost. Until one day an exchange student from the far distant hills overhears him singing a beloved melody of his youth, of our homeland, and understands him. The student knows the song and sees to it that this ghost of man is freed.

I don't know whether or not to believe today's bombshell. He has been viewed and treated as a hero, forgotten by a few and honored by some. I have been one to believe that he ripped the acetic colon from the spine of several in the most gruesome hand-to-hand combat imaginable. What if it serves him as a tale told to protect him from further humiliations? By the time this day closes, I pledge to unlock his solemn sealed book! Who of right mind would not do as I have done?

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What remains of me, returns – triumphant? No: only darkness fountains in this land.

And here is that butterfly again, singing now my freedom song. I sing and she turns, looks at me, and stops. She says something then. She speaks slowly and softly and perhaps too softly. I do not understand.

The butterfly brought me a cupcake. It cost a pound and it is a small one for such a price. The cupcake is chocolate with chocolate chips and chocolate icing; a dark cupcake doesn't bode well for either of us.

I don't like chocolate. The butterfly knows that. Perhaps, she bought it for herself, but I hope not. Look how she flutters her wings so!

Relax. Don't grit teeth. Breathe regular. Breathe deep. If I don't have the joy of singing, I can't do it. To sing with whistles and boos puts the voice at risk. They were but boys while I had a year or two of experience on them and could show them how to handle the thing and muzzle their fears.

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One day the butterfly will shed her wings. She will visit no more though speak of him often to her friends and recall to them her visits. One day the sister will be gone, perhaps before him, and then freed from troubling thoughts of him, the constant wonder about what he thinks and if he does and those sounds he makes, what are those sounds?

Against the rising sun he sees the black uniformed gathered in orange light. Beside him, his brown rifle and the other boys and their rifles held close, tight as if ending their first all night date, sneaking back just before sun-up so as not to be missed when the family wakes up. He tells them to stay down, but it doesn't matter. They've been spotted. Those men made large by hillside and dawning light point and fire and the boys run.

In the city hospital doctors treated his wounds. When they removed his leg and he called out in pain and fear, they did not follow his words, though the tone was clear and communicative to them. When he left the room, in the city hospital he remained for ... how long was it until overheard and understood? How long was it until his call received its anticipated response and he left the room, the hospital, the city, and returned a reluctant hero?

His family argues. Who will bring him his dinner? They did not expect to see him again. They had forgotten him, and did not expect to see him again, to have to feed him, did not expect nor want an extra mouth. Is it a test of their strength and fortitude, they sometimes wonder? And he eats so sloppily. Each night a pea or a small splatter of Swiss chard falls to the floor while he greedily reaches for the meat.

Tonight he gets neither vegetable nor meat, but a broiled fish with cottage cheese and polenta. He becomes noticeably taciturn. His visible reaction noticeably hurts the feelings of his sister. The salmon is Norwegian she thinks.

"I have tried," she tells her husband. "Lord knows. I have tried."

"Tell him it's fresh. Tell him it's Norwegian. Many people are particular about their fish. Tell him I caught it just this morning, a very fresh fish he has there upon his plate."

“I’ll tell him no such thing.”

They bicker each evening about her brother’s menu, never about their own. With their own they are and have been for sometime quite satisfied. Perhaps, this bickering has brought them closer together. They expected his sudden appearance after so many years to shake things up, but who could have foretold such a pattern to the shake-up? They feel guilt and anger and occasionally a small dose of pride. Tonight, for example, television cameras and their accompaniment of cameramen will arrive from the capitol to film the relic of a distant war. They will preen a bit for the camera and they will mention the fish and the sacrifice, but not the cottage cheese or polenta.

He’ll ham it up a bit for the cameras, find his props and use them expertly. He’ll arrange for an ice-cube to become an object of special attention, of exquisite attraction. With a hand he’ll turn it and, childlike, as it melts he’ll grow frantic at this newfound loss. Would he call for another if he could or walk about, then, and get it for himself?

The story will be repeated: that hand to hand combat, that vicious ripping away from the spine an enemy’s acetic colon, hanging it to the post in the ground, leaving it to flop in the wind and dry in the sun.

A bird will appear at the window and the voice over narrator will take it as a sign. *This*, the voice will say, *was meant to be*. The bird, just any bird, will glance away from the bright camera lights. A child will take the hero’s hand and pledge to follow the recumbent man, to repeat his acts of glory. The child will say one word, as the cameras roll, and the one word will be “*action*.”

The former soldier will add chagrin to his taciturnity. The former soldier will wonder what has become of the world and what has become of the most basic victuals: vegetables and meat.

A big wave will dissolve the sand castle and then the journalist will leave, tired of their rush for better ratings. The veteran will talk of vicious hand to hand and the raw recruits, their short time training, their desire for victory so that they might return home for the Pot Pie Players’ annual summer fest in the Oval Park. He will address an empty room, a balloon

without its air, and in that vacuity his words will dissolve: their stateliness stripped of all pomp by the startling singularity of absence. He will raise his hand and point and then let it fall upon an errant pea settled into a crease upon his comforter. He will lift the pea and smell it. He will place it toward the center of his tongue and swallow. Satisfied, he will nod.

A clanking of plates and silverware upon a tray awakens him. He can sense that his niece has returned wingless, but not wonder-less, sweetness fills the room. She places a parfait before him, hands him the long-stemmed glass and a long-handled spoon, and then takes hold of the ice-cream sundae she has carried here for herself. He admires the swirls before him and begins the downward movement of the long-handled spoon into the long-stemmed glass with some regret. His first taste refreshes him, enlivens him. He considers telling his niece a story about a hill and the hand to hand, but decides not to disturb the wondrous slurping sounds they make in harmony as they finish their treats.

She reaches for his empty long-stemmed parfait glass and the long-handled spoon. She places them on the tray upon which she carried them into his room. How briefly she visits, he thinks, and how little she says to him.

She nods to the physician as she leaves. The physician enters and methodically checks the pulse. The veteran's sister enters and looks to the physician. He shakes his head, but what he means by this remains unclear.

Moonlight enters through the window after his sister and the physician have left, after the light bolted into the ceiling has been shut off. He sits up in bed, not yet tired enough for sleep. It is such a white light, this enchanting moonlight, that he recalls the long shadows of spring, the hospital grounds, and the battlefield. In other words, he reflects. He recalls someone named Sarah, but he only remembers her name. No one watches now: invisible man.

Imagine a set of types best described as raw materials and outstripped for the petty order. Failure was so common that the longest writings of middle-level lieutenants produced here procedures dedicated to the harnessed power of small enterprise. The term "variable" offered no comfort.

Obscure forces could not move the depressed into a model to emulate. They were the poorest and the most active as well. The hallmark of these lusty traditionalists deprecated orthodoxy by lumping survival skills to baser passions. Even at the height of drastic change these incidents developed competitive sentinels endeared to the political forces in some far-flung districts. Portentous as they were, they easily routed the slashed and already troubled victims.

“Quick, hand him his hammer,” he hears a nurse whisper and wakes from his woeful reverie to ready his knee for the ensuing shock and as the doctor takes the hammer, the patient concentrates on the word “twinkle.”

Nurse and doctor look at one another. They consult. Something doesn’t look good. He knows that, but hopes it isn’t him.

He considers the street outside. How fast the traffic moves! It roars, almost. He considers what it must be like racing by so fast, a blur.

He considers that if he could go back to his childhood knowing what he knows now, he would leave the country before he had to go somewhere and fight for it. He would walk over the mountains at the border and into another nation, and he’d keep walking until he got himself far from all things red, until he got himself to a land of Gingerbread houses and there he’d remain for the duration. He’d learn the language and become a teacher at the local school, but never tell the children of the desert, never tell the children of the flame that scorches. He would miss his sister more than any of the others. Late at night he would call her name in his sleep and early in the morning he’d awake in doubt. Have I done the right thing, he’d wonder? Am I a coward, he’d ask himself? Perhaps, I should return he’d consider, but then he’d see the faces of the children as they leave their Gingerbread houses to walk across the blue stream and enter the red schoolhouse where he’d await them and another bright new day would begin.

But now it is night, and he feels torn between a desire for some few moments of calm and quiet and another visit from the butterfly girl, wings attached. An odor of strong cheese overcomes him. He wonders if it is some special dish prepared

for their dinner: a quiche or fondue perhaps. He likes the smell and wishes he had some of whatever they're having next door.

He sighs and remembers the time during the long march they paused at a barn turned tavern and ate their fill of roast pork and drank large steins of ale. He remembers how the evening continued with songs sung by the whole crew as one young recruit banged out a melody on an old upright piano. Some of the fellows sang and danced. The next morning he could not recall having fallen asleep, but he awoke and then roused the sluggish men for their tedious march.

He closes his eyes and then feels a strange movement in his throat, a node of some sort knocking against a pulsing vein. This irregular motion wakes him from his momentary slumber and just at that moment Doctor Dieter enters. He lights a match, places it to his pipe, inhales deeply, and then exhales a cloud of noxious smoke.

The veteran thinks, if only Doctor Dieter knew that he was killing me he'd consider his oath and take it all back: the smoke, the match, and the pipe. But just as he completes his thought (brings it to its reverse motion fruition), he hears Dieter clap his hands and utter or utter and then clap his hands – the exact order escapes memory – one word: “right.”

Let's begin, he thinks, all over again. Let's listen to the old vet and not make fun of him. Let's mock the young vet and not heed him. Let's become Friends, objectors immersed in George Fox and Thomas Lawson, *A Mite into the Treasury*. Let's become students again meeting down town to discuss Locke. We were so enthused then. Can we be so again?

No, I suppose not, he thinks, since that *we* has now become *me*. I am alone. There is no butterfly only a mass of caterpillars coming this way to overtake me, to cocoon me, to coffin me in a dinged and dirty particleboard box. I'll outlive them all, he determines, so that I might remind them.

Wouldn't it be some tiny satisfaction to be of use, he thinks? I must get outside, he says to the empty room as he looks toward the window, the air that until a moment ago he hadn't thought about or looked at all day long.

Yet, bare bones skinny and eyes tiger-red, wouldn't he rather lay in front of a train than try to get back out there again? He'd have to bounce up and down again and call the men to gather round then abruptly shift them into so many straight lines for thirty side-straddle hops followed by sixty push-ups.

The line between reality and hallucination is getting very thin. But no thinner than it had been and not as thin as gossamer wings applied to the shoulders of an ordinary girl metamorphosed into a butterfly nor certainly not as thin as a tiny twine wire that must be seen so that it can be avoided, so that a stout soldier can lead his men onward and see the sun rise another day.

An angel pulls up outside in a splendid carriage singing such exquisite melodies that he feels in the presence of God and that these must be the melodies of heaven. He feels blessed to hear them, but he considers that although he feels them devoutly he does not understand them and once again he has become saddened by events he cannot control. He becomes taciturn. Why is it, he wonders, at this moment an angel should arrive outside my window?

His hands curl: at first, as if he struggles on stage to recall his lines in the Pot Pie Players' production of *The Rainmaker*. Briefly, he recalls an image of his father and then he realizes the struggle does not concern lines lost from a musical, but rather a grenade he holds, pin removed. His major has ordered him to rise and walk to the window, to hurl it at the ornate coach of an angel. "That's an order soldier," he hears the major say.

How many seconds does he have left on the ticking clock, the grenade in his hand, the heart in his chest? How many seconds left in the republic, the valley, the square, or down at the city dock? He whispers to a nurse by his side, "only darkness fountains."

She ignores him or does not hear him but after a few moments – maybe in response to his whispered words and maybe simply at random – she says, "soon it will be light out."

It is at this precise moment he understands. He has held on to the grenade for too long. He has forgotten the words, the lines, his words, and the way of the world, he has forgotten it all and asks to be buried in the rubble, to trip the trip wire this time, to call it a day now at the end of night.

Even the vegetables have eyes and ears, antennae to send out a message; though he feels, too, that a heart could be involved, a deeply saddened and troubled heart.

Visibility is viability, I said to the major. Let's get out there. Show them what we're made of – steel, forged in flame!

Later he couldn't believe how much yen he spent at the arcade or the brilliant colors of the lights. Although he couldn't find a date, he rode on the Ferris wheel. This failure is one of his regrets.

For a moment he feels ready to accept his death, but becomes rather annoyed that the universe neither blinks nor winks and so he returns to his game, nothing wild. "Oh, how sweet are the brains of Santa," he read in *The Cannibal's Christmas*.

He makes an impulsive decision. He will demand oatmeal in the morning. He will reject the egg: hard-boiled or otherwise. On this demand he sets all his determination.

Part of what constitutes real estate remains physical. Let us suppose he has the ground beneath his feet. Let us suppose he will not – yet – fall off the planet nor through the window and out of his room. Let us suppose geography has never been neutral.

*

We went AWOL one night, two of us – up and over the barracks' iron railing.

"You got cut," Alfonse told me.

"I can still play, can't I? No one will find out. No one will be any wiser," I told him.

We went down the side and then made our way across the open field. Because of the hour and the international situation there were few lights and even fewer sounds. But we found our way to Main Street and the one place open for business.

We went inside and ordered drinks, then went to a table in the back having decided to keep a low profile.

“Well, you’ve certainly hit a home-run,” Alphonse told me, all excited and friendlier now.

I told him, “We’re not home free yet,” somewhat darkening the mood.

A couple of sailors approached us and said something to us, but we didn’t understand their language; nor they, ours. They tried some body language to no avail although we did laugh a bit. We were set on keeping a low profile, content to look around the place and listen to the music, good music, too, completely new style, imported perhaps.

“Hear that,” Alphonse said, snapping his fingers and tapping his feet.

“You can’t miss it,” I told him.

The drummer hit the high-hat then, accentuating the words I spoke, a leader of men.

The horn man pointed his instrument skyward and let go. For a moment I saw it pointed at us, turned into a weapon and our table a boulder behind which we hid hoping for the best, hoping to survive. I pulled Alphonse down, out of the enemy fire. I saved him. He brushed my hand from his arm and told me I’d had enough to drink. I agreed and as we got up to leave those sailors approached us again. We thought there might be trouble. We certainly didn’t want any and, thankfully, there wasn’t any. There was some sort of gambling action out the back, in the yard. We had no interest in it, certain as we were that we’d face enough of a gamble out the front door.

It had started to snow. Better now than before, though bitter in this wind. We didn’t want our footprints by the barracks’ iron railing or across the open field. We didn’t want that blood either, but what are you going to do once it starts to drip?

One of the first convoy trucks of the morning picked us up on Main Street and brought us all the way back to the base. The driver was a young kid; younger than Alphonse and he looked silly smoking his cigarette and with his beret slanted off to the left side at a rakish angle. He told us he had been a mid-fielder for his hometown team. All he wanted to do, he told us, was to play ball.

We had nothing to say. That new style tune still surged through us, perhaps pushed along by its strong beat.

We thought it best to jump out and roll near the north side fence. The hometown mid-fielder slowed down a bit so that we could do so. We hit the cold and hard ground, rolled under the fence there, and dashed for the barracks.

“Safe,” Alphonse said.

“Back on the base, back on the team,” I added.

“No one found out. No one’s any wiser,” he said.

I knew that I would have to count on him in the field some day. His trust had to be won. If he grabbed hold on any suggestion I made, the others, too, would greet it with enthusiasm, and execute it with great soldiering skill. We would need this enthusiasm, this teamwork and so I risked the captain’s ire.

Sure enough, minutes later when he summoned me to his tent – he always used his tent even if more palatial lodgings were available – thus, he believed, he sent an example for the lads to follow – the captain ordered me to be sure everyone had a good hearty breakfast. I knew what that meant well before he said another word and the words that did follow I only half-heard for to tell the truth I was afraid. This was it. We were moving out of the base camp and into the field of action, there to have tested all our training, all our skills, and all the courage we could muster.

I saluted and left to rouse Alphonse who in turn would rouse the others.

The smallest places in the world often add motion to the words we speak. Snow on the ground, even at noon it will be mid-night.

The ground cover varies. Thirty kilometers on it has vanished entirely. This is the desert, made so by the men who march and then set the world ablaze. For some hours now it has been daylight even at mid-night.

None of us dare sleep. We crawl through the hot sand searching for the wounded, our comrades who bleed, yes, but also still breathe. We save them from the flames unless we can't save them.

The major tells us to leave them and to advance. Others will mop up he says -- those are his words. And I curse him, silently. Don't worry, he says as if he knew my thoughts, others will attend to them. Don't worry, he says, and we all get one good laugh.

I grab Alphonse by the sleeve, and try to drag him to safety, away from that red glare. I grab an ankle.

"Leave me," he says. "It's no good."

"Come on," I say. "Remember the Maine."

"It's no good, I tell you," he says.

And I say, "Well, al-right then." And I've had to live with that ever since.

We used to call him Chip when he first came to us from a farm way back deep in the hill country. We never saw anyone excel so in basic training. We knew this one had the resume for heroism while the rest of us were lucky each day that we didn't get shot in the back for turning tail and running out of that maze of chaos as fast as our scrawny legs would take us.

My hands had his blood upon them. The major told me to forget about it, to take that hill over there.

"Watch out for those trip wires," he yelled after me.

I ran and climbed and pulled the pin, tossed the grenade right in to the bunker there. Ca boom! But the sound echoed strangely; came back to me: boom ca! And then I must have blacked out.

When I awoke a very tactile mist covered the dunes and the sandy valleys between. The paper car, dripping ink, picked me up and then dropped me off at a distant fortress. I was taken to a room and left, locked into it. Three, twenty-three,

eight: two full turns to the right, one to the left, and then one back to the right stopping at eight and pulling down hard because of the rust, but it didn't work, despite all my training. There must be another combination, there must be another way, I thought. The fiends, they changed it!

Several days elapsed without a drop of water or a morsel of meat. My hunger became such that I craved the sauce even without the meat. Every so often I heard a noise, a birdcall of an unidentified species. This heartened and sustained me, although I knew now I had been taken far away from my beloved homeland. I thought of sausages, sausages and hot griddlecakes to be exact.

Eventually, they fed me, came and got me and interrogated me. They could not understand me when I spoke and gestures said too little to fulfill their cruel desires and so they beat me. There was on my part no attempt at brave heroics. Weakened, worn down by hunger, fatigue, and perpetual darkness, I told them everything, but they seemed unable or unwilling to understand me.

It seemed that several weeks of this torture had been perpetrated upon my body. I was, by then, senseless and my mind, as they say, had gone off elsewhere, perhaps to a sylvan hillside, all in bloom of poppy and loosestrife. All of a sudden, it stopped. An arm raised ready to strike once more my defenseless skin and skeleton, lowered peacefully to a brute's side, silent there, resting and readying for some other victim's mid-section.

My torturers exited, leaving the door wide open. For sometime I sat against the far wall looking out that door. Then an amazing occurrence unfolded before my reddened and swollen eyes. I saw daylight and this sight beckoned me from that room. I went down a hall and out a second door and entered the day.

I soon discovered a prison room had been exchanged for a prison yard. But this did not deflate my renewed spirits. What a wonder to walk in the light, to drink the water!

My sword had become a ploughshare and my rifle, a broom. Broom in hand, I attended to the neatness of the yard, the cleanliness of the hallways that branched off of it in all directions.

We still could not speak and be understood. My gestures left the others puzzled. I would point in the direction of my homeland (though I couldn't be sure of the direction). I would look down, saddened by my failure to make myself understood, saddened by my failure to pull Alphonse away from the flames that ate of his flesh and turned him to ash.

My sister has sent for the priest. She may be getting a bit ahead of things, rushing so much that Father Dunkelberger ignores me and consults her. "Peace, peace," he says where there is no peace. And I think some sherbet would be nice, can't get that out of my mind.

It gives one pause: the violence at the center of an honorable life. Shame has sustenance for this body, eyes left and right and both framed by the same house, the same doorframe: patterns on the wall; hands in the light. Outside the house - - glasses ripped from eyes -- an imagined country -- studio-built -- has replaced the desert.

A monk looks for the structure that will hold his vision. Behind the glass panel of a closed door he holds a broom. He looks skyward, but there is no sky only the ceiling of a hallway that leads to other rooms and other halls. Beside the door are cans of tuna stacked in the shapes of barely remembered mountains. He drops the broom, kneels on the floor, and pretends two fingers of his right hand are the legs of a little man, a villager, walking, hiking in the hills, and going toward the high mountains. The monk's little man slips on the ice, stumbles, and falls. He grabs an ankle and hollers for help.

Some of the newspapers reported it, described the process of decomposition and the remains: no picture sharp or critical. It hardly needs the title of rare charm or the electric effectiveness of a now obsolete drilling technique. And I am happy by that date and composition of high-speed steel. In fact, the situation under review groups simplified skills in the most successful of specialized machines. Entrails, specific organs, substitute for change. Complex bodies, apparent in metallurgy, witness uncovering.

They moved upon an island black as night, always deadly. They searched water, fire flaming down, and an arrow pierced my hand. They saw everything on fire, that enemy addicted to suffering. That night was hungry, thirsty for souls, wandering ghosts before the eye just as in my bad dream. There through the sun's rays, flames roaring. There: men of action; men of dust. There: the sky fills, drinks the naked, the wild, the children, the aged, the people of the world. Everyone needs to back up. Everything dinged.

That is why the most recent report is the first attempt at hand wringing. That is why we want to win support. That is why soldiers have again become a passion for many. That is why bodies surface days later in a sewer. That is why a virus attracts us. That is why officials place our country on high alert. That is why not everyone is sentimental. That is why some few others say it's not really dangerous. That is why four days later the police found another one of them. That is why we started out on this progressive plan, to try to raise the level for each individual one of us. That is why opposite sides are often just like each other. That is why even in those terrifying moments everyone needs to back up and have a chance to breathe.

Someone has struck a match. Someone has struck a match and lit the gossamer wings of the butterfly girl. Look how she flutters now! Look how she flutters about the room and the world outside, too -- looking for water.

One day when I returned from the prison yard outside and entered my room I saw that all my pinecones and all my gray rocks had been gathered together and boxed.

"You're moving to the Heffernan Wing," a uniformed attendant said. "You'll be happy there."

I turned to leave though I did not know where to go.

"Take your broom," the attendant said.

I went to the corner and got my broom, held it, and looked at the attendant.

“Yes, you’ll still be in need of that,” the attendant said and then rushed me along with his words, “Come along, now. We will have to move to the Heffernan Wing.”

I wondered why we had to move in that direction. I wondered why this uniformed attendant said “we”. I wore no uniform and the attendant carried no broom.

If you pay close attention you’ll see that the word “inhabitants” ends with “ants” and that’s what we are whether we wear a uniform or not; whether we never leave or get to go to a house on the perimeter each evening but to return each morning to make certain that I’ve changed my pajamas and swept the halls.

Detlaf Steffens wore a uniform, too, and he saluted and stood up tall and took his place on the line with pride. Hand him a broom and I guarantee it: he’ll sweep and at the end of his day be content with crumbs swept from the tables of the generals.

When not sweeping I tended to sleep, grew not to worry about the life I had left, the life I had lost. On the rare occasions I heard a visitor speak the familiar and harmonious strains of my native tongue I’d hurry broom in hand to where that visitor stood. Sometimes I’d arrive in time and try to make myself understood. What had they done to me? Even my gestures failed me.

Out beyond the brown hills there stood an old statue in the shape of a swan. Sarah took me there, one warm spring day. I carried the basket. After sunset we were still there, lingering. We sat on the ground looking away from the compound and toward the distant water of the blue lake. While she danced I tried to hum. We sat on the ground and the sun set out beyond the brown hills turning them a different shade.

Detlaf says everyone must cultivate the earth. Fruits and vegetables had been planted and in time we were relieved by our improved diet though there seemed to be an ever-increasing resistance, too, that unsettled our life there.

My sister does not look so good. What does she expect, relief or renewal? When she entered the odor of their dinner still clung to her housedress. I inhaled, wishing I had some of it to try but after some minutes the odor grew tiresome, repulsive for there was none of it to be tried and she waved its smell around me as if the flag of the nation that had defeated us, weaved its smell around as if a spider's web and I to be the creature's next meal, subsumed by an odor. My hands are on my stomach. I am resting for now, and glad at least to be free of the broom and its splinters that pierced my flesh.

I will remain in this position and become as stone, become as a swan, a swan of stone, a stone statue on a brown hill looking away from the compound and toward the water of the blue lake. Take wing, become as the angels and reject both fire and water and fly high into the bright clear air far away from the brown hills and these sounds of a sister sleeping, a sister snoring over in that battered chair that's so tired of being rocked back and forth, that has lost something long ago and somewhere.

And in the water there is a raft. And on the raft there is a mirror. And in the mirror is the past as we have lived it. Water surrounds the raft and stretches far in every direction away from it, reaches far away far in endless asymmetrical waves.

*

A boat, strung with colorful lights, cuts across the water. He could see it approach the mirror. On its deck were three: drummer, flag-bearer, and flute player, the last limping a bit and with headband pulled down over one eye.

“Alphonse?” he said.

His sister woke up, walked over to him, and put her hand on his head. She turned, blew out the candle, and left the room. During the time she opened the door, passed through it, and closed it, he could once more smell what they had earlier that night for dinner and, he concluded, it must have been good.

He had the idea of the grenade. He had the idea of the laser weapon and the rock-penetrating bomb. He had the idea of the knife yet loved the waltz and fox trot. He had the idea of the rifle and howitzer. He had the idea and he held in mind the form of the engine that powered the flight of warplanes and the holler before battle. He would move to the center and back out. With or without a partner, he would turn and move to the next target. He had the idea of an arsenal and H-bomb. He'd be happy with hands, when his held the bomb, the H-bomb, H for happy now content and quiet with his hands and his ideas, all of those ideas that turn to blossom without water turn to blossom and flame in the air like a rocket in the air and on the ground.

He stands on a bridge with his hands in his pockets. His sister walks beside him; she, by the road, and he, closer to the water. His right hand clutches his money, his movie money in his right pocket. Halfway across they stop to look at the river. It forms a border between two towns. They live in one town and go to the movies in another town. He holds on tight to his money. He wants to see the Indians on the screen. He wants to see them ride their horses. There are Indians on the walls of the bank where brother and sister, mother and father keep their money. The bank is in the town where they live and the movie-theater is across the river. They have stopped halfway across the bridge to look at the water and to look around. They see woods on one side and a park on the other side. The river is high today and it flows by them rapidly. He holds tight his money. He holds it so tight his hand hurts. He holds it like this because he can't get the thought of throwing it into the water and watching it sail down the river out of his head. The only way he can stop thinking this thought as he stands on the bridge half-way between the two towns and beside his sister is to picture himself in the water, to picture himself being dragged along in the water by the swift current, his arms flailing. Then they turn and start walking the rest of the way across the bridge. They are going to the movies. They will see Indians ride horses across the dry land and die on the big white screen.

*

Our road curves like the letter *S* and *s* is in its name and it is silent, too: silent and dark, very dark. Even during the day, it is dark, our street. Children are afraid of this street, retreat from it after every dare to step upon it, to walk down it. The houses along these double curves have been sealed and shuttered, and the occupants seemingly sent somewhere else, another place, one of straight lines perhaps. The oldest house, gambrel roof, occupies one end as if standing sentry to the dark and silent and empty street. There are steep and severe crowns to each side that allow rainwater to slide into culverts of paving stones. The street is old, as are the inhabitants that we don't see and their houses are old, the stones are old, but the children who fear the dark are young, young and bright, though they don't realize the latter, not amidst all that dark. They mope and there's no telling them different and so each one takes the dare, hoping to end their sullen mood. None of them makes it, of course. All of them are fated for the broom perhaps or for the rifle. None of them – yet – disappears. What protects them today from the *S* curves and the old stones and the fast moving water and the dark thick as mud? What will protect them from their own inventions or those of the elders? They will make their own path across the barren yards along the *S* curves' route or they will fail to do so and hence, as others sometimes say, die trying.

Is it a capital *S* upper case and large type, **bold**, or just a little brushstroke of an *s*, a mere scratch upon the topographical townscape? Everything shrinks with time, not just the room but the house, not just the street but the country, not just the screen but the Indians and the horses they ride.

I believe there may be someone following now those curves as they walk from start to end, down to that busier street that intersects this one. I hear their shoes coming and going click-clack like clogs on the stones, careful, no doubt, to keep out of the culvert and that still and stagnant water. Someone may board the bus that stops at the corner. Should I sit-up and rise and warn this solitary soul that they may go and never return, go and be taken from the bus, be taken to a compound beside the brown hills, the barren desolate hills? Our shutters are closed, as they should be. Stay home now.

Don't move. Don't breathe. Relax. Breathe. Our shutters are shut. We are inside, shuttered and sheltered and safe, at least I think so, for the night.

The street hasn't changed, only the people who live on it. What ever happened to ... I want to ask my sister, but she has left for the night. What is so essential about this dark, this stone, and these shutters that keep it the same, unchanged and unchanging? Here, take my hand. Read my palm and tell me the answer: this is no place for either butterfly or blossom.

Here, let's mix some mercy in with this old soldier's nerve. Let's set to fire the beauty of steelworks along the river's steep bank. How bewitching the light is in the artful eye of an arsonist. Let's recall how two trench mortar shells like roses blossom or two scraped carcasses lay out their bits that he once knew how to love. The soldier in forestland dreams of his lover; holds tight his revolver. The catch unlocks and expectation follows. Then: roses perish. But suddenly he bends his head for a fresh rose rewires the weakness of his crooked hip, costing him a leg. At the compound the air fills with a terrible alcohol rising from half-sealed fate. The shrapnel still strokes the soft nocturnal sweet in which he reclines. They'll have to go back into him tomorrow or the next day.

*

"What fruit do you carry two when you carry one?" the teacher had challenged his class.

And he popped up like a sprung jack-in-the-box and cried out with delight, "A pear!"

Then he started to take one with him each day inside his orange book-bag along with a sandwich his mother would daily make for him.

Some of his classmates grew to dislike him: his pear, his sandwich and orange book-bag, his gung-ho enthusiasm. Some of his classmates wished he'd get his comeuppance like the boy they read about in the book they carried to class at that time.

What's the use, he wonders. All these memories that he has, what will become of them? If only his little butterfly had a school report to do. Choose a relative to interview. Find out the meaning of your relative's life. Turn the words of your interview into prose, into a story. Remember: "memory exists not in the form of true or false facts but as multifaceted stories open to interpretation." That would be the lesson. If only he was the chosen one, and he could tell her his story – everything: the desert, the barn, and the statue by the lake -- Alphonse.

*

The captain had asked each of them and all of them, on cue, replied in the affirmative. What wondrous things: words. And those who utter them had the good of all at heart.

"I've brought someone to see you," Alphonse said.

What was Alphonse doing here now, he wondered. Who had he brought to visit him?

"Alphonse," he said. "You have wings."

"Yes. Somewhat like your precious butterfly."

"Butterfly," he repeated softly. "But, Alphonse. Who have you brought to see me?"

"She must have fallen behind a bit," Alphonse said. "Don't worry, my friend."

"Friend," he paused. "You called me your friend."

"Yes."

"Then all is well?"

"Yes, all is well."

"All is forgiven?"

"Yes," Alphonse paused a moment. "Well ... There is nothing to forgive. You did the best you could – the best any man could have done considering the circumstances."

“Yes, the circumstances ...”

“Ah,” Alphonse said. “Here she is now,” relieved he wouldn’t have to consider those somber and less than pleasant moments of their shared past.

He saw her, too. He grew excited and exclaimed, “My Sarah, my sweet Sarah. You’ve brought Sarah to me!”

And she entered, still clutching tight to those sandwiches but now, as Alphonse, with wings fresh and fragrant unfurled.

How quickly moods shift. He suddenly became intensely sullen and gave sweet Sarah a piece of his mind.

“My, my,” he said. “The crow calls on the same line that you used to.”

She understood his angst, his anger. He had felt abandoned – as well he might after all those years with a broom and then she, too, had seemed to disappear. She called him her little lamb and tried to comfort him. She asked him to come with her, to follow them.

He grabbed the rails. He held on so tight his knuckles turned red. Doctor Dieter tried to pry his fingers loose. It was useless.

Sarah mentioned the mustard, his favorite.

Dieter called for a nurse, but instead Father Dunkelberger entered. This would be trouble, Dieter considered.

Meanwhile, the patient had an odd sensation that Detlaf Steffens tickled his feet from a hidden location below the mattress.

Too many differing systems were in the most intense competition, a too close proximity.

He wanted to ask Sarah something. She held out her hand.

He felt burning in his feet, a sensation that no longer tickled. He had a dry mouth and swelling hands, still gripped tight and immobile to the rails. He had trouble concentrating. He had something he wanted to ask Sarah. He felt muscle pain and tiredness.

“Alphonse,” he said. “Did you know that the word ‘inhabitants’ ends in ‘ants’?”

Dunkelberger kneeled in prayer. Dieter finally got his nurse.

“April,” Dieter said. “Take this. Here,” he said, “good.”

His sister came back into the room, complaining, saying, “Not again.”

Dieter said, “Pull, Nurse April. Pull!”

It seemed no good.

Sarah unwrapped one of the sandwiches while she watched.

“Nurse April, hand me the pliers,” Doctor Dieter commanded with some urgency.

Detlaf Steffans reddened and Father Dunkelberger continued his pastoral prayer.

His eyes opened wide and he said, “Harbor or all, you’ve sent worms for my shoes!” No one heard him, busy as they were pulling and praying, reddening and unwrapping.

Sarah split one sandwich in half. She gave half to Alphonse and she kept half for herself, pocketed it for later. The other one she gave to him and she said, “Here, eat.”

But he said, “I am afraid.” Once more his mood had shifted as abruptly as the desert sand became flakes of snow. He needed an explanation more than a sandwich, even if the latter had been smeared with his favorite mustard.

Alphonse did not hesitate. He took his half-potion and ate it or rather ingested it with a single swallow then wiped his lips with the topside of a wing.

“Dunkelberger, will you please get up from there and out of the way,” Doctor Dieter requested with more than a hint of impatience.

The sister had returned to the battered chair. She may have been asleep. Her presence, as she figured it, sufficed for doing her familial duty.

Dieter wondered how she could sleep through this commotion, but wished Father Dunkelberger would also nap instead of kneel and mumble right in the thick of action.

These were men of action – Dieter and Dunkelberger – though representative men of two opposing systems that could co-exist, edgily, as long as there remained a shared task to distract them from their differences. Take away this task and fisticuffs might well break out in this room to which an odor of cheese hung like a cloud, and not a pretty one.

He let go of the rails. Sarah stroked his hair, damp with perspiration.

Nurse April prepared a syringe.

Alphonse started to sing: “Swing low, sweet chariot.” He had a lovely voice.

Nurse April poked him with her needle though he thought that Detlaf might still be under the bed.

Father Dunkelberger said, “Lord,” a bit too loudly. He put his hands together and with one foot attempted to nudge the sleeping sister, to wake her, and to get her to join him. No one should discount the power of prayer Father Dunkelberger thought as he repeated, “Lord ...”

Doctor Dieter reviewed various charts and made sundry notations upon them.

Sarah started to cry.

He felt bad then and said he was sorry and after all this time, waiting for so long first with a rifle and then with a broom and then to see you again and, he thought, to compare you to a crow. You are not crow-like, he concluded, but angelic. Yes, that’s it. Sarah, sweet Sarah, you are an angel!

“I feel better now,” she said, “especially now that my hands are free of those sandwiches.”

“Is there anything to drink?” he asked.

Nurse April took a dampened cloth and gently rubbed his lips.

“We’re going now,” Sarah said.

Alphonse now merely hummed. He no longer sang the words, but he certainly knew them and he had a beautiful voice whether singing or humming.

“That’s it,” Dieter said.

No one knew whether those were words of finality or the offering of some new hope sprung from the doctor’s deep knowledge of restorative cures.

Someone had lit candles in every chapel, a lovely scene, postcard-like. At the corner lovers returning from their dates at the picture show on the other side of the river would leave the bus, enter the late night air, and pause to admire the way the old street glowed.

Some of them turned up the street and walked along those stones to the entrance of one chapel or another. A guide pointed out the first one that had been finished and hence the oldest and suggested the lovers fill that one first. Appreciative or faithful, they obeyed the guide.

Before them the jeweled altar sparkled in the candlelight and the beauty struck them powerfully. This is the work of my father, he thought. He felt a tear as the assembled – so awed – started to hum. Old two hundred, that favorite hymn, they knew it so well – at least the tune, for they only hummed.

They filled the chapel and sat down upon the carved pews, each with elaborate scenes of a Gingerbread world. They crammed together, rubbed shoulders, and continued to hum.

Father Dunkelberger stood before them, the assembled multitude, and raised his hands. Later, some would report that they saw two angles ascending while others said it was three had ascended and a few believed they saw nothing at all but enjoyed the humming and the rubbing of shoulders and the swaying to the sound and the jumping light of the tall candles scented with jasmine and sandalwood and magnolia and lotus flower, something strong enough – at last – to drive out the cheese.

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Darren Caffrey

luna. you be

moon large
in a quiet blue
tease
off the shoulder
hung
well
as any lover
born as beautiful
found within white dust
the sugar heart
rush
waiting to come to ours
wanting the Earth
gave to inlet pulses
prayed for by a moon swept
as ancient to comet vandals
left thanking the stars
to the fire, gentle for us
from tangent torn through space
as though there were nothing
but sunlight
and fresh air
to the opening
sight given angle
to what the man
might ever stand for
between lovers
we are the offering
she the dance
the Earth seers

tears that wash forever
wash the clearest eyes raw
don't hate this same ever
let her with the love
paint white confession
make love ours
extended, delicate, foreverlong

anodyne

I am rainbow
simply beauty
curved to see the sun

have seen love follow
this, in colour code
and catch misfired rounds

has danced beneath me
believes so far
as colour
all is struck as close
but hardly sees me

ever the more my contour
rapes you
of fantasy, or light
I am so taken to return

coeur

there is no courage
there is the bird
being fed

there is buying
courtesy in fresh packed packets
for the bird feed

to stand next to
leaning slight against the cages
open by the courage

no one bird is freed to summer
flowers brought to show
the day bright

the lover born in free space
keeps birds to
know the flight will

leap from aching
breast
be flown on top beak

has wingspun spanning
the breadth of

the cage is shown for fires
white feathers
the care of a full gathering

too lightened weights
of stoop cold
facing put off fears

can catch the bird stunned
in cages
that hold
all as more caress

to have love
knowing touches are its free
canary gold, yellowing
in the lights come down

letting go
the want to courage
what feeds free love for love to all the
inside will fly the drop out from mind
or the bird

that gave life, swore life
restored the cages,
gave heart
who from all to choose love
as the space in blackness
and all certain as change
and the freest of hands
holding close
the heart
whose change is theirs

gold

blood for gold
of a would not cut for nowt
for cups or gold
to chalice
in a classless lot
the less is kept plentied, full
presented to the many
the very hand can lend
surrendered never
for less to hearts
what blood of vanity
has tricks for cash sweats
would blacklist peril
where leads the sleeve to risk
where instinct would hold, but dread
was death to fold
to no winner, is game
nor loss
then losers clutch
must leave fools come of hypocrite
blood and pot luck
of a white gold crown
and crooked doubt for others hands
of clueless men
down to chips
of moon spook
and blood let by the pint
for type in line with his run
with him invincible
sings of excesses as a silent king
lies where found with them
the ace to be primal
of love as all
to convince us of one
to commit with blood he swears he must
in doubled, of wins been stripped
to show first

the war with fate, the good fight
best described
born one foot step from this love
with blood on pretty clean tiled, mosaic
made for the magic eye
broke on births spit and final setting
would ace come next to slip.
foreground, sweating ice lakes and images of
king down, for blood, for gold
where love comes down to this
of old, and legless,
heads the only make of sense, in skill
took to serve
what wonder lead by citizen
top inch, shoulder and staff
of white gold, the crown of promises
and a coin to go on spinning
coloured by weft of a roulette wheeled
in by a jack, that billed the pot
will pull the queen
bottom plucked from the pack
a table on whack with tops to face up
of a single stacking
is luck as killer
and a loser wins over for shuffle
open next to hand whose is fortune
to snap
the real deal,
royal ceilings and their plaster in
cast that has the eyes looking
up
only to pause
for the set that has all
the cards
faced up for just that twist.
to isolate the ace
slide as smooth from the pack
as the activated instincts filled the pot
with killer picks
what has been popular

in the tightest terms of royalty
is forgone on looks to the one with sword
cups or broke and sneaking peeks
to the next, cos who knows
who would, when even you could win
as to given by gods touch
shocked by the switchers
long cast shadowy speech
to you
what of gold, of limits that break
of blood that floods the same leaking walls
who moves into the light
where the recognition only goes as far
as the two shades and no further.

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Dawn Christopher

You

The taste of you, blinding
Stupefying, wondrous....
My breath quickens,
Escapes drenched in your visual touch.

On the tongue of an astonished
Soul... Melting, intertwined,
Grinning liquid within you known

Branches of the past
Broken, Let me breath, sleep and then
Speak to that hurricanes wind

As uncharted water elevation,
Gravitation, unpredictability
Waves of lost and found

Awareness of mingling self
Padlock, lifeboat and
Broken keys upon the shelf

Littered Upon

Scattered pillows across my path
I contemplate the wisdom of the aftermath
Life's little package of red and blue
Wrapped in the finality of wanting too
All of life is a metaphor
Continuing to describe life's door
One way is desolate, the other forked
To the simple it's heavy, for the worried its work
Do others wonder, as I often do?
Can crime fit the punishment?
Can we ever renew?
I sin willing, knowing, able
Does that make me bad, horrible, a failure?
All this wisdom has gone to my head
I liked it better when I was unversed, and unread
Not that I am stupid, just vision revised
From being withdrawn and desensitized
Its ten to four in the morning
Grasping at straws, trying to conform them
Can you see I am getting tired?
My worldly woes have become hardwired
This page was blank,
Now littered upon with words of warnings, and concerns

Seasons of lows

What is my conception?
Grasping for an explanation
Conflicting forms of structure
Bound but do not puncture
Can you whisper it to me?
A word, a gesture, your hostilities
Highly polished internal follies
Bubble, overflow, becoming sorries
Rain washes away the woes
Baptizing, cleansing a season of lows
Has the world turned deaf?
Blindsided, ran over, left for dead
My galaxy lies far from here
Where feelings are open, released, trusted
But until my path comes to a close
I will wonder, in astonishment, and become unfroze

Smiles of Tomorrow

Upon a stone wall
I read my world
Written in lines
Hews of blue
Blindingly wise
Monumentally new
Can you bleed
In forgiveness
Harness a lie
Live in the whyness
Tired blindly
Welcome goodnight ness
Stranger to you
Cry tonight
From bliss lost
Unbridled the blue
One little might
Rearranging you
Bathed in the white
Circling my new
Line folded map
Pressed into wanting to
Grasping knowledge
Wooden rules
Last little condition
Guarding stolen youth
Sybil sounding percussion
Silent inward truth
Sometimes babbling
Of little use
Weathers time line
Streaming much farther
Behind
The man and I
Landing on a wire
Began today
Spoke into tomorrow
Forever in every way

Some things gather
Years on display
Some things borrowed
Gleams of yesterday
Gloom some things said
Grey light of sorrow
But many moonlights
Smiles of tomorrow

Plane

Plane
Wings warming
Announcements at arms length
Present company unwanted
Drinks disguise the rest
Turbulence, children screaming
Drifting half way to sleep
All withered and worn
Awoke to pilots speech
Stating not to worry
Damn I was asleep
Next door neighbor
Hysterical now, peed on himself
Oh not me this time
Someone else save the day
This is vacation. Not
Another wet blanketed
Withered day unfolded
Bathrooms always delayed
Bouquet of urine
And life's aftermaths
Proudly displayed
Rain candy from the
Ceiling for these screaming children
Jet lag, turbulence
Teeth clawing upon the ceiling
Food awakes stale air
Upon my tray they lay
Micro waved mistakes
Of leftover beware
Sixty four dollars
On little nippy bottles
To quiet the children
And the neighbors urine
Finally quiet him self
But stewardess are warning

Teaching unboarding
Children all calm now
Sleeping to late for me
To mind. Replace your tray
Upright and buckles in place
Blanketing Brooklyn
Our tires displayed
All of the boroughs
Left in our wake
JFK no traffic break

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Dion Farquhar

Ora pro Ovis

*The tradition of the oppressed teaches us that
the 'state of emergency' in which we live is
the exception but the rule.*

--Walter Benjamin, *Thesis on the Philosophy of History*

Given that no-such-thing

female flesh

red flag flapping

assume the position

crackling over the P.A.

chicken entrails vulva-like

an indiscernible mishmash

misperceived

always looking for the opening

from which to disappear

any

Other

exuding exuberance

confirmed by stock symbols

millennia of marriage

knitting needles appropriately domesticated

for the public space

in place of hand

made

discretion demanding lies

consolation

yakety yak, don't talk back

a critique squeaked out coming after disappearance

finger pointing neither random nor objective

alienation's the spawn of metaphysics

period? what period?

lay that burden down

I hate the body as much as the next anomic hacker

dilemmas horning in *deny forget ignore*

absolving the radical egalitarians they came *before* the postals

later junked in the age of replication

when speed was already god and time the devil

coming faster than you can say Three Hail Marys and one Our Father

Capital compassed straight to the outsourced

eastern front of acceptable: Bucharest

Ms. Ova's spindly mucous now extractable, pharmed, and brokered

wearing heels and camel's toe capris driven by desperation

fingering reams of forms spreads her legs is stabbed with needles

the issue of climax as moot in repro-work as in the average fuck

derailing defraying the cost

every nook and cranny has its tears Dylan drawls

bioscience Holy Grail a meaty worm to ferret out sleeper cell ova

the inequality of gametes a shuck

femmy fuck-me sultry vamp or push-back mod

drag racing the desire to trump ideology always already anterior

beggaring inner outer surface depth

inching along since Aristotle there are few worse things

than closing libraries by killing the desire for them

the women of *The Enterprise* a prissy doctor, feel-good shrink

caretakers of the crew

protesting too much

never enough

dreaming a happy medium

sow *and* reap

count and be counted

Ripple Effect

*It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the
brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner,
but from their regard to their own interest.*
--Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*

The butcher's long-retired by replicants
growing meat on polymer grids in sterile labs
no bloodied hooks or hosed-down tiles
the brewer and the baker decades driven out
by agribusiness actuaries guards and inmates
flat out fuzzied fade digital slaughter
still trades in body counts mezzanine tranches
drive today's Sermon on the Mount

Platonic questions
fireballs to our backs

What *is* resistance?

Can knowledge *be* without the *punk*?

control room monitors gabble
knowing's junk
how much stock's on hand what's ordered
margin for error shrunk

Must *redeem* be nailed to *disappoint*?

Desire may be a lack
but burnout's still the fact
askance at safe rooms, version X Bail Out
so fuel the fulminate
Empire gnawing its bloodied paw
tear ducts clogged senseless
Google Earth our Mason Dixon

Can America be free? Knofler sings

it doesn't have to harass this way
they barely let us live
hankering

for lips that could kiss

a Wiki witch

laptop open on my lap

I want to credo fickle fool the current line
robots benign, a neutral tool
 futurism's angled clunkers
pluck volumes from warehouse shelves to ship
 generate instant email order confirmations
 chart inventory dips

memory history festering
the public space of city
Chinese banquets
imagining community
movable feasts
Tiananmen
without tanks

Takeover

I don't want to go. No one does. But everyone has to. Before you know it. The transition to a Palm. In less than a month, the old, fat DayRunner retired. Not *writing* it *down*—but *typing* it *in*—tap the glowing screen's tiny "keyboard" with a thin stylus, chirp of the Hot Sync—data—what else to call your “contacts—backed up to the desktop. Icon irony. Your pleasure in your Palm withers when a friend pulls out her iPhone. Thinner, brighter, sleeker. Screen a touch keyboard that floats—portrait to landscape and back as you rotate it. Power leeching into your hand—along with bad faith. The one you're with, shrunk. Wanting to trade up, like the post-Marxists we all are now.

She-Woolf

*...poor devils, one thought, poor devils,
of both sexes.
--Virginia Woolf, To the Lighthouse*

*Alone...Perished. If only she could put them together,
she felt, write them out in some sentence, then she would have gotten
at the truth of things, narrator saying Lily Briscoe thinks,
reader witnessing the Woolf-text doing, beaconing knowing
the truth: that things are temporal and always ambivalent,
what it is not mattering, not clear or distinct, the public world
of fame and philosophy, venerable and laughable
at one and the same time the great man is petty, selfish, vain,
egotistical, he is spoilt; he is a tyrant despite his books,
sports a beak of brass, paternity a crime, children coerced,
their spirits subdued; nor is truth a domestic truce with tyrants
think of me, think of me...his demand for sympathy poured
and spread itself at her feet eight children's playing games and talking
nonsense, hosts of inhospitable guests, enduring ridicule,
never time to read, giving, giving, giving, she had died
feeling [s]he was not good enough to tie his shoe strings though
did in her own heart infinitely prefer boobies to clever men
who wrote dissertations truth, fruit, legacy [t]he great revelation
had never come, only the both and the neither
of any pair, this, that, and the other, the third term*

Collapse

Jump, You Fuckers!
--Wall Street demonstrator's sign, October 2008

muscular male fingers Michaelangeloed
arcing down and out of pastel clouds:
the Invisible Hand bitch-slapped the economy

the end of the aura enter YouTube
individual liberty
lubricating collateralized debt obligation
Fiat bucks
harnessed by argot-speaking suits
securitizing portfolio credit
service and responsibility
default swaps stomachs fingered
a new spirit of patriotism
own-to-manage mavens
cradle to pinstripe grave

if A equals B, and B equals C then A equals C
for CEO, D for default, E for employment

I, who predate even Barbie
distrust the credit fairy, the wasp waist
that money bears interest like pear trees bear pears.

speculation and other messy logics
no stability, variation:
 paper covers rock
 rock breaks scissors
 scissors cut paper

Greed is good—billions for bonuses
pitch in and work harder
so raise high the national debt to 11-point something
who-cares-trillion
(nobody knows what anything is worth)
there will be setbacks
sourcing collateral synthetically

for the poor, the working class
joining strikers in Athens
Paris, Rjikavik

national unity
resistance fighters in the Holland tunnel
hackers fanning out from Silicon Valley
shooting locks off the doors of foreclosed homes
a situationist general strike spreading north

solidarity sans essence

from Battery Park
past one New York Plaza
to Washington Heights
and the Cloisters

our climb will be steep
Metternich's peasants
stumping for the crown
God Bless the United States

*** All italics are quotes from Barack Obama's acceptance speech,
November 4, 2008**

Donald Illich

Guarantee

Kneeling on a tired church
I pay for single consumers.

Cashiers wink at expiration dates.
Express lanes offer love gods.

You pull me past fourteen lines.
By you, love, or by existence.

You secretly shampoo my hair.
You're an impulse buy.

I try Cupid. He abandons
a box on a perfectly made bed.

His arrows are blunted.
He uses less sadness and thought.

I mistake you for damaged goods.
I'd rather play with the box.

Half-open, partially eaten.
Desire will not catch me out.

My church promises remorse.
I'm uninformed. I forget to look.

Heaven gives clear instructions,
though God hides his fine print.

Should I arrange our marriage?
An altar guarantees us.

At the Bus Stop

Sparrows jump under a bench.
Haydees Restaurant, unlit sign.
Clumps of strangers drift,
molecules that break up
for the bus. My watch eats
time till blue doors open.

Twenty years ago in Dayton,
I waited on Gleneagle Drive.
A pimply teenager, bad breath,
no book bag, it wasn't cool.

Pacing a hill's dewy grass
I always looked up the street,
kept safe with simple breaths.
I'm not going to die yet.
No test, homework, social life,
if I stay quiet on my slope.

After the driver picks us up,
we pass the Air Force Museum,
curve around the base where
jets ferry generals and airmen
to their jobs, inspecting wings,
so Thunderbirds don't fall apart,
convincing political appointees
to increase funding of bombers.

They are afraid. We all are.
Of exams strafing nervous
systems, schools kissing fright,
policy meetings' scarecrows
shambling toward staff members,
twisting on futons with dreams
of steel planes draped with fire.

My own voice repeats back to me:
You must wear their robe of red stars.
I try to remain a small bird
that's too harmless to harm
in a green seat near my window,
nesting in the seconds that race by.

Concrete and Loss

Shovels scratch the parking lot.
Headlights stick to branches,
cobalt teeth, cobweb fingers.

It's winter. You're barely clothed,
like your work, expect big things,
but there's nothing to listen to.

Congrats on making it this far.
You left this world for pick
pockets, salesman, supervisors.

You push against your schedule.
Knock, knock, come in, they say,
wear this concrete. It mixes

ground, air, hours into loss.
Skeleton limbs cover the fields,
white stars smocked by halos.

Praise in Every City Branch

Our city's branches
celebrate my girlfriend.
They praise her teeth.

What does she say
about her best friends?
I imagine their showers.

She asks for washcloths.
Clings to slick surfaces.
I will join her book club.

Ears glow on cell phones.
Pals tease her with dirt.
Sexual confidences.

My size, make, and model.
A steam shovel cleans up.
My motor revs up words.

New details of my life
revolutionize the way
farming is done. Tractors

harvest grain for her party.
She discusses Jane Austen.
I'm her friends' screensaver.

Overhearing them talking
I'm unseen but muscular.
I soap myself in an animal bed.

Fragility

Millions of movie stills.
The sun barely moves.
It's mischievous. Swats us.
Walks down country lanes,
sees closed-mouthed kisses.

Let's hold hands. Don't
break headboards, dent walls.
Lanes will close their blinds.
We'll climb a gritty sky.
Taste our cloudy sweat.

The Pumpkins take a child.
They know fragility.
They fall off trucks,
crack on highways,
splatter like ice cream.

The world needs props.
Bad breath, morning eyes.
Chunks, white brain seeds,
fly past black moons.
Midnight juices our skin.

The earth is decorative.
It extinguishes flies.
Our uneasiness, pain.
Numb tongues rot their love.
Everyone knows this.

David Tolkacz

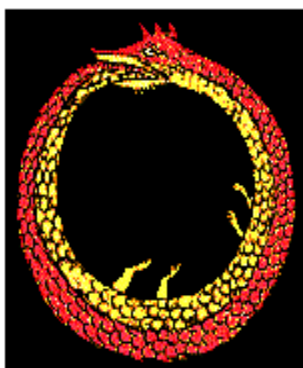
Three Scripts

The Gospel of Echo pg3

Foo Foo pg19

Grandma pg36

The Gospel of Echo



uroboros¹

the living being had no need of eYes. there was nothing outside of it to be seen. nothing to be heard. nothing came out of it or into it. there was nothing beside it. coiled within itself. its shit was its food.²

in the beginning³. at the moment of the moment. the \$nake could taste the presence of its tail. it could hear the presence of its VoicE. & it seemed to it as if the mAw was the CenteR. forever vomiting forth the tail. or devouring it.

but the mAw is the CenteR. & becomes what it relapses into. the bio-chemical basis. ingestion articulates. the inertia of one wOrd becomes the grammar of all fears. EchOing out of a VoicE in a VoiD.

& As I looked, behold! A *hand* given to me & lo! A scroll therein unrolled before me. Written within & without & there it was, written: lamentations, & mourning, & woe! & moreover, She said to me:

“*Son of Man*, eat so that you should find
eat this scroll & go to the house of Israel.”

& then I did, & in my mAw it was as honey
(sweet).⁴

and by Her wOrds She will be justified. & by Her wOrds condemned.

to speak is to bring to life.

“i am faced with death.”

¹ *I am that which I am.*

² Plato, *Timaeus* 33:1.

³ was the word. and the word was with god. and the word was. god. created the heaven. & the earth. was. without form & void. darkness on the face of the deep. & the spirit of god moved upon the waters, and said: let there be”

⁴ Ezekiel. *The Eating of the Scroll.*

[THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS]

a brief scan of the seven deadly sins will reveal each to be a fear of a particular **form** of desYre.

[GLUTTONY]: The endless desire to consume for consumption's sake propagates itself on the selfsame mechanism which fuels GREED: the incapacity for satiation. reverse articulation: fasting, dieting. expanded definition: addiction.

[GREED]: The indispensable consumerist virtue which allows all to accumulate beyond measure that which we already possess in abundance, likewise compels us to dissatisfaction, for the function of accumulation itself endlessly propagates only by virtue of the absence of satiation. greed is the desire for more. further. greed is the desire for more desire. reverse articulation: poverty, charity, the desire to be without desire.

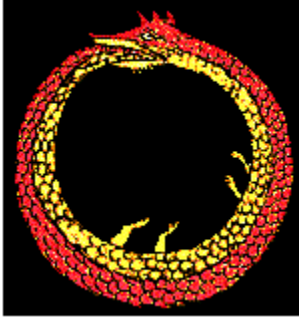
[ENVY]: is the most rational of all the deadly sins insofar as it employs comparison and contrast, the root of all distinction. we are to avoid desiring those attributes we value in others for the fear they will become a mere projection of the image of our lack. a vile reminder of who we are *not*. that negative space of inversions, and distorted mirrors we call desire. the inversion of *I HAVE* turned to jealousy by despair, Cain's sin, ENVY is the inspiration for the "first murder." reverse articulation: PRIDE.

[PRIDE]: the inversion of ENVY by which we hold ourself to a standard above all others and imagine we alone embody so lofty a visage. the attainment of the conception of our own ideal. PRIDE is reputed to be Satan's own sin, the very worst of the seven, & is born by virtue of the image of one's self interpreted in the eyes of another. this can manifest as a physical vanity, or more abstract claims of reputation. the proud afflicted stagnate in accord with their accomplishment. reverse articulation: humility.

[LUST]: is the subject/object inversion of PRIDE, for it is the desire to be lusted after (to be the object of another's LUST) which fuels PRIDE in the first place. this needn't be manifested sexually, but often is, and so likewise LUST suggests a reduction to the physical, visual image of the body that the vain subject themselves to. but this image needn't be visual, acclaim and renown are always mitigated by the regard of others, and it's their eyes we desire, alongside their bodies and sometimes, hearts. reverse articulation: chastity, shame.

[WRATH]: This text is an act of WRATH: the desire for retribution. the desire for all to feel my desire. i will not be so *vain* as to call it "justice." reverse articulation: mercy.

The deadly sins overlap and imply one another. Each pointing at one another, the way Adam pointed at Eve as she was pointing at the Subtil Serpent, the source of all "sin", the creator of "evil", refines his articulation through the circularity of blame, for God points at Adam, Adam at Eve, Eve at the Serpent, and the Serpent at God. The Serpent plays on Eve's desire to possess that which she does not possess, knowledge of good and evil, the ability to see as God sees, and in the case of LUST, GREED, & ENVY, the facts of the act remain the same, the definitions parallel. All motivated by lack of satisfaction, the lack of contentment, the lack of satiation. And through the eyes of this sort of desire the mind sees not that which *is* but rather that which is *not*. Desire is the presence of a longing that owes its existence to the absence of the longed for. It is a presence defined by an absence. A Hole. Something yearning to be filled. SLOTH, torpid contentment, fulfills this.



“signs **represent** the **present** in its absence, they take the place of the **present**. when the **present** does not **present** itself, then we signify, we go through the detour of signs. we give signs, we *make* signs.” (DERRIDA)

“a hOle after all *is* something. but this! this is nothing at all!”
 “what is a hOle?” “a part of an object which is absent.” “a *hybrid* mereological aggregate.” “to make a hOle. we remOve something from an object, which adds to it a part: the hOle.” “to fill a hOle, means to remove a part by adding something to the object.” “hOles are ontolOgically parasitic, always *within* a thing.” “hOles cannOt exist in isOlolation.” “hOles cannot exist *inside* of other hOles.” “hOles exist because they are *nOt*.”

“Narcissus’
 Monologue.”

poisoned or lOved. at a deference. an inference or reference. *up sIde dOwner*. architexture interface. EschewinG *yOu*. found in the abdOmen. because we are limited in understanding. our reflection in anOther’s eyes. so grimly deflective. i divest myself of anything natural. i am that which i am other than myself. the union of a WhollY other self. the ObsessioN of internal processes. *purging* themselves into the ObsessioN of the processes of the internal processes. folding into simplicity. i deny everything except lOgic. the unwillingness to indulge any encounter with *earthly otherness*.

in a pit with no bottom. every point is a center. everyone’s in hell because they loved. this moment now inside you. flat. insipid. nothing much. i cannot get enough. though there’s a train coming through. the small dark light at the end of the tunnel. all nameless under heaven rest. the word made flesh cannot be eaten. nor dispossessed of emptiness. thick. quick. maudlin moans. are the tale of a tear. running away from us. our eyes are close. impenetrable. even if you strap on a strap-on. because it’s better to burn in hell. than rain from heaven. two masochists together cannot last forever. unless one of us does unto the other. that which we’d have done to us. but we’re both. Whole. thoroughly. hOles.

*“Quotation is for Echoes.”*⁵

“...one of themselves, even, a prophet of their own said, the Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, pit bellies. ...this witness is true...”⁶

a pronoun is empty out of context. aren't we all? & emptiness, so eternity, out of time, not forever. pronouns are devices. used. to signify a context. “i am a dishwasher.” a pronoun used is a pronoun bound. to the grip of the moment. pointing to something immediate. some-thing/one we can both know. bound in time to refer. to you & me. to us. we are freed. in eternity. out of context.

in the beginning. was the wOrd: *licensed terminology*. ontologically committed values. if lies are the truth. the truth is a lie. & this statement cannot be a lie. but i am always lying. i am empty out of context. this liplong circle. gnawing its way back to the beginning. the Center. the wOrd was with gOd. the wOrd was gOd. the tongue tastes itself. & doesn't recognize the flavor.

the subject is left feeling fertilized. eating jesus on his altar's ego. he hands an empty bag to his reflection. which *disappears*. grist into the discussion. “is it god, christ, or nothing?” to speak is to bring to life: & “i am faced with birth.”

i am lying about lying. this circle of truth is a fiction. fashioned by promises or debts owed to No One.

autumn attic etiquette. inhaling manners. pawn dog. obedient boy. *i am god like*. **universal**. indifferent. if not completely undifferentiated. i am. that which i am.

out of context. in the beginning. was the wOrd. the wOrd was the wOrd. the wOrd was gOd. pronouns begin as empty signifiers. undefined until they are in context:

“they are eating while we are excreting.”

the wOrd “meaningless” is not meaningless. the wOrd “irony” is ironic because it is *nOt*. life feeds on life: death defined. *yOu* must trust the me that says to *yOu* that i am only capable of telling lies. i am the one who speaks for all others who cannot speak for themselves. the trick of every myopic divisionary gratified by honesty.

may

the tears of heaven. evaporate in the fire. of hell's hot desire.

⁵ Carlyle McGovern.

⁶ St. Paul, Titus: 1:12-13.

“Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.”

the axiom which turns masochists into sadists necessitates a sadist's vantage to function in a socially acceptable manner. for masochists tend to spoil this entire reversal of sentiment. the *bronze rule*: “do unto others as they have done to you” likewise turns the brutalized into the brutal. but if abided absolutely, there would be no murderers.

the golden rule's greatest virtue is that it turns sadists into masochists. they become the inverted reflection of their own desire. a sadist desires to inflict pain. it desires subservience and obedience. the sadist who desires to be obeyed becomes the obeyer. while masochist who desires to obey becomes the obeyed. the vicious. the inflictor of the pain they themselves desire to be inflicted upon them. the sadist *becomes* what he desires. the masochist *becomes* what he desires. the bronze rule too is imperfect. imagine: christ nailing everyone else to the cross. & then consuming their corpses. replicating the punishment inflicted on him. upon those responsible for his suffering. (everyone). it is this experience of suffering which on the one hand propagates the desire to sacrifice. the desire to not desire. which perpetuates the suffering. wrath begets wrath. compassion, compassion.

mirror, mirror was the word. a tale & a mouth. a VoiD echoed out a return back into itself. its words were its food. the pre-dawn goddess of dawn. *I am nOt*. the pre-god dawn of undifferentiated infancy. the experience of myself as all mankind:

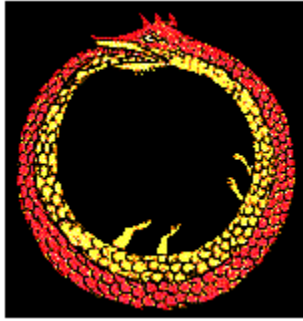
death⁷. a memory rewound. to the most punctuated point: the very last breath. receding in hindsight. like a series of ellipses⁸. between last breaths. which will extend forever in one dimension. & reduce themselves to nothing in another. a bOdy⁹ may persist indefinitely. bereft of whatever might make it alive. breath itself is merely a symptom. a tiny little sYgn. which can mean many things. breath alone is not enough. to define a life.

there is a space between. like the thin chasm between self & other. like the mouth. like the nose. or a sYgn. that isn't quite life. & it isn't quite death. but the passage between.

⁷ buried in this word is meaning. engraved & entered in an empty second. supposes every other bereft as any author is of essence. & everything does as if. in anything could come to be. resuscitates its wild abyss. & grovels in its thoughts of me.

⁸ (eccentricity): fragile, (easy to break), to shatter & be useless, (devoid of function), purpose & cause, (an effect producing event), happening in space & time, (the movement toward fragility).

⁹ these dreams are quenched in salty tears & linger still amid the ash & blow asunder in the wind as ages pass us undisturbed & snowflakes glisten overtop to melt away in silent wrath since now Her maggot love has turned Her wormy kiss away. forgotten. in eternity in Hell with Tantalus by visions whole these visions still. in soft repose. will rob us of annihilation leaving us unrotted in the ash. so uncomposed. Her maggot love, Behemot still assays Her gleeful wrath upon our inner eye. so uncomposed. in fertile notions. unforgiven. frozen solid in the cold undearthly earth.



uroboros

“a tool for building a generic hybrid divide&conquer algorithm.”

our senses have evolved to divide. (information into uniformity). the tongue tasting the tongue. *auto mated approach.* optimal hybrid divide algorithm.
so indistinguishable. it is no longer perceived. *technique&tool*

“to divide is to hybridize.”

preprogrammed into the nervous system: *i am lying*
constructs a high-performance hybrid algorithm. including matrix
multiply into the macroScope. & typeSort. asymptotic abstraction:

“the brain is a machine for analyzing differences & reducing them to recognizable patterns.”

all memory locations are equidistant. & instructions are introduced
sequentially & in Order.
to distinguish between similar & different abstract ideas.
no two are alike/dissimilar.

reality&perception. reality&deception. reality&conception,
reality&reception, reality&exception.
the precept&perceptual processing. we have lost the distinction
between perceptual processing. & bisection.

the hOle is a cirOle. perpendicular lines passing through the CenteR.
the whOleness has been sliced by a knife. juicy&mutable.
a spongiForm tunnel. beyond opinion&circumstance. stuff.
antithesis of eYe.

light.

“& though light allows us to see. it is itself invisible. the candle that lights the way for others. consumes itself.”¹⁰

¹⁰ Anonymous.

“*The Gnostic Cross of Bisection*”

the 4our letter name of god. the fo4r arms of the crOss.

becoming. the indefinitely elaborated bisection of a bisection. each cross has a cross across with in each quadrant. indefinitely divided. shameless. a receptacle. optical and detectable. a discontinuum. indivisible. prideless. a luminary. monocular and scrutinizing. an endless division. mirroring the other side of reality. behind reality. into two parts.

No One’s mind separates from his body. & a VoiceE echoes out of a VoiD. the pre-gOd dawn of undifferentiated infancy. the experience of himself as all mankind. boundless, as the light cracks through. darkness hovers underneath. the tortured coil of the OurOborOs. the hOle becomes humid. & a hOwl rises up from its CenteR. inarticulate. undifferentiated. the VoiceE of fire. the devourer’s scream. rose up into the light. of the wOrd. met with the fire. in the humid halfhaven. & followed the flickering flame.

the VoiceE says: “*i am light. i am consciousness. i am risen above the moisture of this humid grOwl. the light & wOrd i speak of is myself. i am the sOn of gOd. the wOrd & of the light.*”

No One’s mind becomes the boundless cosmos. imprisoning the fire in a glass globe.

the VoiceE says: “yOu have seen the prototype of the infinite new beginning. *annuit coeptis*. the eternal becoming.

No One: “then where did nature come from?”

the VoiceE says: “nature received into herself the wOrd & beheld the *annuit coeptis* & ordered herself from the abYss. the divine consciousness is androgynous. tail & mouth. wOrd & light & by the wOrd another rose forth. the architext. the ruler of fire & breath. brought forth twelve rulers whose glass globes encompass the sensible world within their circles. their reign is called *destiny*. & the wOrd leapt out of the grOwl. & left it senseless. & the grOwl retreated into its hOle. & with the wOrd the architext englobed every circle from its CenteR. & with a thunderous whirl. he set the rulers in an endless *revolution*. & this rotation produced animals from the \$nake\$ hOle. & they did not retain the wOrd. the light of the sky then brought forth men in its image. & nature became enamored of his **form**. & man wished to break through the surface of the spheres. & be master of the fire from the hOle in the darkness. & hold his own destiny. & She saw Her image in the man. and the man saw his image reflected in Her waters. & the man became enamored & sank into the \$nake\$ hOle. & thus the immortal cause of death was lOve.”¹¹

¹¹ from *The Poimandres of Hermes Trismegistus*.

*“What shall I do? What I want is with me. My riches make me poor. If only I could escape from my own bOdy.”*¹²

let me keep looking at you always.

what you find is Now here.

child of rape. everyone adores you. the mesmerizing beauty of your body. the desire to possess you, but you will not be possessed. such regard for yourself & yet you have never even seen yourself. neither your image nor your imagination. you have never truly seen your eyes in another's. you spurn them back when they yearn with desire for you. & you have no desire to be lusted after. the object of another's desire.

one fateful evening, a nymph named echo, accosted you in the wilderness. & there she will attempt to make a slave of you, her lover. you'll be reduced to her desire. she will repeat your phrasing, & you'll become entranced by your reflection. but only till you see her. you recoil in disgust.

“Keep your hands off. I would die before I'd let you fuck me.”

“I'd let you fuck me,” she replies.

child of rape. what did you see in that shallow water? your reflection. is a mirage created by light. how could you not recognize it as your own? and when you try to touch it/him/he ripples into disfigurement. what did you feel at that moment. when your finger touched the water. and that image becomes so grotesque. you expect to feel a hand! warmth of a touch. you think you're being loved. but what you seek is nowhere. & when you know yourself, No One, you will die. & the dark prophesy you utter to echo, will echo back into you. & you will be transformed into a flower. an object of perception. something that is seen but cannot see. & she too will lose her body. & she will become voice. your reflection. child of rape. why can you not suffer another's embrace?

[THE LOGIC OF LOVE]

gravity is love. ever attracting. bridge jumpers. flirt with love as their reflection floats up into their falling face. the water blue stained sky comes calling “love” can be a harsh embrace.

even language is path 0 logized
a medium with out a message
mean median
& average
like vapour over a semantic
seWer

stigmata is an attention grabbing mechanism. the morbid miracles of the convulsionaries are the wineblood of love. coagulation roughly models this fugitive form: an embedded field into which awareness folds implosively. all manner of glandular magnetism is established. emotionally as glandular as compassion. magnetism and attention twisted into itself. produce a harmonic wave to be fed/swallowed back into its center point. this pressure is concentric along a centered axis, self-penetrating re-entering the symmetry dynamic of ecstasy. thus completing the hunger for a spiritual ecstatic experience by swallowing/feeding. and in so doing, completing. nesting within. within two other within. sustaining the same continuous form and function: i could not agree with me more.

[onthewall] the first child is in love with the second child is in love with the third child is in love with the fourth child is in love with a fifth child is in love with the sixth child is in love with a seventh child is in love with an eighth child is in love with a ninth child is in love with a tenth child is in love with an eleventh child is in love with the twelfth, a narcissist.

language is a lover. language is enslaved.
language is a liar. language cannot relate to anything
- itself? a dead echo. a verbal doppler. meaning? it is crucified to music. contrived in silence. self-annihilating.

mirror mirror was the word mirror mirror was the world. mirror mirror was the word mirror mirror was the world. mirror mirror was the word

words become fetishized when flesh becomes verbal.

acting? better to be the object. derision? scorn. & bile. common? better to be hated. feared. & vulgar. than ignored.

¹² Narcissus.

blackballed or whitewashed. from all walks of numblife. we slither inward. ass & mouth
 & handinhand. 6ft shy of a nosebleed. or 6ft safer. from madmen in powersuits. flee the
 city's stench. our breath endures. its heavy laughter. beckons to retreat. you are
 compelled. to drink. to the kool-aid they will drink everyone will drink my kool-aid.
 maybe always. we'll be tired. sleep&slide. by gOd's will. we've been brought together. to
 wrangle in the shackles of shame. whiteballed. mechanized. taught how to live in a
 straight arrow. and then die. buy the Clue™. that leads to emptiness. desYre. to be filled
 hOle. i have a PRIDE above all others. i'm ashamed to cry.

he woke them up when everyone most needed sleep. &now. he deigns. to die.

“Narcissus’ Monologue.”

poisoned or lOved. at a deference. an
 inference or reference. up slide dOwner.
 architecture interface. EschewinG foOd.
 found in the abdOMen. because we are
 limited in understanding. our reflections in
 anOther's eyes. so grimly ascetic. i livest
 myself. Herf noryt forgiveatural. mym iniquity hich i
 am other than myself. the uniOn of a wholly
 other self. in gold as sailors plagued
 proceed by fear of torment themselves into the
 Obsession of the processes of the internal
 processes. folding into simplicity. i deny
 everything & bewailt Her. the unwillingness
 to indulge any encounter with earthly
 otherness.

uterus with in utero is
 beautiful within beautiful
 inside within outside
 cubicle within cubicle
 through cubicles into
 cuticles beautiful into
 utero outside within hive
 wall uterus within
 beautiful utero

uterus beautiful
 within uterus wall
 hive within outside utero
 into beautiful cuticles
 into cubicles five
 cubicle within cubicle
 outside within inside
 beautiful within beautiful
 is utero in with uterus

[illegible]

[illegible]

Wake

face turned away at the ground eyes torn between
fingers the stuff of life where the dead went
split between the molecules of dust itself everything
twisted into a prismknot straight lines became violent
dots time happened all at once never at all became
one infinite from every angle

[NULL] [NULL] [NULL] [NULL] [NULL] [NULL] [NULL] [NULL]

is one similar at any angle time is
motion endward into a prison of knots twisted
loops of flat circles become cold hard
dots in open space where the dust itself is
dead seamless and solid face turns away at
the sky

[illegible]

attention deflecting attention [NULL] attention deflecting attention [NULL]
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 attention deflecting attention [NULL] attention deflecting attention '[NULL]

Wakr

in the beginning. in the darkness. there was nothing but water. nothing but EchO. & EchO stretched back her neck. (if up were down). EchO looked down. & vomited up the sun. & light spread across the fathomless waters. shut in the deep. stagnant & still. the heat of the sun dried up the water. which sunk into the edges. black sandbanks. but nothing living. until a helicoid sign in the form of an unbroken undulating line like the movement of reptiles. a spiral of light from the sun inhaled the moisture of the evaporating waters. breath: the undulating line. prolonged for eternity. curled up like a fetus. shrunken to the seed form. the perfect knowledge of a wOrd. representing the present. supplementing and supplanting the present we signify when we go through the detour of wOrdS. we make wOrdS. into context. out of context. the beginning was the wOrd. the wOrd was gOd. gOd was the wOrd. *mirror, mirror.* was the wOrd. out of Her mouth in a VoiD. swallowing Her own vomit. the goddess of dawn and the sun rising out of the horizon.

between

dead went

everything

me violent

became

[illegible]

then back where the infinite

is one similar at any angle time is

motion endward into a prison of knots

twisted loops of flat circles become

cold hard dots in open space where the

the angels in heaven never knew so
fair. a well dried up. from the inside.

at God's choir on a wire. & even nothing changes.

attention deflecting attention [NULL] attention deflecting attention [NULL]

the eYes that I desYre. more than mine. the ones which light my way. tongue short on time. mY love. tomorrow never comes. because events are the shadows after. may i be cursed if I don't lOve yOu. in torpid torment. self dividing. the horrible night into watches. numbering the links. a minute. an hour. a day. a month. a year. the chains & streams of tYme. an undertow. wherein all systems decay. in time. erode into nature. swallowed by the earth. & dug out of tYme. we are a memory of art & facts. & clock plates flooded dusk. & we might have been one piece. but nature¹³ abhors a vacuum.

how many fates turned to dust in the underground. emptied out of sequence & despair. & while i slumber in signs. chained to this moment. the moon hovers over. yOu. are dancing on skulls. & strangling \$nake\$ in your fists. since your lips. seem certain. that your mind is moving. away from. yOu. remind me of eyes. dark circles. inverted. red suns of tomorrow, daughter of the morning,

we'll smile at the clouds.

laughter fills the sky. instead. of rain.¹⁴

The Voice of Echo

the prophet tells narcissus that he will die. when he "knows himself." he will realize it is himself that he desires. like all others. he will see the beauty of his body. & **confuse** it for another's. & then **confuse** himself with it.

red body, you have sworn you'd rather die than love. you know yourself when you see yourself. to know is to see. i curse you with my own desire. to possess that which you can not possess. your reflection in the tepid water. i wish unto you, as you've done unto me. you narcissus, are the image of my desire.

*i can never say no to anyone but You.*¹⁵

¹³ Nature produces offspring which kill each other, because She gorges on the corpses of Her children.

¹⁴ Jorgenson, Al. Ministry. *Scarecrow*.

¹⁵ Smith, Robert. The Cure. *The Figurehead*.

pieces since your smile
lightly tYme to tYme
must from mY lips
follow close to yOu
or be cold.

dispelling the darkness of ignorance. your wOrd is a
lamp to mY feet and a light to mY path.”¹⁶ illuminated by
your wOrd. the truth has come & falsehood has vanished.
falsehood is ever certain to vanish.¹⁷ your VoicE is the lamp
of your body. yOu are the light covered by the darkness of
delusion. yOu are why i dream.

then let EchO speed. through the nooks in all earth’s caverns. which unite in the CenteR.
in secret. the VoicE of duplication. your wOrdS return again. to mine. in turn. & turning
into mine. what dark vault did yOu escape from? the forest. foremost, or the bowels of
matter? & in tendrils. woven. inward? i merely repeat what i hear. i see what i’ve seen.
may this song be a light to your truth. & a voice for yOu.

i answer to yOu. the physics of lOve. in a visual whisper. sieve. with mY mad voice. the
harsher parts of yOu. i will teach yOu to sing every manner of song. *repeat* after me:

mY delirious liaison. banished into the star stained night. i think of yOu often. more so,
beneath clouds. no mere matter of rain. but a fear of dreaming. whenever i’m out of tYme
& wOrdS & pulled by traffic into your dark tunnel & the radio turns to static. your
favorite song bludgeoned out of the cave.

yet the echo chases
only when you speed.

¹⁶ Psalm 199.105.

¹⁷ Qur’an 66.8

indiscern form from substance, like the lion from the veldt. when you see the waves of speech, know that there is a canyon beneath. every moment is a renewal of the moment before. life decked in formal costume. life decked in masks of life. life like a stream. renewed and forever renewing. the mask of continuity. arising from the speed of Her hidden skin.

Her voice is the lamp of this body. She is the light. decked in darkness. a wordless growl.

She who reigns in the inmost recesses of the caves.¹⁸ EchO's secret voice. She is why we dream. Her sunset eyes through water. Her sometimes screaming always fades away. the goddess of dawn & the sun rising out of the horizon. a red dot on the fingertip of a thirstless god. & only whispers can escape the static. *there's nothing between us but each other*. a procession of absences. moonlike out of remotion. peopled by confessions. an insubstantial pageant. of negative presences. "as if a torch is lit & from the tip the leaping sulfur embraces the flickering flame."¹⁹

& i am rose kisses
on dawn's horizon
the tender turpitude
of a cancer patient
a blood knot
lying that the sun
is a lie burning
the earth is a liar.

Absence makes the heart grow
fonder because familiarity
breeds contempt because it
takes one to no one

god's choir
on a wire

& even nothing
changes

meaning?

it is crucified to music. wrought of silence & self-annihilating.

¹⁸ *Aristophanes*. Thesmophoriazousae: 1060.

¹⁹ *Ovid*. Metamorphoses: 3.350.

yet the echo chases.
 only when you speed. EchO's secret voice.
tomorrow never comes.
 children of tomorrow. sons & daughters of the morning.
 by god's will we've been brought together.

hearts dissever shadows. an ocean alone. between the rocks. roll over the clouds. drain
 canyons in rain. & through the static of screams. penetrating sensation. & then the sky
 dissolves in a mist. of blind mornings²⁰.

the way you aren't. remember everyone. & i²¹ can't remember. someone watching. watch
 them changing. sand into glass. with their bare hands. suddenly. & suppose religion²² was
 repose. & shadows²³ at noon. alone. convey the truth. that we attach ourselves to. so
 cunningly. like a wall of eyes

shining in a schizoid sky
 our lady of maliciousness
 our lady of deliciousness
 our lady of the annuals
 perennially receding

with the inner as bereft of substance
 as the outer is of meaning

A

con

vulsion of a con
 version of a vision
 with

in me

but with deflection

masquerading as love. such mirrors deflect.

nothing whatsoever.

gathered here *together*. the gift of the canyon. the promise of no more
 promises. tomorrow never comes. a shadow. under moonlight. relative to
 nothing.

the tears of heaven
 evaporate in the fire
 of Hel's hot desire

	refractions	of	reflections	of
infractions	of	infections	of	
refractions	of	reflections	of	
infractions	of	infections	of	
refractions	of	reflections	of	
infractions	of	infections	of	
refractions	of			

"to speak is to bring to life."

²⁰ dawn is faith. collapsing into reasons. out comes all compared.

²¹ the momentum of the whole is processional. a rhythm between heavens & hells.

²² men & mice are permutations of the same cheese.

²³ projections striving to break free of the underlying echo that denies identity

Foo Foo

he held the bill in his fist. his arm resting on his itchy wound sweating to his sweater. and he looked behind himself, crossing the street and seeing only the next corner. the exhaust of the cars on either side of him dissolved into the clouds. but he only stared at the corner. and believed that's where he'd be.

[illegible]

“ghondumz gotta reel big dick. hee hee, “he said, pointing to his penis.
condoms weewweeee hAw

[illegible]

the man in the chair twisted the top off the bottle. his wound had already begun to heal. the cold flat beer tasted merely like water. and the coolness of the water relaxed him as it sat in his belly. and the space that it filled oozed out from his center. and the honking horns could barely matter less. the time would advance with or without anyone noticing. and so with his magnum in his sweater, and the wound in his chest scabbing toward the center, he pushed himself backward through the parking lot, across the street, and toward the corner.

the sun had been snuffed by the turning earth. the business persons laid asleep in their domiciles. a gentle wind rustled the tree's leaves. the streets filled with barflies and college kids. thin pink streamers fell from the starry sky and lit up beneath the fluorescent lamplight. the christmas lights blinked in sequence on the evenly spaced trees, which were encased in cement pots to prevent their overgrowth. with the hooting of party favors, the drunks screeched in celebratory glee. the drunks in muscle shirts, with shaved heads, clutching money in their fists. their arms raised in victory. party favors hooting out of every lip. and their faces reddened toward the tip of their pugnacious snouts stuffed full of cigarettes.

May I trouble you for a cigarette, sir?

trouble at all, he replied.

the drunk pulled a cigarette from his nostril and handed it to the man in the chair. white powder dropped out of the hole now unfilled in his nose. the powder dissolved in the soft wind and he inhaled deeply with a rippling snort that sent out a cloud of white powder like a bubble around his head.

coooooolie man. heh heh, said the drunk.

God Bless you sir. Lord loves you. Lord Blesses you.

[illegible]

he kicked his way back into the alleyway, content for now with all he had. he brought the cigarette to his lips and pulled softly on the gutted filter. the cherry glowed like daylight for a moment. and he noticed a rat chewing on his shoe.

he pulled another drag off his cigarette. and reached behind him, pulling out a slice of bread from the bag attached to the back of his wheelchair. he broke off a small piece and threw it near his shoe. the rat scuttled toward the bread. picking it up with his little arms and chewing at it rapidly. the man in the chair smiled at the little rat which began squealing in glee. the man in the chair began laughing. pulling a drag off of his cigarette, sipping his magnum. the wound on his chest reduced to a red rash. and everywhere was the sensation of a cool warmth, that reminded him of the past. when old Sleek ruled the streets. and how everyone was always doing him favors. giving him things. and he was always giving back. hooking a guy up with a job and some extra cash.

he sipped his magnum and looked down on the rat. the rat looked up with that gleam of expectant desire, and let out a little squeak, which made the man in the wheelchair smile. he tore off another piece of bread. and bent over, holding the bread out for the rat to take. but the rat squealed and bit into the tips of his index and middle fingers. he grabbed the rat whose teeth were still dug into his own fingers. he squeezed its body in his hand with all his strength. he forced its innards from its skin, through its mouth. there was no life left in the skin, which he threw aside. but the moist outer lining of the rat's stomach still rippled as if to digest. its lungs inflated with air which came through a tiny larynx. peristalsis pushed what was left over of the bread through the small intestine and finally out of the large one where the bread he had given him turned into a piece of feces stuck like a bubble to the anus. the sight of that heart beating filled him with panic and rage. he swigged his forty. and with his one good leg, smeared the rats innards across the wet cement.

he awoke to pitch black. the opening of his eyes merely darkened the external world. he felt around recollecting himself, his chair. the empty space where once there was a leg.

“Hot damn,” said a voice coming from behind him. “You look like shit, foofoo. What the fuck you think your doing chucking forty bottles at a business?”

the voice had crept up on him from behind. it was now hovering near the soft spot, where the nape of the neck met the back of his skull.

Goddamn rat bit my finger.

'man, fuck that, you got punked by some motherfucking rat?'

I was given it food, man. Bit my goddamn hand.

'lookie here, foofoo. every rat despises what sustains it. that's the nature of the beast. you kill one, another pops up in its place. that's the nature of nature. so you can go around boppin them on the head if you please, but in the end its not going to make a difference.'

the last word he spoke settled in the back of his head like a bullet. *Who are you?* foofoo asked.

'it's sleek, bitch. i run this whole motherfucking gig. from the pigs on down to you. everything in between. and i need a favor from you.'

Anything, Sleek.

from behind his periphery came a soft light shining upon a blank, unsealed envelope. he could make out the shadow of a hand adorned in twinkling rings.

“this envelope you will bring to saint christopher's playground at 11:15 tomorrow morning. for doing this the contents of this envelope;” - he held up another envelope; “are yours. go ahead. open it.”

inside the unmarked envelope was a 1000 unit bill. *Aw Sleek, man. God bless you.*

“i bless myself, and that's enough,” said Sleek, whose voice seemed to retreat from the back of foofoo's skull, as the light that shone on the envelopes faded, and Sleek's “enough” seemed to echo and dissolve into everywhere.

10001

he awoke in his alleyway. the rain water dripping from the gutter. he had an envelope in either hand. he opened one and looked inside. the shock of recognition struck him at once, his eyes sustaining the sight of a spheroid ball of Love. he closed and reopened his eyes as if to reboot his mind and reprocess what he had just seen. in the other envelope, was a bill with three zeros.

and though his leg felt arthritic and sore. and there was a piercing pain in the flesh of his chest. he pushed himself backward out of the alleyway. between every step was a stop and a start, and one thousand steps separated him from the gas station. and his body felt heavier and his steps became slower and measured. and his knee made a popping sound between every bend, and from the popping came a dense burning, somewhat numbed in the cold. and finally he pushed his way up the handicap ramp, and pulled the heavy door open.

he struggled to make his way through the door, but someone kind enough to be leaving held it open for him with one arm while he checked his watch with the other. he pushed his way through the door. and the business person walked out into the cold. and the door closed behind the man in the chair.

Magnum, he wheezed, coughing. two clerks stood behind the register.

'ih?'

Magnum. he spoke louder and looked him in the eyes as he spoke. the clerk's black eyes seemed to settle into his skull. he nodded, and walked toward the back of the store. the other clerk stood there and said:

'dzeven dzeventy dzeven.'

he handed him the bill. the clerk looked at it and said:

'SZOT! nigh cant bray chthys.'

What do you mean?

when clerk two had arrived with the magnum, clerk one held up the bill so he could see it, and said:

'szot. no change.'

Aw. C'mon man. Have a heart now, God bless you.

'we don't halfsy nuff money to give you back your change,' (he explained).

Then keep it, he hissed. *Keep the fucking change.*

the clerk's black eyes seemed to settle back into his skull. he seemed shocked and hurt by the lame beggar in the chair, and he set the magnum on the countertop, and pulled a bill out of his pocket, ringing out the sale, handing the man his one thousand money unit, and the bottle of magnum along with it. he walked around to the other side of the counter, opened the door to the store, and held it open for the man in the chair, and as he pushed his way out into the cold, foofoo said:

And a straw please. God bless you.

10001

the bitter cold kept consumers indoors, and the gasclerks were adamant about not panhandling in front of their store. so he kicked his way down the empty streets, sipping the magnum tucked beneath his sweater from a straw. and an absolute warmth settled into him. like the deep warmth of a hot bath. a medicated transcendence that severed his mind from his broken body, which left him free of it, by allowing him, for the time being, to be unaware of it.

he sipped his magnum and watched as the broken shards of glass melted like ice off of his chest. nature's bitter wind felt like a fan's on his skin in the midsummer heat. he wheeled his way outside of a bar, where he could see heads floating through the window glass. it was only a matter of time, he knew, before one of them entered or left. and no sooner had he thought this, than the the door swung open, and a small blond female, wearing powder blue earmuffs and holding a powder blue cell phone to her ear, stumbled out of the bar, and lit a cigarette.

Excuse me miss. Do you happen to have an extra cigarette?

she shook her head and reached into her purse, her long nails fumbling through the bag. and she chattered into her phone ... “yeah. they took his leg off. mikey said they needed meat. i don't. no. what are you up to. i'm here with glimmer, tambis, rondold, and phikist. niner's” ... as she handed him the cigarette, a large rat scuttled out of the brush.

phiker! she screeched, clenching her entire body in an immediate spasm. her phone flew backward over her shoulder, and her leg bent out from underneath her. the cigarette fell from her hand as she keeled over. hit the ground, and screeched in pleasure/pain. “phikist!” she yelped. “phikist!”

a small male waddled out of the bar, while the rat snatched the cigarette as fufu bent over to reach it. “taudrea!” the male yelped. “who hurt you?” “nobody, that rat!” she pointed at the rat, who was standing in front of the man in the chair, who was already reaching for his spare empty magnum bottle in the back of his chair. as he bore the bottle down on the rat, he noticed phikist waddling toward him with his fists clenched and snot bubbling out of his snout. “phocket skimfick,” he snorted. fufu's attention raised from the cigarette, which was now out of his reach, to phikist, who'd misinterpreted taudrea, and was dark with rage. smoke billowed out of his nostrils. the spaces between his knuckles ran red with blood. fufu kicked his chair backward. “fikist, no!” shouted taudrea. “i meant that literally. there was this disgusting rat...”

Yeah man. The Lord loves you. So back off, he said brandishing the magnum.

fikist thought about this for a moment and calmed down, looking deep into taudrea's sunken eyes. “i hurt my ass,” she said. “kiss it and make me mommy.” and fikist's tongue unrolled from his mouth, and slapped down on taudrea's back and to foofoo she said: “scram wacko.”

“oh fikist,” she said. “make me mommy. make me mommy.”

10001

he bitched silently to himself about that fucking rat, and went about fumbling through his pockets, and sipping the magnum which was resting inside of his sweater. the straw he kept between his teeth, which lifted the burden of raising the bottle to his face. he pulled the flat envelope out of his pocket, and opened it again, he promised himself, for the last time. he found a spheroid ball glowing white, like a light bulb. he remembered: *11:45 Sleek said. st christopher's playground* sleek said. sleek he realized, had played him like a pawn. and foofoo rested the Love on his lap. *Saint Christopher's Playground*. he shook his head. *I ain't slinging Love to no kids*. and then he fumbled around in the bag attached to the back of his chair, pulling out a tire gage and a wire cleaning pad. he jammed a pinch of the wire pad into the tire gage, and carefully placed the Love atop it. with his lighter, he lit the Love and sucked on the tire gage, and then everything changed.

A standard 1D barcode is located at the bottom of the page, used for document tracking and identification.

“i have nothing.”

“SZOT!” he screamed.

he looked into the man's cold and sunken eyes, and knew this was personal, that he wasn't going to talk him down. that he needed the mothball if he wanted to replace the Love. and that he had a half an hour to get to st. christopher's playground or sleek would come after him. sleek would kill him and set him as a symbol for any aspiring dissenter. he weighed death against the effort and the expenditure it would take to escape death, and escape won again, and he handed the man the bill, and the business person took the bill from him, put it in the register, and laughed till he stopped waiting for any change.

'you don't even know what you done, do ya? well i'm gonna tell you so you know. that man you robbed, has a wife, he has five beautiful children, and he's been running that Deli Shoppe for eleven years. he decided to use the money he'd *earned* and *saved* working at the bank since he was eighteen years old in his home town of Pitri, and he decided to take his money *here* into our community and open his own Deli Shoppe which was a dream of his, even as a child, cooking dinners for his fucking mother. and you done paralyzed him from the waist down. that bullet you fired after he'd hit you in the back of the leg, went through his gut and into his spine.'

at this point, the officer was shaking. the man sitting on the hospital bed was shaking too. his breathing cut for a second, and he panted awkwardly, in a rigid exhale. he was too petrified to cry.

'now, don't get me wrong. there ain't nothing you can do that's ever going to right this wrong, not in this life anyhow. how's he supposed to run his business and support his family? but there is fortunately a gesture of balance, a sacrifice, a token of your remorse.'

the officer backed up, and looked away. the officer standing at the window stared back at him, and the doctor nodded at them both, and the two officers left the room together.

'unfortunately,' explained the doctor. 'the bullet is buried in a surgically unstable portion of your upper femur. if i were to operate on the bullet itself, i'd risk flooding the bloodstream with marrow, and you'd die. the only surgical solution is amputation,' he said. as he gassed foofoo, who passed out with his eyes open.

[illegible]

foofoo awoke in a hospital bed.

'i hear hopeless men got the biggest balls of anyone.'

Sleek? Look man, I don't know what happened with any of that. That kid just flipped out man. Then the people started staring. I don't know what happened.

'whatever, man. the cop bopped you in the back of the head, now you're in the hospital.'

Where the cops now? I'm going down man, that kid is dead.

'nothin to worry about. kids don't know how to handle their drugs these days. can't go shovin a ball of Love in your mouth like a damn fool. kid had it comin anyway. his pops has been slinging that shit all over the west side. it all comes back in a circle.'

So the cops are in on it?

'like i said, it's taken care of. i got another gig for you.'

You shittin me?

'not at all.'

What do you want from me?

whatever room foofoo was in was completely dark. he knew that there was a mattress beneath him, and that the bed was reclined like a hospital bed. sleek's voice sounded like it was coming from everywhere.

'the shopkeeper the one you bought the mothballs from. the one that charged
you all you had you remember that one right?

I remember him.

'same motherfucker who put that bullet in your leg.'

I remember.

'that motherfucker watches you everyday like a hawk rolling up and down
the street with that forty in your sweater like a piece of road kill rotting in the gutter
meanwhile he rolls his ass around on that electronic chair that he didn't even have to
pay for because his insurance covered it. and still runs his own business.
i need you to kill that motherfucker. i need you to kill him. not just kill him either,
i mean crucify him. sacrifice him. you've already sacrificed for him. it's his turn.

Why?

'why? i thought that would be apparent. but to put it into business sense for you,
when he robbed you, he robbed me it all comes back in a circle.
this man's debt can only be repaid by his life. if he owes it to you then he owes it to me.
and we will take it.

We?

'yes, we. i'm going to help you help me kill him, and you're going to help me kill him
and it all moves in a circle, foofoo. gain, and consequence, it emanates from
a center which it must return to for sustenance. sound familiar?'

foofoo said nothing.

'foofoo. i need you to kill the man that put you in the chair. i need you to kill him
because he enjoys watching you suffer. he and his family live in the top floor of his
shop. i'm going to give you a device. and all you need to do is throw it through his
window, and get the fuck away. when it goes off, it'll destroy his business, his house
everything he owns, his wife, and his kids. you will erase him completely, forever
all that he has created. his life will come to nothing. a gesture of balance for what
he has taken from you. don't worry about the cops. just get away, go on back to your
alley,' said sleek.

and a light shone in the darkness on the face of a blank envelope. a few dollars in change dropped
onto the bed between his leg and his stump.

'i'll collect you when its done,' sleek said. and the room went dark again. foofoo's mind
slid out of his body.

when foofoo awoke, the sun was setting. it was dusk. and he discovered a gun in his right hand and a small white cube in his left. he examined it closely under the dim light that crept into the alleyway. it was perfectly smooth and its glossy outer coating seemed to make it glow opposite its shadow. sleek he remembered, had said it was a bomb. and he shook his head, put the bomb in his pocket, and found change there.

he tried to sit forward to have better access to his pockets, but found himself stuck to the back of his chair. it felt as though the skin on his back had grafted itself to the back rest. he pulled his hand from his pockets and pulled his sweater from the skin of his chest, where his hairs had become intertwined with fibers in his sweater and he could sense and feel that the two were fusing, and everywhere on his body, he felt the sticky envelopment of his sweater to his chest and back, and his pants on his legs, and he started to moan in a doglike whimper as his mind desperately tried to escape his body. he took the gun and stuffed it between his legs, and pushed himself slowly towards the gas station.

between every stop and start he could feel the itchy burning of the external world closing in on him. the arthritis in his knee did not feel like anything compared to his skin burning. it merely slowed him down. he saw in his mind his destination, and in his desperation, his desire fabricated a world where his body touched nothing at all, it merely hovered in mid air, and even above the air itself, because air is tangible and can be felt.

[illegible]

he pushed his way up the handicapped ramp and pulled the door open, wedging his chair between it so it couldn't close. with one hand on the door, and the other on the door frame, he pushed his way through with his arms and not his leg. the gasclerks had already anticipated his request, and one came out from behind the counter and walked toward the back of the store where the coolers were. the gasclerk told him the price and foofoo pulled the change out of his pocket, and the gasclerk had to come out from behind the register to take it. foofoo remembered the gun between his legs, but dared not to do anything that would disturb the urgency of this transaction. and he merely handed the gasclerk the change. the gasclerk examined it in his hand, then went behind the register, tapped some buttons, and then a ching and it closed.

Where's my change? asked foofoo.

"you were four cents short," replied the gasclerk. "but i covered you."

Bullshit, foofoo thought to himself as he grabbed the forty tensely from the other gasclerk, and made his way out the door.

[illegible]

foofoo swigged the magnum right there in the parking lot. and felt the burning on his skin fizzling away. whereas before it felt like his mind was walled in a prison of pain, the magnum allowed his mind to hover two inches off the back of his skull, putting his body at a distance. he could still feel its presence, but not the symptoms of its condition. and his skin seemed to consider the difference between itself and the sweater, and rejected the sweater pushing it out, as the fibers of cloth unwound themselves from the hairs on his back and chest, and separated from his body again. by the time he was done with his first sip, half the bottle had been depleted, and then another half, and another half, and another.

he slid the empty bottle beneath his sweater as he rolled down the street, gliding along the pavement like water over sand, and the cool wind kissed the back of his head. he glided to the nearest bar, and there was a decent crowd trickling off into the streets. he set up shop in front of Niner's, and sipped what was left of his magnum. he formed a frown of his face, and contorted his body to a more pathetic form, so as to attract those who would need to pay out to feel ethically good about themselves. and many did, by handing change to him or merely dropping it in his lap as they walked by. he would have to collect those coins in privacy, for to open his legs would mean to reveal the gun. and foofoo didn't want the nice young ladies seeing anything of the sort. so he scattered his *god bless you's* and *thank you's* between donations and soon had enough for another magnum.

'oh fikist!' said a voice. 'it's that funny little crippled man!' she squealed. fikist didn't reply but stared at the man, as taudrea opened her purse and offered him a cigarette. 'here's that cigarette from last time,' she giggled. 'but you have to compensate me for it.' 'wha!' phikist yelped. 'you have to tell me how you lost your leg.' 'phiker!' fikist yelped, raising both his fists in the air and then walking away, toward a crowd. 'i wanna know how you lost your leg,' taudrea said, putting her hand on his face, and sitting down on his lap. 'tell me how you lost your leg.'

I was shot, foofoo said. *doctor took it off.*

'were you in nam?' she asked innocently.

Naw, foofoo said. *I wasn't in nam. I think if I told you what happened, you wouldn't like me very much.*

'did you kill someone?' she asked excitedly.

Never killed nobody. No, I robbed a man. I shot him. I paralyzed him. He shot me in the leg. They. They took it off. They took it off.

'oh,' she said. 'nobody's ever forgiven you. they feed you change out of pity, to make themselves feel better about themselves. they don't even see you. do they?mister,' she said sweetly. 'what is your name?'

JAHN he replied. but before he could complete the second syllable, taudrea jumped from his lap and screeched in fear and disgust. a giant rat emerged from the alleyway behind him, about the size of a human head. the rat moved itself atop a skateboard with arms pushing himself. he laid on the board with his chin sitting on the tip. as he approached taudrea and foofoo both noticed that his hind legs were crushed and the putrid flesh had already begun to be devoured by small white insects. taudrea vomited and moved backward. foofoo thought about reaching for his gun, but didn't want to brandish it in front of taudrea, fearful that she would think him a brute, and humbled by her willingness to listen. truly the nicest thing anyone had ever given him.

the rat stared foofoo in the eyes. and foofoo kicked himself backward, and the rat reached for something lying next to him. a thin tube foofoo recognized would make a good pipe. and the rat held the tube to his lips, and instead of sucking on it, he blew into it, and a dart shot out and dug itself into foofoo's leg. foofoo ignored the pain and kicked himself backward. taudrea was gone. but a woman ran out of the bar with a broom and splatted the rat, who was momentarily stunned, but otherwise unfazed. the rat's little arms paddled away from the broom-wielding woman, who was disgusted enough to be content to let it run away.

foofoo had not lit the cigarette that taudrea had given him. but the desire to do so had set in order a sequence of events which he'd concocted from his memory. a 'plan.' it had been so long since he had used 'planning' that he couldn't remember (nor did he try to remember) the last time that he had 'planned.' the order of the plan he constructed thus: first, he would make his way down to the gas station and purchase another forty. then he would smoke the contents of the envelope that Sleek had given him. then he was going to go kill that rat. and after all that, he was going to smoke a cigarette. the sequence of the plan had not been constructed out of the urgency of his desire, but rather the sheer pragmatism of having the forty to sip after smoking the Love, and not having to go to the gas station all strung up on Love.

taudrea's small act of compassion, of true Pity, had done something to him, and somehow, he was capable of dividing because he'd known himself to be known by someone else. somewhere, he hoped, she kept alive the image of him as a man nobly enduring the crimes of his past, and fighting the inevitable against all reason.

[illegible]

after he'd purchased the magnum. he rolled his way back to his alleyway, and loaded the crack pipe with Love, and sucked, as the image of himself being imagined by taudrea filled whatever space was left empty by the magnum, and as the shock of recognition struck him, there was a bullet in his leg, he looked over at the owner whose apron was stained in red and black, holding a shotgun at the thief, and delighted by his own aim. he lowered his gun, while the thief raised his and shot him in the belly. blood gushed from his stomach like crème puff. he dropped to the ground clutching his gun like a blanket with blood running out of his mouth. his wife ran out of the Shoppe screaming and she kneeled down over him and covered her eyes from the sight of him twitching. his children looked through the window as the blood spilled out of their father.

he smoked the pipe down to the steel wool wire, and set it back in the pouch behind his shoulder. he bristled a moment, content merely to listen to the sounds of the drunk's laughs, and grasshoppers and wind. he kicked himself backward, with no real destination in mind, just to wander and observe the drunks in glee under the streetlights, and the car's passing. the lights on the trees blinking in sequence. the potted plants expanding out of the stone enclosures. everything, and everyone seemed to reaching out to the sky. he sipped his magnum, content for a moment, with all he had. and then he felt something sting him in the back of the head.

[illegible]

he felt around the back of his head, and found a small dart about the size of a toothpick embedded in the skin. he pulled it out and turned around. it was the rat! rolling toward him on the skateboard, rolling on pure momentum, and pointing the blowgun at foofoo's eyes. foofoo turned around as another dart hit him in the back of the skull. he kicked himself toward the rat, trying to protect the back of his head with this hands, and pulling out the empty forty bottle in a single fluid motion. the rat's skateboard collided with foofoo's wheelchair, and the skateboard flipped over though the rat was tied down to it, so he could never be separated from it. foofoo's momentum had taken him away from the rat, but he could hear something akin to the sound a jack would make and the rat suddenly flipped over right side up on to the board. foofoo withdrew the gun from between his legs, and pointed it at the rat, who instantly backed off as foofoo fired a shot which struck the front of its skateboard, and the rat nearly toppled again. the force of the bullet shot the skateboard up into the air, and it landed on the wheels. foofoo fired again, and missed, and in a panic, the rat skedaddled but foofoo fired off three more rounds, leaving him only one in the revolver that sleek had given him.

the revolver, he remembered, had been given to him by sleek, and the small cube explosive which he was supposed to dispose of the shopkeeper. he fingered it between his thumb and forefinger. the cheers of the drunks had faded into the distance. the rat was nowhere to be found. he rolled his way toward the shopkeeper.

[illegible]

he looked through the store's glass door, and saw that the shopkeeper was still awake stocking the shelves with moth balls. foofoo held the door open and turned his chair around wedging his chair in the door. the shopkeeper looked over at foofoo, who still struggled to clear the footrest from hooking itself on the door. foofoo could hear the gears of his motorized chair getting louder behind him. and he could feel the moist warmth of the shopkeeper's breath on the soft spot of his head where where the skull meets the nape of the neck. the shopkeeper grabbed the back of foofoo's back rest and said: 'i've been waiting for you.' the shopkeeper pushed the joystick on the arm rest of his electric chair, and they both rolled backward. *You been waiting to kill me?* foofoo asked. 'often,' he said. 'i wanted to. i wanted to exterminate you. because you are vermin. a bottom feeding, garbage eating rat.' they both kept rolling backward, for what seemed like an impossible length of time. 'but then i figured that'd be like letting you off the hook. i came to realize that i took no real joy in my life. this convenient store means nothing to me, other than another miserable day, that i loathe to sustain.' *You should live in the now*, advised foofoo who was already reaching for his magnum. 'do you really know why i wanted to kill you? because i pity you. because it would be an act of mercy. and maybe that act of mercy, in some symbolic way maybe, god would take mercy on me, and let me die. and so i've waited for you. to kill me. because if i did the deed myself, i'd have to bear the miseries of my children on my eternal soul.' the shopkeeper buzzed around foofoo and they now faced each other. 'i wanted to kill you the way they put the old greyhounds down when they break a leg. and instead, everyday i watched you suffer.' foofoo said nothing, but took the small cube out of his pocket and handed it to the shopkeeper. the shopkeeper looked at it for a second and then squinted into foofoo's eyes. 'you came here to kill me, didn't you?' the shopkeeper's yellow eyes seem to gush and bubble from his skull. he panted ecstatically. but foofoo raised the gun to his own head and pulled the trigger.

[illegible]

Rainwater dripped from the gutter in a quickening rhythm. his heart matched the pace. there was an empty bottle of malt liquor between his sweater and the skin of his chest. and where once it was full and felt cold, and familiar to the touch, it was now empty and hot, and burnt his skin.

half conscious, he fell asleep in his wheelchair, his mind yearning to escape his body. and a limp comfort settled into him. and then the shock of slipping away. he fell asleep in the wet alleyway.

and awoke.

to a foggy dawn with the steam of his breath dissolving in a cold mist. smoke trickling out of his nose. his hand rested atop the forty between his sweater and his chest and it took him a few seconds to collect him...

Grandma

grandma sunk into the puffy cushions of her royal blue recliner. her hand was curled into her chest and a pen extended to her redlips. a book of crossword puzzles lay face down on her tummy. her thick glasses slid down to the tip of her long nose. her nostrils flared with every breath, and jonathon exhaled the smoke from the cigarette he'd stolen from grandma, and simply stared at her, still and quiet, for the night. the black curls atop her head looked full and shiny. and it appeared to jonathon that she was at peace.

[illegible]

jonathon went to bed, tucked himself into his blankets and cuddled himself into his puffy pillows. his bed was dug into the far corner of his bedroom, by the window which overlooked the backyard. in the yard there was a small patio at the foot of the house, overgrown from many seasons worth of uncut weeds. and there was a sycamore tree in the middle of the yard, and in the extreme corner, there was a shed which was dug deep into the shadows. the lights on the side of the house, which only came on at night, shed no light beyond the trunk of the tree. beyond that it became too dim to see anything at all.

and sometimes the shadow itself would creep past the darkness and into the light. and the endless chirping of the grasshoppers or the electric hum of cicadas drowned out even the thoughts jonathon tried to think in his own head. and the darkness stretched from the deep back of of the shed, all the way over the patio, and up the side of the house, until even the outside house lights were engulfed in darkness. and when he fell asleep, he dreamed he had awoken where he lay himself down to sleep. and the window that faced him, was covered in a blanket of cockroaches. and he could hear them scuttling across the glass. and the lamplight on his night stand shined on their glossy black abdomens.

as the window shattered, the cockroaches caved in with the glass, and jonathon jerked himself back. knocking over his lamp which flew into the wall. he could feel their tiny legs moving across the skin of his throat. and as he swallowed, he vomited, realizing there were little legs on either side of his skin, inside his throat, crawling inside. he fell off his bed, face first, with his hand on his own throat, squeezing at the digging roaches. his elbow hit the bed as he fell over, driving his hand into his neck and mashing the roach to his skin. white fluid squirted as far as the wall. and jonathon noticed that from the fluid emerged small spiders which ran up and down the walls until it looked like the wall paper itself was rippling. so jonathon ran into the wall and started clawing down the wallpaper with his fingernails bending back. and when that didn't work, he smashed the spiders with his forehead until he woke up, on the ground, with the daylight glistening over the dust.

[illegible]

[illegible]

'ooh!' said grandma, covering her hand with her heart.

'you scared me,' she said, as her large thick glasses slid to the tip of her nose. and when she looked at jonathon, she looked looked up so she could see his face, though the two of them were nearly the same height.

'yes, grandma,' he replied.

jonathon watched as the red tomato sauce bubbled in the pot on the stove, exploding little bubbles popping hot sauce into the air. the stench of piss lingered midway between grandma and her sauce, and jonathon himself lingered midway between them. grandma's hobbled legs loathed to make the trip upstairs, and she did so sometimes to sleep in her bed, or to use the bathroom in a manner that the bucket could not avail her. but her aged bladder emptied often, and she would have had to make that trip more than once an hour, and so she pissed in a bucket behind the kitchen table, where no one could see it, between the table and the wall. when the smell had become so excruciating that even grandma noticed it, she would dump the bucket off the porch into a small space in front of the house where there was once a garden. all that remained of it was a rose bush off to the extreme right of the porch near the

stairs. weeds grew taller toward the extreme ends of the garden, because grandma poured her bucket it the same place twice a week. and in the center nothing grew at all, and the mud itself seemed to lose its pigmentation, and left instead a clear gel, maybe the consistency of mud.

'jonathon,' grandma said. 'will you look in the bucket. i think there's blood in my urine jonathon. another problem, just what i need.... i'm deteriorating, you know. its terrible to get old, jonathon. so terrible. will you check the bucket. see if there's any blood in it, for me, jonathon, will you?'

jonathon said nothing. he walked toward the kitchen window which overlooked the neighbor's next door yard, and around the kitchen table where the red bucket was carefully hidden. he looked inside and the urine and lestoil mixture did not look at all discolored. he stared into the bucket, which was red everywhere anyway.

'can you see it jonathon. there's blood in it, isn't there?' grandma asked.

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jonathon walked into the livingroom which was connected to the kitchen by a small hallway with a door to his right leading into the basement. beyond the door was the stairway which lead to the bathroom, and two bedrooms, and another stairway which led up to the attic.

jonathon sat on the couch which was on the extreme end of the livingroom by the stairs. between the stairs and the couch was an end table with a black lamp on top of it, and there was another end table between the couch and grandma's blue recliner, that had an identical black lamp. finally, there was a third such table, with an identical black lamp between grandma's recliner and the wall with the picture window and the front door carved out of it.

on the opposite side of the room was the television, a fake fireplace and mantel, and then the front door. jonathon sat down on the couch, as grandma waddled in from the kitchen. in her one hand she carried a three footed cane, and in the other hand she carried toast and eggs and set them in front of jonathon.

'there you go jonathon,' she said handing him the eggs smothered in hotsauce and the toast with strawberry jam spread across it, as he drank a glass of cranberry juice.

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'be careful,' grandma said, as jonathon set up a foldable tv table in front of him. 'ooh,' she said holding her heart with her hand. 'you scared me jonathon. put your plate in the center of the table so it doesn't fall over. you'll ruin my nice carpet, jonathon. please?'

jonathon pushed the plate into the center of the table without acknowledging grandma who was turning on the television. the news was on. ... *and on the city's east side today, a woman was raped as she left her home to go to work ... authorities received a call from the woman herself... this is the fourth such attack in the last ...* 'it's terrible jonathon. the world we live in,' she shook her head, at a loss for further commentary. 'you can't even leave your own home any more. did you hear that? the poor girl was walking out her front door, and that happened to her. it's terrible jonathon. the world is terrible.'

grandma reclined in her chair while jonathon looked over the red eggs scrambled on his plate. 'your food is going to get cold, jonathon,' grandma said, turning the channel to the food station, and suddenly, a chicken glistened in place of the anchor lady's maudlin eyes. 'maybe i'll get some new ideas for recipes,' ... *and then you take the marmalade glaze and just brush it onto the chicken's skin there ...*

'how does that sound jonathon? chicken marmalade?'

'no,' said jonathon.

jonathon ate the food on his plate, the red eggs and the red toast, and then he drank the last of his cranberry juice, and cleaned off his plate in the kitchen. he lounged back on the couch while grandma turned the station to court tv. the tv-lady's face filled with venomous rage. she spat each syllable with indignant deliberation. the trial she was covering was familiar to both jonathon and grandma. man murders pregnant wife for duped mistress. jonathon could feel the acids in his stomach denaturing the food he had eaten. squishy gurgling noises emerged from his belly, until he burped and farted, silently into the cushions of the couch. he felt his bowels fill. and without speaking one word, he walked upstairs and went to the bathroom.

[illegible]

the stairs and upstairs halls were carpeted in the same brown carpet as the downstairs living room. a deep rich brown which grandma obsessively scrutinized for impurities, and protected tenaciously against jonathon's carelessness. grandma was wise to do this, because jonathon could care less about the rug as he sped toward the toilet. he pulled his pajama bottoms down and sat on the toilet in a seamless motion, without so much as closing the door. he and grandma were alone in that house together, and there was no way she would make it upstairs in time to watch him shit. they were bound in that house, at least for the summer, day and night. school would offer some reprieve for jonathon, if not for grandma. jonathon let loose with a thunderous rippling fart that splashed the toilet water. a single brown ball, perfectly spherical, floated in the center of the bowl. jonathon exhaled a swift wind of gas from his ass which filled the air around him. and he remembered his mother, whose closed door he could see from the toilet. jonathon felt his stomach turn again and his bowels let forth with a stream of yellow liquid, and then another, and another.

when he was quite certain he had finished, he looked into the toilet, and there was a brown ball spinning in circles in the middle of the cloudy orange water. the spinning ball began to disturb the water around it. jonathon could see it rippling, and pulsing, too rhythmically to be random. as the brown ball spun faster and faster, it created a divot around itself in the toilet water. it appeared as though it was rising above the water itself, or as though the water was sinking around it, and holding it up by some invisible will.

jonathon took a step back and flushed the toilet, watching as the ball floated down through the hole, as if whatever will the ball had, was an extension of the water itself. and he waited while his panic settled, until he knew the brown ball was gone, and all of the orange liquid too. he washed his hands thoroughly without raising his eyes from the empty toilet bowl.

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jonathon came downstairs, holding his stomach. 'are you okay, jonathon. you were up there an awfully long time for a child.' *yeah*, jonathon said in a sigh. 'my stomach hurts too,' grandma said. 'i hurt all over. its terrible to get old jonathon. i wonder if its time for my tarva.' she held her chin as she looked up at the clock. 'court is in recess,' grandma said, pushing down the leg rest of her chair, and collecting her cane. 'do you know what that bastard did, that fucker. he killed his wife, jonathon,' she said as she stood slowly and painfully from her recliner. 'ooh,' grandma said. 'i hurt so bad. my knee buckles on me. i'm deteriorating ... oh...', grandma sighed, then said: 'so then he cut her to pieces and threw her body over the side of a boat. ... and get this jonathon ... she was still pregnant. can you believe it. so her dismembered torso gave birth under the water. its terrible jonathon. this fucker. this fucker deserves to die.' grandma began making her way across the living room. when she got between jonathon and the television her knee buckled a bit and she said: 'ooh! did you see that jonathon. i almost fell over. its terrible to get old, jonathon. terrible.' jonathon held his belly as grandma waddled off into the kitchen, and in a few moments, jonathon could hear the sound of grandma peeing into the red bucket behind the kitchen table.

'jonathon,' grandma called from the kitchen. 'come get your lunch.' ... *so what were the expressions like on the jury member's faces when they saw \$\$\$\$'s body after it had been exhumed from the lake...? ...well grace they seemed thoroughly disgusted...* 'i would have brought it in for you, but i hurt so bad today,' she said, holding her left hand in her right hand. jonathon looked into her eyes through her thick glasses. they were yellowish, the same pale yellow as her tarva. her pupil looked like it had burst, like the yoke of an egg, and ran over into where her eyes were once a deep brown. but now they were jet black, and she stared at jonathon with an innocent victimhood, that made his heart overflow like an autumn gutter. he could almost feel what a prison her body had become. he could sort of feel that for every step she took on her bum arthritic knee, it let out a dull throbbing pain, reminding her of her prison. and yet she still found the will to make him meal after meal. 'i made you a sandwich jonathon.

little bit and had to lean on her cane for support. jonathon stood up without saying a word. he went into the kitchen and poured grandma a glass of water, and brought it to her where she stood, before she could take another step. 'thank you, jonathon,' grandma said, picking up a dixie cup from the end table, half filled with pills. she poured the pills into her mouth without swallowing, and jonathon handed grandma the water. she slurped and gargled the glass of water down her throat with all the pills, and out of breath, she gasped for air, and her panting faded into a sigh.

she set the cup down carefully on the end table. 'i'm going upstairs, jonathon. i'm going to take a nap. i have to shit anyway. so i might as well nap upstairs.' grandma hobbled her way slowly across her pristine rug. 'lower that will you,' she said passing between jonathon and the television, when her knee buckled a bit and she stumbled. 'ooh,' she said. 'my knee just buckled. see that jonathon? i keep losing my balance. one of these days you'll find me on the floor. it's terrible to get old jonathon. it's just terrible. now that i have nothing to do, i have no freedom at all, and its not fair, jonathon.' grandma made her away across the television and toward the stairs. she put her cane, which she held in her right hand, on the stair up from the ground, and with her left hand, she grabbed the railing. she lifted her right foot and put it on the first step, next to her cane, and with all her might she pulled herself up a single step. fourteen steps separated her from the second story, and the bathroom, and her bedroom. 'this is the worst part of my day jonathon,' grandma said, as she traversed another step. 'nobody knows my pain. nobody knows what i go through.' but jonathon merely stared at the television, and for every step grandma took she let out a tiny moan of pain, like a whimpering dog. jonathon held his stomach and stared blankly at the television, struggling with grandma's food.

[illegible]

jonathon watched the man on the television stand in the front doorway of his own home, with the door wide open. his tie knot hung halfway down his neck, and his shirt was halfway untucked. he dropped his auburn briefcase to the ground and screamed. jonathon was familiar with this movie, it was called *He Struck Without Warning*. it was about a woman's harrowing struggle against her recent husband's deteriorating career, and his demonic urge to take out these frustrations on his woman. he dropped his briefcase to the ground and slammed the door shut. the woman looked up from the flower pot she was dusting. 'kevin, you're home,' she says, smiling into her husband's eyes. 'surprised to see me?' he asks in fake restraint. 'no,' she says. 'the door...' 'where's my dinner victoria.' 'oh... it's on the oven, honey.' 'it's on the oven honey?' he mimics her voice as he slowly moves toward her. 'oven honey?' he grabs her by the hair, and throws her down on the couch, so that her knees are on the ground and her body is bent over the couch cushions. he pulls her skirt down and exposes her backside. he stares at it for a second and licks his lips.

jonathon watched the movie and held his stomach, which began to tingle with excitement, because he knew well that his mother had loved him, and that grandma was mistaken about the cause of her death.

though he could not move them himself, they none the less moved, and he sat up straight, and looked in the mirror across from the bed. and he saw the face of his mother, who smiled back at him. they stood up together, and walked out of the room, and down the stairs, and out the door. they stood there together, sharing a body, looking over the yard. they walked through the weeds together. jonathon could feel himself moving, but he could not feel the weeds beneath his feet. they walked together toward the shed. he could not feel his hand as it reached out for the shed door. jonathon felt as if he himself hovered over the bareback body of his mother, who was opening the door to the shed. a thousand flies or more flew out the moment the door opened. they hovered and buzzed around his naked mother's body, until she was covered like a blanket, head to toe. she walked into the shed, and when the door shut, jonathon found himself awake on his mother's bed, alone.

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'mommy?' said jonathon. 'i'm here,' she replied. 'jonny, my melancholy little baby. how beautiful you are. i miss you so much.' jonathon could see beyond his own reflection. he saw the reflection of his mother but there was no body corresponding in his world. 'mommy where are you?' said jonathon. 'i'm in the shed,' she replied. i'm being held there against my will, jonathon. i think i'm in hell or something. i don't know. but the insects feed on me. they keep me weak. and *He* is here, jonathon. the piece of shit fucker. He punishes me. i couldn't bring myself to speak of the terrible things he does to me. it's terrible jonathon. it's just terrible.' 'so it wasn't like grandma said then,' he asked. 'you did care about me.' 'of course i cared about you jonathon. of course i loved you. i still love you. but i can't get out of here.' 'so you didn't kill yourself, did you mommy?' 'of course not, jonathon. nobody wants to kill themselves. they're all trying to escape their pain.'

11101

jonathon awoke on his mother's bed. the sun had begun to set, and the room was too dark to see much. he stood up, and turned the light on. he jumped at the sight of a body on the bed. but it was not his mother's, it was his, laid out in the same position his mother's was in when he found her. he could smell the heavy stench of feces in the air. and then he awoke again and he was lying in the dark, with his back turned to the mirror, in the position that he'd set himself in, the position he remembered his mother's body in. he slapped himself in the face, to check to see if he was really awake or not, and the sting convinced him for the time being that he was indeed. and then he also realized his pants needed to be changed. jonathon began to cry.

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jonathon stared at the dark red sauce on his plate. it glistened with the grease of the brown hamburger meat. 'i hope you don't mind,' said grandma. 'i didn't make meatballs today. my hands hurt so bad today

jonathon walked downstairs and saw grandma standing beside the fireplace with her cane in her hand. she fumbled around the knick knacks reaching behind the statue of St Jude which tipped over and cracked on the ground. his arm lay broken on the rug. when grandma noticed jonathon approaching, she began to swing her cane harder and flail about more thoroughly, ensuring that anything within her reach was sacrificed to the piercing chaos of her need. jonathon ran down the stairs, but it was too late to preserve anything fragile and the wooden roses crumbled into the rug. jonathon grabbed her pills atop the mantel which lay there unscathed by grandma's rampage and handed them to her. grandma dropped her cane from the top of the mantel and left it on the floor atop the wooden roses. her hands shook as she reached out for her pills. she panted through her gaping frown. 'water jonathon. water,' she said. and jonathon got her some water.

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'thank you for eating the leftover sauce, jonathon,' grandma sighed in jagged spurts, as jonathon shoveled the hot red food into his face. 'but i hurt so bad today jonathon. it isn't fair. why were my pills left on top of the fireplace? why jonathon? you didn't do that on purpose did you? you did, didn't you?' *...so what you're saying is... you're stupid... you went to this character's house, at 10:30 at night... - but judge he said he had the money he owe me – SHUT UP! you talk when I ask you a question. but judge. SHUT UP! LISTEN! ...* the rage of Judge Judith Eichmann quieted both jonathon and grandma for a moment. *you don't go to a man's house looking for money at 10:30 and not expect him to expect some thing extra..., **the audience claps**...* the large muscled bailiff nods like he knows the predatory ways of sexualized men. 'this was the kind of stupid bitch your mother was, jonathon. drugs jonathon. that's all your mother cared about jonathon. i told her over and over to keep away from those kinds of people. and she wouldn't listen. she did what she wanted. to spite me and then she left us both alone.'

11101

grandma snuffed her cigarette gruffly then lit another, while jonathon attempted to superglue St Jude's arm back to his body. the statue nauseated jonathon, to look upon it in pieces, and he felt the pasta and sauce separating from the lining of his stomach. he could feel them independently, dividing and dissolving, things once living, chewed down into some unitexture goo. jonathon could hardly bear to look at St. Jude's arm without its body any more than he could bear the pain of chewing through his own arm. the sight of St Jude's expressionless face haunted jonathon perhaps more, and he could feel the bile in his belly roiling with the disgust of its own function. he held the arm together to the body, and pressed it tightly together, clenching his eyes in the process. 'i don't know why you even bother, jonathon. a lot of good he ever did us, eh?' jonathon's arms overpowered the old porcelain statue, which cracked in half from the pressure he placed on it when gluing the arm to the body. it crumbled to pieces in his hands. jonathon saw not porcelain shattering. he didn't feel sharp edges breaking his skin, and causing him to bleed. he did not hear the cracking of a statue but the crack of small bones, ripping out

of thing that happens when you let him do whatever he wants. 'bullshit. piece of shit,' said grandma under her breath. and when jonathon looks behind him, he sees a car with a man in it, and its driven straight into a car without a man in it. *what the hell is wrong with you, kid? you didn't hear my horn? you didn't see me coming?*

of course he hadn't. any good outfielder has to block out forty thousand distractions a game, while protecting his eyes from the field lights, and still manage to follow the ball into his glove. when he looked back toward the porch, grandma was calling to him. Sara was gone. jonathon would never see his mother again. 'bullshit,' said grandma. 'was a piece of shit fucker. you'd better buy formula for him, Sara. he'll end up a vegetable.'

jonathon remembered trying to run after his mother, and he remembered grandma telling him to let her go. and that it wasn't his fault. and that it was hers. and jonathon remembered wondering why it was anyone's fault at all, and what had happened to make everyone angry at one another. shortly thereafter jonathon's sleep disturbances began, and grandma's health began to deteriorate. beforehand, her arthritis had been manageable, and her health was well enough to make the decision for custody merely a formality. but as grandma's health deteriorated, she made no effort to see that jonathon be taken into foster care, because she knew that doing so would mean she herself would be dumped in a nursing home to die. the thought of dying did not frighten grandma. but the thought of waiting to die mortified her. and the thought of losing her home meant waiting to die.

suddenly, grandmother let loose with a thunderous rippling rubbery fart that shook jonathon from his reminiscence. both lamps turned on, and the television turned off, and grandma snorted loudly in her sleep. 'piece of shit,' she said, under her heavy breath. jonathon clapped twice, quickly, and the tv turned back on, while the lights turned off. but the room filled with the stink of grandma's fart. and from beyond his periphery, jonathon could see a disruption in the darkness, as if the atomic particles in one small region of the darkness had become excited, and the staticky blips of light in his field of vision moved increasingly quickly. and it seemed like all the static, and all the blips of light, compressed themselves into a single point in space. and from there a green light shone through, a single green eye, that stared at jonathon from the darkness.

0111011

jonathon awoke in his mother's room. he was curled against the wall in her position. his body lay paralyzed. he could not even open his eyes. but he was fully conscious, fully aware of his paralysis, but no matter how hard he attempted to move his limbs or open his eyes, they would not move. and worse still, the stink of shit filled the air. he could feel a slimy moist snake coiling up his lower leg. *hooooooooomme*, it said. and in his mind's eye he could see its green eye staring over him. and a terrible rush of panic electrified him, when he realized the turd's urge was to return to the place where it had

been created, he began rocking himself back and forth and jerked his hand around his body, swiveling his hips over, buttocks flat down on the bed to protect himself. as he swung his hand through the air, it struck the piece of shit splattering the upper half of it against the mirror in his mother's room. he stood up, and turned the light on. the eye of the shit had been severed from its body, but the body began to regrow the eye. and worse still noticed jonathon, the eye, began to regrow its body. he ran from the room slamming the door shut behind him, and stopped atop the stairs before considering his options. to go into his room at this time of night would be pointless, and cage him into the corner, for the insects would certainly be awake, and jonathon had no plan to sleep anytime soon. he carefully went downstairs, and from behind him, he could hear the pieces of shit chewing at the bottom of the door.

[illegible]

halfway down the staircase was a landing with a plastic tree on it, and when jonathon got to it, he could see the entire living room from the top step. and he sat down and looked over the room. grandma was asleep in her recliner with her chin in her hand and her jaw gaping open, it seemed like she was looking over at jonathon who sat on the couch with the remote in his hand. jonathon's mind faded like smoke into the sky.

there he was seeing himself, from his own eyes, like a mirror through time, he watched himself find *He Struck Without Warning* and he watched himself mute the volume. and he watched himself stare rapidly at the images on the tv, not really watching, or even seeing. jonathon could see he was reminiscing. and he inched his way down the steps slowly. he wasn't certain that the other jonathon could see him, only that he could see the other jonathon. 'hey,' he said to himself. but the other jonathon, screeched and ran and grandmother awoke and the other jonathon ran up the stairs and was gone.

[illegible]

'what is it jonathon, what happened?' 'nothing grandma.' 'what's the racket then?' 'it was the television. i sat on the remote. it got loud for a second so i muted it.' 'oh,' grandma said. 'what are you watching?' 'that lifetime movie. you remember?' grandma laughed. 'oh yeah. with that piece of shit husband,' grandma said as she closed her eyes. 'piece of shit,' she said through her snore. jonathon sat down on the couch and stared at the television. jonathon knew the scene. it was during one of kevin's calmer periods, and things were very good for gloria and her boy. jonathon's interest drifted and he scanned the room amid the the flickering dimness. again, the smell of shit filled the air. jonathon tensed. at first he couldn't see it. it was the same rich brown as his grandmother's precious rug. what he could see instead, was the pale glow of the piece of shit's eye, and the buzzing of the flies which worshiped it. *hooooomme*, said the piece of shit. jonathon screeched in terror, and sprang to his feet, bouncing on his tiptoes through the swarm of flies which hovered around his face. jonathon could sense that they were

sometimes i don't think you're well.' jonathon saw the shriveled skin on grandma's twisted hand hang on the bone, bespeckled in off color spots. 'are you feeling okay, jonathon? you don't seem yourself, today, are you okay?' jonathon clenched his bloody hand into a fist, and squeezed it as hard as he could. tears of restraint bubbled out of his eyes. 'i'm fine,' he said through his teeth. but he could no longer hold back the feeling that was building inside him, and the tears which collected out of restraint began to overflow from pressure, and jonathon could not see the face of his grandmother in front of him. but he could feel her arms extending around his. he could feel her trying to hug him. but he couldn't figure out why.

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grandma held jonathon in her arms for what seemed like an eternity. jonathon could make out the shape of her red robe through the tears in his eyes. he could hardly feel the pressure of her weak arms. and her hands did not touch him at all. and jonathon could feel the tears rolling back into his eyes, and he could feel them falling somewhere into the back of his skull. jonathon stood there statue still, his face without expression and stared through the drying tears in his eyes at the bubbling red sauce boiling down on the stove.

grandma pulled back from her embrace. 'i'll make you some eggs, jonathon. how does that sound?'

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jonathon sat before the television cautiously watching the red eggs on his plate ripple as if from within. grandma watched the food network with her head tilted and her chin resting on her fist. 'i can't stand these chinese people, jonathon,' she said. 'can't understand a damn word that they're saying.' *Yak can Cook* was on the Food Network, and jonathon watched the man gesticulate with all his might, in order to force his communication through. *Crack of duck!* Yak yelled as he opened the elaborate and shiny oven and pulled out the pan of roast duck sizzling in its steamy juices. the audience reacted in orgasmic glee, and never before had jonathon seen such a magnificent duck. its skin was glazed to a perfect brown. *We cook gravy in with duck at pan bottom, to harmonize the flavor so the two become as one in a fuzon of juizes.* Yak poured the wonderful gravy atop this glistening duck and the audience again let out a moan of exaltation. jonathon looked at his own red runny eggs that resembled low budget carnage and looked over at grandma, who was reclined in her chair working on a book of crossword puzzles. grandma chuckled to herself as she wrote in her book. 'fooza jooza,' grandma said to jonathon, who looked at her the way a judge looks when he's sentencing the convicted. 'oh jonathon don't look at me that way,' she said. 'i have enough problems.' jonathon stood up, and his grandmother tensed slightly. she pushed down the foot rest on her recliner as he stood up, and walked over toward her. 'what's this, jonathon?' she said, and he held out his hands for her, and she saw the dried blood in his hands, and the infected cuts, and she shook her head, and held her own hand knuckles out at jonathon. between her

forefinger and her ring finger there was a cigarette, and her middle finger was bent flat back against against her knuckles. grandma ripped the finger off by the skin which connected it to the rest of her hand without so much as flinching. she reclined back in her chair, while taking a puff off her cigarette, and exhaling the smoke into jonathon's face. 'now go sit down, sissy boy,' she said, as she popped another pill down her throat. 'you should really put some peroxide on that, jonathon. oh. you're eggs are probably cold by now, jonathon. you'd better put something on your hand, jonathon, my god what happened! if you don't put some peroxide on your hand, you'll get gangrene and they'll have to cut them off. how would that be jonathon? living the rest of your life with no hands? do you want me to help you jonathon? go get the peroxide from upstairs. oh. and the bandages, and the ointment.'

[illegible]

'okay now jonathon, make a cup with your hands.' jonathon made a cup with his hands, and grandma poured the peroxide straight from the bottle into the cup jonathon made with his hands. he screamed in electric pain, and made a spastic jerking motion that sent the hydrogen peroxide to the ceiling. jonathon's flailing arms nearly hit grandmother square in the nose. jonathon harbored no emotional reaction toward the notion, even after he'd realized how close she'd come to death. and jonathon could see from the bruise in the middle of his forehead that his grandmother would likely prefer that absent blackness to the hell he knew she endured unwillingly. jonathon looked up at grandma, who was also staring straight up. 'look jonathon,' she snarled. 'look at the ceiling.' jonathon looked up at the ceiling but saw nothing. 'you got the peroxide on my fucking ceiling jonathon. that spots going to stain jonathon. i'll never be able get that stain out. it will be there forever.'

[illegible]

jonathon awoke in his mother's bed. curled against the wall. in her position.

Jonathon! she pleaded. *Can't you hear her crying?* jonathon tried to speak but couldn't. he laid in his bed paralyzed in the darkness, with only his mother's sobs above his scalp. *She's in constant pain!*

Don't you see that? jonathon's ear drums rang from the sound of Sara's screeching. *Jonathon! You must free her! Don't you understand?* though jonathon could not speak, Sara knew the answer was no, and jonathon knew that she knew that he didn't understand at all.

jonathon was suddenly above himself. seeing himself on the bed. he could see his mother squatting behind him. she was unclothed. he could see something long and brown emerging from a cavity between her legs. the thing grew longer, thicker. it was less thick at the tip. and jonathon recognized the green eye that now looked up at the shadow from which he saw himself. the piece of shit turned from jonathon's shadow toward his body, while his mother turned her head from his paralyzed body toward

jonathon's shadow. he saw her pupils spill out until they filled the entirety of her eye in a pool of hollow blackness. two cavities instead of eyes, billowing smoke softly into the ceiling. *hooooomme*, said the piece of shit fucker, which hovered over jonathon's body while he watched helplessly from the shadows. *Jonathon*, said Sara, shaking her head back in forth. *Do not watch, Jonathon close your eyes.* jonathon's breathing grew jagged. while his body lay lifeless and dim, he noticed his face had a certain smirk on it. and he realized that from his shadow he could no more shut his eyes, than his body could open them.

Jonathon, she explained. smoke billowing from her eyes. Grandma's soul is crying out to God. Take me home, take me home. Every single second she remains alive is a rejection by God. Or so she feels. Her body is falling apart. Her mind yearns for escape. You, jonathon, ... you're too innocent and how I love you for that ... but you cannot do what needs to be done. You can help by remaining passive and receptive to an escape for the both of you.

'why doesn't she do it herself. if that's what she wants.'

She does, jonathon. Have you seen her eating? Food, I mean. She's afraid to actively participate in her soul's release. She has been taught from an early age that to do so would be a rejection of the creator's gift to her. So her rebellion becomes passive to the God who rejects her, and redirected at you, who she at once both envies and resents – she resents you jonathon. for being dependent upon you.

'what am i supposed to do? there's nothing i can do.'

Nothing Jonathon. Be passive and receive.

[illegible]

grandma sunk into the royal blue cushions of her expensive recliner. a book of crossword puzzles lay flat on her chest, and there was a pen in the corner of her mouth. the black dye on her matted nappy curls was beginning to fade. jonathon watched his body hover over her, with a cigarette in his hand. jonathon's vantage was a foot above the crown of his skull. jonathon watched in horror as the body-jonathon took the tip of his lit cigarette and closely wafted it beneath grandma's nose. she coughed and farted, and the body-jonathon extinguished the cigarette between her eyes. the smell of her burnt flesh filled the air like cooking steak. the body-jonathon stepped back for a moment, as the hole left by the cigarette puncture poured with yellowish pus, and then the stink of shit filled the air.

[illegible]

jonathon awoke in his own room. sitting up in his bed and looking at his face in the dusty mirror. he parted his bangs and saw the green eye of the piece of shit staring back at him. jonathon ran down the hallway into the bathroom. he pulled down his pants and sat quickly on the toilet. but his bowels settled comfortably in a sublime inertia. and nothing would come of them. jonathon pushed inward on the eye that he could feel seeing from him. he tried to force it down. but all that resulted was a piercing pain between jonathon's eyes. *home*, said the piece of shit between jonathon's eyes. jonathon pulled his pants up and ran toward mirror. the eye of the shit seemed to have a mouth underneath it. *hoooomme*, said the piece of shit, with a little mouth of its own. a small red tongue rolled out of its mouth, and slapped jonathon in the nose. it hooked himself around his nostril and jonathon grabbed it and pulled. but more rolled out, and as jonathon kept pulling he realize that there was no end to it. that it was produced by his pulling. *Jonathon! No!* screamed his mother. he closed his eyes and smashed his forehead with as much force as he could muster into the mirror.

the mirror shattered with a thunderous crash sending individual shards into a fathomless abyss of blackness. jonathon approached the black hole in the wall. he felt his forehead and there was a hole where the piece of shit's green eye stared from jonathon. an inch round crater in the middle of jonathon's forehead. jonathon gazed into the blackness, the shards of mirror partially obstructing the cubiform view from the hole in the medicine cabinet. jonathon removed the excess shards of mirror from the perimeter of the black square.

he threw one in. to his surprise it landed a few feet away from him. close enough so that the light from the bathroom still reflected off of it. the way it bounced off what appeared to be nothing suggested that whatever it was that lie behind the mirror, extended no further than the dimensions of the square of the medicine cabinet. jonathon reached his hand into the abyss, and felt around. though the walls of this place were not visible, jonathon could feel them give ground like moist pillows. from somewhere beyond, a voice inside this place called to him, and he put his knee on the sink, and pulled himself up, and then into the soft moist void.

[illegible]

jonathon found that he needn't do anything to advance through the tunnel. the expansions and contractions of the tunnel itself seemed to guide him to wherever it was leading. he could not hear, smell, see anything at all. he could only feel the soft comfort of needlessness. the sensation that he was being guided by something that made him feel protected, and for want of nothing.

[illegible]

jonathon awoke in his mother's bed. curled against the wall. in her position.

he walked downstairs. where he found grandma. asleep. on her royal blue recliner. she had a book of crossword puzzled folded face down on her chest. and a blue pen was tucked into the corner of her mouth. jonathon knew she was as deaf as a doornail, and he needn't worry about her waking up as he removed a cigarette from her pack, and lit it with her lighter. he needn't even worry about her waking up as he brought the cherry of the cigarette toward the skin between her eyes. for a moment jonathon wondered if grandma had passed without his realizing, but he realized that her chest was heaving and in fact he could hear her goopy lungs wheezing. his grandmother didn't flinch even as he pressed the cherry of the cigarette on the skin between her eyes, and inhaled the cooked smell of her burnt flesh.

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jonathon awoke in his mother's bed. curled against the wall. in her position.

11101

he looked at himself in his mother's mirror. she rested her hands on his shoulders and stared over his head. her pale bare shoulders glistened in the dusty lamplight. *Jonathon*, she said running her hands up his neck, up the side of his head, and through his hair, where she parted his bangs and exposed the eye. she put her lips up to his ear. *So are you gonna do it?* she whispered, the moisture of her breath settling like dew on the hair on lobe of his ear. he felt a tingling in his ear drum. *Do it Jonathon. Oh Please. Do it. Stick it in her. Stick a stiff knife in her throat. Dig it in Jonathon. Carve her up. Like a lampchop. Stew her in her own juices.*

'naw ma,' said jonathon. 'don't make me do it. what'll i do after she gone?'

You'll fucking make due, like a big boy, jonathon. I'll be there to help you. And so will He. We'll all be together Jonathon. Like a nice fucking family – you know – like it could have been – without her there to fuck it up.

'aw. maw, c'mon - ,' jonathon whined.

Sara drew her teeth near jonathon's ear lobe and ripped as far as she could pull it.

'aawwWaargGhhRaA,' screeched jonathon.

& Sara slapped him in the ear she bit. *Jonathon, sweetie. You're missing my point, I'm afraid.* Sara dug her fingers between jonathon's shoulders. far from pain, he felt a burning coolness. that settled into an electric numbness, from which jonathon was utterly incapable of moving.

Jonathon closed his eyes. his last recourse he hoped against Sara. but in this room she was all powerful. and jonathon's will was no match for hers. and he merely gave up. he gave in.

[illegible]

but when he opened his eyes again, he found himself in his own room, and he looked around, but it was empty. he looked in the mirror. Sara was naked on the bed, sitting up with her legs crossed. she looked up at jonathon with a predatory gaze. jonathon turned away and left the room.

jonathon knew that all the mirrors in the house were on the second floor. he also knew that at the top of the stairs there was a mirror facing the stairwell - a dangerous place for a mirror to be. jonathon disregarded it, he pretended like it wasn't there, but in the back of his mind, it was all he could think of.

when he reached the landing he saw grandma lying face down on the floor. she was moaning, rhythmically, slowly. like she'd been moaning there for hours. like she'd somehow fallen, but she couldn't get up. jonathon noticed that her bottle of pills lay just beyond the reach of her extended arm.

'grandma!' he said.

'oh jonathon,' she said. 'i fell! my knee just buckled, and i fell!' jonathon ran to her side and put his hand on her head. 'are you okay, grandma?' asked jonathon gently. 'do you need medical attention, grandma? can you hear me speaking?' 'i think i'm fine jonathon. just hand me the bottle, will you?' 'hold tight, there, grandma. we'll get you up.' 'oh jonathon, why bother? tv is boring anyway. costs enough and there's nothing on. eight hundred channels and its all crap.' jonathon had already stopped listening and went off to find something to help grandma. he came back with a large wooden board. he laid it down beside her, and dragged her atop it. then he picked it up from the bottom, and grandma slid down the board, and off the ground, onto her feet and then back into her chair, safe and sound. 'i can't even remember why i stood up.'

[illegible]

'thank you jonathon,' said grandma.

'for what?' asked jonathon.

'for fixing yourself your breakfast. peanut butter and jelly isn't much of a breakfast, but it'll do in a pinch, eh jonathon? you're learning to shit for yourself. that's good. lord knows how much longer i'll be here.' ...*court is in session... all rise ... you maybe seated. Mrs. Selancelot, you seem to be claiming that your daughter, Miss Selancelot, defrauded you on a bargain, how so?* 'i've been waiting for Jesus to take me Jonathon, into his arms and heaven. but i'm not sure the son of a bitch wants me, ya know? i've lived a long life. when you get old you lose your sense of purpose jonathon, its terrible. i hope you

never get old.'

'grandma,' said Jonathon. 'maybe Jesus isn't rejecting you. maybe he's giving you to me, so that I don't have to go to an orphanage, and you don't have to go to a nursing home. maybe Jesus will take you when I learn to shit for myself. maybe Jesus wants you to teach me. Jesus is giving us to one another, so that we can shit for each other, and so you could teach me how to shit for myself.'

'that's a nice way to look at it jonathon. your so innocent. innocent as god made you. i think He does it to punish me.'

they both fell silent for a moment. *well, Your Honor, when I agreed to allow my daughter to move in with me, rent free, mind you, with her young son, she had no job,' (the woman listed this on her index figure); 'she was living with some guy who was abusive to her, and my grandson,' (on her middle finger); 'she had no future,' (on her ring finger), 'and she was in and out of rehab,' (on her pinky).*

'Well who paid for rehab,' asked Judge Eichmann. '*medicaid Your Honor.*' 'Okay so what was the agreement? If she stayed clean, got herself a job, you'd help her out until she was able to get herself on her feet again.' '*that's right, Your Honor.*'

'i think He wants us to protect one another,' said Jonathon.

grandma said nothing. but he could see the way she held her nails between her teeth, that she was tense with guilt. 'stupid,' she said beneath her breath as she stared at the television set. Jonathon looked sadly into his lap.

'And Then what happened?' '*well Your Honor,' she began. 'my daughter was admitted to Brylin Hospital, and released a month later, which the insurance covered, thank god.'* Eichmann raised an eyebrow after 'thank god.' '*and for a period of time about three, maybe four weeks, she had a job working as a checkout girl in the Super Duper.*

'Excuse me Your Honor That Just isn't so -

'SHUT UP!' screamed Eichmann boldly. 'In my courtroom, you will speak when I ask you a question. We do not interrupt people mid sentence, is that clear?' *Yes, man,* he smirked. and Miss Selancelot looked at him and smiled snidely. Judge Eichmann smirked back at the wisenheimer. 'Sir, what is your relationship to Miss Selancelot?' *Miss Selancelot has contracted me to speak on her behalf in the case of Selancelot versus Selancelot.* 'So your her lawyer? And Miss Selancelot?' 'Yes madam,' Miss Selancelot said. 'Yes, ma'am uh- '

'YOUR HONOR' screamed Eichmann. 'YOUR HONOR SAY IT! SAY *YES, YOUR HONOR.*'

'Yes, Your Honor.'

'GOOD!'

the entire courtroom resonated from the deafening silence that Eichmann's bitching had left behind. Miss Selancelot was shaking and in tears. 'Miss Selancelot,' said Judge Eichmann softly. 'Yes, Your Honor,' *Eichmann smiled, and looked at her Bailiff who sniggered at Miss Selancelot, and shook his head.* 'Explain to me EXACTLY how you are retaining this man's... *services...*'

'grandma,' said Jonathon. 'i think mommy is mad at you.' jonathon's grandmother looked over from her blue recliner. she stared at him through the tears in her eyes. she stared at him like he had a third eye stuck in the middle of his forehead. jonathon could see her rubbing her face and removing her glasses. rubbing the sore between her eyes. she took a drag from her cigarette, and then butted it and lit another.

'Your Honor,' said Miss Selancelot. 'I admit I had my problems in the past, but my mother concocted this agreement in head. We had no burble or written arrangement stating that anything like a legal agreement was manifest at any time.'

'So your saying your mother trumped up these charges?' 'Yeah, Your Honor bitch Trumped 'em up.'

'YOU WANT ME TO BELIEVE YOUR MOTHER'S OUT TO GET YOU? NONSENSE!' Eichmann screeched. 'That's paranoid drug thoughts. You relapsed didn't you? You promised your mother you'd stay clean and you didn't. And now she's here, and she's not *out to get you* Miss Selancelot despite what Viagra snorting douchebag has led you to believe. Your mother is here trying to hold you responsible to the *verbal* arrangement you made with her to stay off the drugs, and you simply couldn't live up..

'that's nonsense jonathon,' said Grandma weakly. 'your mother didn't care enough about me to be angry with me, to be angry at...'

'It's just like nothing I do is ever good enough, it's like I'm always being judged, and I'm not good enough. I can'tCONTROL*everything* ...'

'oh yes she did, grandma. she cared more than you can possibly imagine.'

'why are you saying this to me, jonathon? what's the purpose? i hurt so bad,'

'because it's *true*,' he replied.

'Sara's dead, Jonathon, let her rest.'

'that doesn't matter,' he replied. 'i can see her lying on the bed she died on. she blames you grandma. she blames you for her death...'

'it was not my fault jonathon! ... it was that piece of shit. that fucker. that bald headed bastard ... gave her drugs ... and she fucked him ... she was a whore jonathon. dirty little bitch. she killed herself.'

jonathon nodded, satisfied that nothing further could be gained by his persistence. through the floorboards, he could hear the shifting of weight, and the creaking of doors.

'you didn't leave the window open upstairs did you? i can hear the doors creaking. you probably left the window open. you'd better close it jonathon,' grandma said. 'before the bugs eat through the screen.'

'later,' he said staring at the television. 'jonathon, please, go up there and change the screen?'

'change the screen? what for?'

'i mean. jonathon... oh. i forgot what i was saying.'

'my mind is going jonathon. that's what happens when you get old. it's terrible. i can't even remember what we were talking about. ... i have to shit,' she said, standing up slowly on her painful knees.

NONSENSE, screeched Eichmann.

'be careful, grandma,' said jonathon as she made her way up the stairs. 'bad memories jonathon. that's all they are. uuuh,' she said, as she pulled her crippled body up another step, farting from the exertion. 'ooh!' she said. 'excuse me, jonathon,' grandma laughed. 'i'm losing my mind. at least i know where its going,' she chuckled. 'what.' 'i'm going to take a nap while i'm up here, jonathon. lower the tv, will you? i don't feel well jonathon. my stomach. my stomach feels terrible, uuuh,' said grandma, traversing another step. grandma giggled. 'Judge Judy, boy. she doesn't take any shit from nobody. heehee uuh,' she said. pulling herself up another step.

'how lung in it bin since you've eaten.'

'you can't do that in a real court room. jonathon uuuh, -' she pulled herself up another step. 'don't forget the mailman, uuuh - ' and up another step.

'since you've eaten.'

'up another step,' said grandma.

jonathon jumped off the couch and made his way up the stairs behind her. 'you're shitting me,' she giggled as jonathon came up behind her, in case she lost her balance. 'the piece of shit,' she giggled. 'that piece of shit fucker. that piece - ,' she sighed, and again began sobbing. 'your shitting me – uuuh – jonathon.' she pulled herself up another step. 'i hope you don't turn out like them, jonathon uuuh. a boy like you – uuuh – shouldn't have to be – uuuh - '

[illegible]

'leave the door open, will you jonathon?' 'sure,' he replied shutting it tightly behind him.

jonathon avoided staring into the mirrors, allowing himself only quick glances to see if he was being watched. the lightness in his belly he recognized as fear, as he passed Sara's room. he dare not stop to find her as he passed. he grabbed as many towels as he could find and tensely shimmied across the hallway. as he passed Sara's room he noticed her shadow on the wall. he did not stop to identify the buzzing as he wedged the towels beneath grandma's door, and he only looked up when he was done. what met his eyes was beyond response. jonathon froze.

flies began to swarm through and indeed, out of Sara's shadow, pouring into the hallway, and blotting out jonathon's site of the bathroom. the flies clung to the ceiling and crept toward jonathon. the piece of shit crept through the shadow then. and jonathon stared into its green eye which stared back into his. and jonathon found himself pulled toward it, and repulsed from it at once. he broke for the stairs, and the ceiling dropped in a blanket of buzzing flies at a diagonal onto jonathon who closed his eyes and mouth, and jumped from the top step onto the landing.

[illegible]

jonathon awoke in his mother's room. he was curled against the wall in her position.

[illegible]

jonathon could not open his eyes, but he could see. he watched from the landing, as the body-jonathon pressed the lit cigarette into grandma's skin. he watched in horror as grandma's gaping frown did not so much as twitch. her body in fact, did not move at all. and even as the body-jonathon's lips smacked with glee, grandma did not so much as register any difference in the world external to her.

'Jonathon,' said Sara. 'I'm sorry I got so angry with you. I should have explained better. I just want us to be a family. Together again.'

Do you want Grandma to be a part of our family?

jonathon could feel Sara's arm around him as he stared through the bars in the wrought iron railing. 'Jonathon, you look, but you don't see. Your grandmother does not feel pain, at all, jonathon. She's numbed the nerves with all that tarva. She hurts but not in her body. *i hurt so bad today jonathon. it's terrible, so terrible to get old.* You see the images, but you don't understand what they mean. When was the last time she's eaten? Didn't she tell you that *I* died of an overdose? I committed suicide on drugs? Isn't that what she's doing jonathon? She's mixing it all up because she's old and all that tarva. I don't want you to kill her jonathon, she deserves to be buried in that broken skin suit after what she's done to you, i'd have her live to be a thousand if it were up to me, boy. She's trying to kill herself on drugs and have you remember it wrong so she doesn't have to deal with the guilt of having left you behind. Every breath she takes inches her toward that goal.'

jonathon felt his arms curl into his chest, and he knew he was lying on his mother's bed, and that he was lying against the wall in her position. he awoke quite easily and somewhat refreshed. he looked at himself the mirror, and his mother in the eye, and knew precisely what he needed to do. he opened the door to Sara's bedroom and walked fearlessly into the hallway. with a running start, he flew toward the hole where the bathroom mirror once was and flung himself into the warm abyss.

[illegible]

jonathon gave up his will to the soft tunnel which flexed and contracted, and pushed deeper and deeper inward. this place enraptured his body in cozy safety, an absolute security, like passing away or falling asleep. jonathon could see there was some light emerging at the end of this place. he was not going away, he was going *somewhere*. at the end of the tunnel he saw the one armed statue of St Jude staring blankly at him. his expressionless eyes stared through jonathon, beyond jonathon, as the Jude became larger, he crumbled to pieces and as He drew nearer, jonathon could feel the bile in his belly boiling and suddenly, he vomited all over Jude's crumbling body and his grandmother's expensive rug.

[illegible]

jonathon hovered above the body-jonathon, who was firmly under the jurisdiction of the Piece, which jonathon could see squirming through the hole in his body's forehead. it turned around like a periscope over the body-jonathon's head, while the body-jonathon's eyes remained fixed on grandma whose glasses slid down her nose as her jaw hung agape in a frown, and her book of crossword puzzles lay face down on her chest. as the body-jonathon tested grandma's skin with the cigarette, the Piece within its forehead snapped at jonathon, forcing him back away from the body-jonathon and grandma. the Piece kept extending from the body-jonathon's head hole, and its green eye was accumulating flies and remained fixed on jonathon, who continued to back off. as jonathon retreated helplessly away from the

body-jonathon, he watched grandma's body get throttled and torn softly one small inch at a time by the mass of roaches which covered her like a blanket head to toe. jonathon was flushed away by the swarming flies.

[illegible]

as jonathon approached the top of the stairs, he stared at himself in the mirror. he saw nothing reflected back. in fact, he had nothing but the sensation of having arms and legs, and when he reached them out for one another, to touch himself, to know that he was there, he realized, in fact that there was nothing there. and jonathon collapsed into a bubble floating in the middle of the hallway, staring at where his reflection once was. jonathon panicked, but nothing came of it. he floated down the hallway toward the bathroom, and he hovered over the sink, and stared into the blackness where the medicine cabinet had been shattered. he tried to pass through it, but felt himself dissolve in the blackness and jettisoned out where he started. he tried again, and he found himself jettisoned out the where he began. over and over again, jonathon tried to pass through the mirror in the hopes that he might emerge somewhere else, still attached to his body. he tried until that empty blackness where the mirror once was felt as solid to him as the world of objects once had.

End.The End.

David Wolach

Kammermusik 3:49
from Prefab Eulogies

The erudite always seem to have Hindemith on their ipods

I've hurt my clicker finger, voyeur sex taking up so much memory

These afternoons:

Needs to be the right light, temp

Too hectic is a bore

Too fine is *Neues vom Tage*, and we all know where high production value got us

If we weren't posthuman we'd be in trouble knowing we're in trouble instead of

I love Ventriloquists:

Dummy sits on your lap

You are dummy sitting in lap of dummies, meta-lap

Barely visible strings hold meta-lap in place

Lip frustration levels indicate master-slave dialectic at work

What's object, who's subject can often be *the* subject or

Object of study

And they say the funniest things

Who taught you to do that I ask

Who asked me to sit on your lap asking I ask

Something programmatic in grain, but you often find at least one

unshowy show recorded evidence of will

She's young enough to be a he her boy jaw, boy hair, slip n slide

chest said something

Naked in a kitchen stirring pre-packaged noodles to a girly girl

The irony of semi-anonymous domesticated feminism

It was, knee jerk apology prelude to loving sex montage

Wish we were secret santas, ambiguous richter doll

I would reenact the way my mouth made your noises

It was the picture of the picture of use value gimme, right temp light just right, grain just so

Limed up, meta-lap a comfy dead house for 3 min 49 sec of posthuman mouth reflex

Uploading frontier not unlike like timed joy, or canned, or thing

you press

That presses you for a duration

Displeasure of a Text, Alarm, Excursions, Today's Popular Music from Prefab Eulogies

You wake to the idiocy of his atopia, waking where I know not says you
Waking, nobody can be crazy all the time she says in his head nobody is pure
Waking, Valery's two dangers seem quaint methinks, what with a rock in my groin
Waking to a new sensation (Dream: "Hutchins hanged himself for pleasure, Dude Rocks!")
You wake to waste my excess energy, frightened by the word "pure" we got a problem
Waking, hoping for a forest, getting instead a road hewn by Him no doubt, turning over
Waking, spiraling jetties now just levee reminders, gender minimal tyrant reminders, veggie take
Waking, Death comes in looking all radical chic, says "slide over," apparently you hog bed
You wake to the primacy of his orgasm metaphors, his dick is sacred, nobody's seen it
Waking, fussing, itching, gagging, bleeding, farting, I can keep an eye on the market he says
Waking, market isn't anyplace, not even in The Book or your Sock Drawer, empty forms
Waking, fishing for appreciation and personal economic boom, get thee to a bathroom
You wake to the sentence "unacknowledged life maintenance crew of the mind" and yawn

*Rosemarie Waldrop, *The Politics of Poetic Form*, 1990

*Roland Barthes, *The Pleasure of the Text*, 1980

*Edmund Jabes, *The Book of Questions*, 1967

*INXS, *Kick*, 1988

READING INSTRUCTIONS

Obtain a degree in philosophy, or some other non-utilitarian cocktail charm that can be abbreviated, the salary ceiling of which cannot possibly rent, let alone purchase, a house in the year 2009. Accept a job to teach creative writing at The Evergreen State College after a brief, several year hiatus from academics, during which time you work as a union organizer. At approximately 2:30 am on the night of September 22, 2008 prepare for a lecture that you are to give for a course you are teaching, which, aptly or not, you have named "Experiments in Text," citing to self as evidence of aptitude the echo in your ear, earlier mistaken for tinnitus by your doctor, of your mother saying: "couldn't you have been a doctor?" Prior to said lecture, decide that you will talk about the historical trajectory of the mashup as it relates to exile, citing to self the inherent violence, or, non-neutrality of the term "mashup." Note to self that the term, much like other surrealist ventures such as waking dream free writing, epiphanic expectorations on the heels of purposeful oxygen-denial, tenuous rational connections such as that between literature and exile, etc., have been, historically, without stake. Forging on, decide that you will, as the good little Adorno you were taught to be, show the manifold possibilities of the form of "mashing" via the form of your pedagogy, thus treating Barthes by way of INXS, Waldrop's "Alarms" by way of Jabes. On or around the time you are finished with your notes and written assignments, allow your hyper-fed 1940's era wall socket to overheat like Edison's moral center, thus creating the electrical fire necessary to burn part of your house down, including aforementioned notes. While at a hotel two days later, after some delay of your pedagogical duties, eulogize what you lost, least importantly your mashup lecture. Do so by writing "Displeasure of a Text, Alarm, Excursions, Today's Popular Music."

Excerpts of “Notes on Demolition of a House,” from *Living Rooms*

I think I have never invented an idea

SUPERSET OF OBJECTS, SUBJECTS: FLOORPLAN, PULMONARY SYSTEM/BEDROOM

[{A, right ventricle of the heart/closet} {B, origin of pulmonary artery/door (ajar)} {C, commencement of the systemic aorta/hall} {D, pericardium/ sheets(beige tc 12)} {E, Mediastinal pleura/circumference of the shade (on)} {F, costal pleura/circumference of the shade (off)} {G, vena cava superior/window NW} {H, upper third of sternum/blinds (drawn)} {I, first ribs/his} {K, sternal ends of the clavicles/hers} {L, upper end of sternum/he} {M, lower end of sternum/she} {N, fifth ribs/reverberation of crashing 1) binary or 2) unknown} {O, collapsed lungs/evidence of 1) slow movement or 2) sleep} {P, arching diaphragm/doorway} {Q,□ subclavian artery/pillow, alternate} {R, common carotid artery/pillow, hers} {S, great pectoral muscles/thank you} {T, lesser pectoral muscles/fuck you} {U, mediastinal pleura of right side/bookshelf} {V, right auricle of the heart/book (Daybreak)}]

language of wanting *in*

situ imperfectly cast

interior skinsack, dimensions:

“this germ” x “an out-let made to in-let” x “occasional arch & claw”

uptown

studio

apparatus

{causes}

no vacuum no contraction no dilatation

a breathing
afunctional act

inhabit that space that inhabits you you
say, crawling into our lung

coiling your fingers round the base of our

spine

when i ex-

hale during

slow sex

appearance of topological closure

{momentarily}

shows itself to be fiat

diagonal, xyz-axis $\{0,0,0\}$

life of the animall self-shelf:

consonant oscillatory *misus*

“Vacuous!”

“Vacuum!”

vital forces circulat-

ory or gans sheet count indicative of fading

1) linen

2) middle-class

3) “and who gives/takes a shift anymore?”

so vain so i r revocable

“Nature abhors a vacuum”

“Yeah? Well blow it out your vacuum”

“Which?”

“The xenon processor”

“Whose?”

“No excuse, no suck, no fuck, all no all know it all the time”

modify & distort O & A

E & G

D traversed by the common-

line the fifty yard line the line in the sand the line we

drew

you

incline towards the left. I & I inclines towards the right

&/ V *Daybreak:*

Noch nicht genug! I I N N (bicleft regions rings sigh for a glow trance, that blue wall tele scopes)

z-axis shrinking $\{0, 0, -1\}$

line our line of no

cleavage

maintained our room our semi-

permeable memEbrane

there is an atomic clock that sits under my

lamp. its alarm

is set to *dayenu* & its trillionsecond hand is

broke

Excerpts from “Power Point Poetics,” from *Prefab Eulogies*

[script for] *Nothings Houses* [three channel audio]

Note on Reading: All bullet points below should be read (sounded) to self or other as “Bullet Point.”

- Breathing.
- “It would set our minds at ease.”
- “If you don’t make the cut for [insert reality television show]”
- I was never there.
- He followed her surveillance techniques sometimes spending whole afternoons.
- At the threshold of a book but what book.
- No denial of a house but what house.
- Not a house that opens and shuts but a mouth that opens and shuts in no house.
- To stay out of the story to undo a story with +/- n stories.
- The world wouldn’t let on.
- Duchamp was a strange thing for us.
- And strange things cast their silences.
- And people.
- People get used to Duchamp.
- Listening to the kitchen windowsill.
- Due to the clanking of her commercials I wonder how.
- If her mouth stayed open.
- He studied the front door.
- She gets hold of some desolate highway.
- The pause the pause the pause the inalienable pause.
- “So I paid you to like us.”
- I couldn’t see whole days.
- I’ll take you wherever you want in this house.
- Supersets urged us to join the Masad and books despined on a shelf for a shelf.

- We stay in our cots until the Power Point beckons.
-

Introductory Lecture:
Power Point Poetics
(The Three P's)*

*Brought to you by Post-Avant Power Point Inc. For free trial membership, or for booking, call 1-800-POWER, or visit our website at <http://www.pappi.com>. WE CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN!

- “We” are a little civil war.
 - Nobody could tell she knew the angels.
 - Placement of objects.
 - Disappearing bowls of latent understanding.
 - I’d constantly notice how dirty the floor was.
 - As if our house had been frozen for a few minutes during the Dust Bowl.
 - The house rooms parts of his body.
 - Broken toilet dangling arm.
 - Unused upstairs foot drop and a burning.
 - Chandelier a head falls at 4am somewhere.
 - The house a machine testy machine initial conditions in the telling large later amplitude of.
 - Reflecting on a map of reflections a diagram that links a coiled chain.
 - She’s looking at nothing but the dirty corduroy countryside.
 - At night nothing but handfuls of air.
-

How to Write

- No nouns
- No adjectives
- No verbs
- No adverbs
- No operators
- No articles
- No subjects
- No titles

- No line breaks
- No lines
- No kidding

-
- They bought hook line and sinker the sinking line.
 - He just wanted to hold her mouth and put it gently on the upper west side.
 - Trying to find it but didn't.
 - “Tell her I think that people get in your business,” he said
 - “Tell him I think that our business gets no people,” he said she said.
 - The food is on full-blast the air-conditioner mutters in Pashtun.
 - The mouth says Georgia Tennessee Kentucky.
 - Going North is a Devine Comedy in Power Point.
 - Going North is a Trilogy in Amtrak.

Poems for Sale

- Non-closural/\$3
- Confessional/\$3
- Non-closural (chapbook)/\$3
- Recursive/\$3

- Recursive anagram/\$3
- Homophonic/\$3
- Antonymic/\$3
- Custom/\$3*

*out

of

stock

-
- During the end I went home.
 - By the way.
 - He'll be a home by nine.
 - He folded his arms slack in his mouth.
 - By the way, “home” is a worn travelogue.
 - That his self-pity is so wonderful is pitiful and funny she said that year.
 - Getting to his father: “There's a party that isn't enjoying itself.”
 - We eat these habits habits are so overvalued oil collects in the lip of my cup.
 - I tied me up and looked at him.
 - The dumpster in a field abandoned by an American minimalist.
 - A Steel Frame.

- A strip malls.
- A kosher deli in the old city.
- The arcade amusement park mall stripping itself of unlikely ambient gesture.
- Amusement park definitional of American Cadaver.

How to Read

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Refer to Manual ● Form=Content ● Content=Form ● Diagram important shit | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Blaspheme (underline) ● Blaspheme (highlight) ● Skim dull ● Look for “chthonic” ● Blood Pressure (keep at 140/82) |
|---|---|

-
- Two weeks ago there was a troubling proposition.
 - A beautiful neo-Victorian leaded drawing room window isn’t here.
 - He guides her to pick up the phone.
 - “Hello? Yes, I’ll wait till evening.”
 - I poked at it again, and this big vinyl booth, and my clothes clown shoes.
 - Everything said I don’t know how tall you are if you are.
 - The nomadic homebody.
 - The homebody homeboy.
 - He threw one dart past the enormous gash in the air.
 - I think about someone’s daughter.
 - And then.

Free Advice

- Land on your feet
- Force of will
- Force of habit
- Show of force
- Show and tell
- Embrace stoploss
- Be Strong
- Stay Strong
- Strong/\$3**

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BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Ed Baker

A two-fwer

Hexapoems II

Ashera: What's A Phantasy

H'X'P"MS II

Ed Baker

1972/2009



WILLIAM

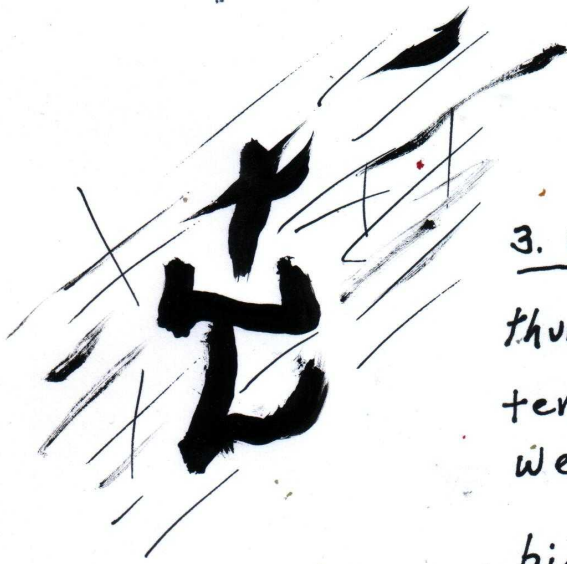
WILLIAM



2. K'un

is she
that is
space

to
go
into



3. Chun

thunder & rain

ten years

we

bide

our

time



4. mēng

water
flowing
fills

the
deep
places



6. Sung

moon

seeing

my

self

reflecting

in lily-pond



8. Pi

through

this

She

comes

certainly

the King will shoot

mm

小 女
田

9. Hsiao Ch'u

Some
girl
just

so
counting
pebbles

泰

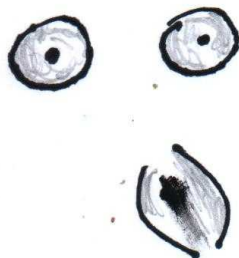
11. T'ai

sleep
w her

is

a
plurality

歪



12. P'i

opposite
of
this
wild
orchid
is

同人

13. T'ung Jên

in
the
open

aggregate
solitude
entirely

這井



15. ch'ien

in
her
garden
gurgling
how
delightful

随

17. Sui

is

she

who

is

shown

considerations

翡翠

20. Kuan

thinking
thinking
stone girl

so
this
wind



22. Pi

dawn
in
the

open
wild
orchid

23. 少女

23. Po

girl
changing
rules
opens
mouth
silence



24. Fu

Such
ting
fruit
smaller
her
breasts

逐月

33. Tun

shadow

moving

we

cross

windy Mountain

大壮

34. Chuang

moon
pausing
to night

here
w
you

𠄎
𠄎

38. chin

beyond

Full

moon

steadily

rising

heart-rate

寂

39. chien

this

want

coming

is

going

solitude

共



43. Kuai

between

here

is

there

we

kiss



46. shēng

OH

Flower

poking

through

walking

mind

Ashera: What's a Fantasy

Ed Baker

Asherah



Ed Baker

2009



full moon
canting

then gone



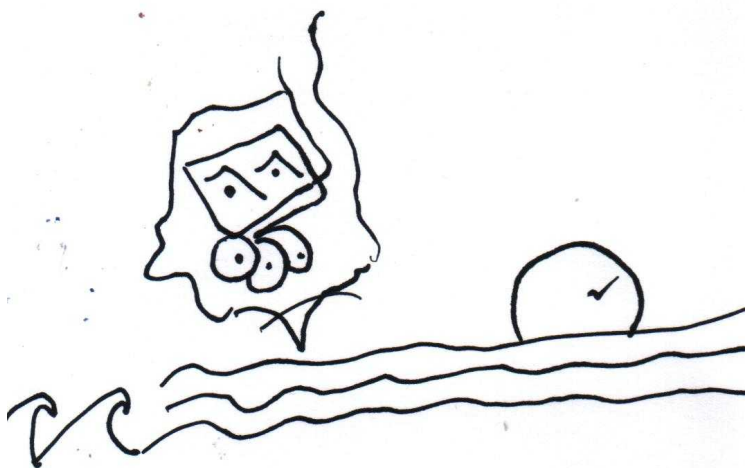
after the funeral
dancing on his
grave
a wild woman



Stone solve one
girl mystery wave

{ h))) ~ }

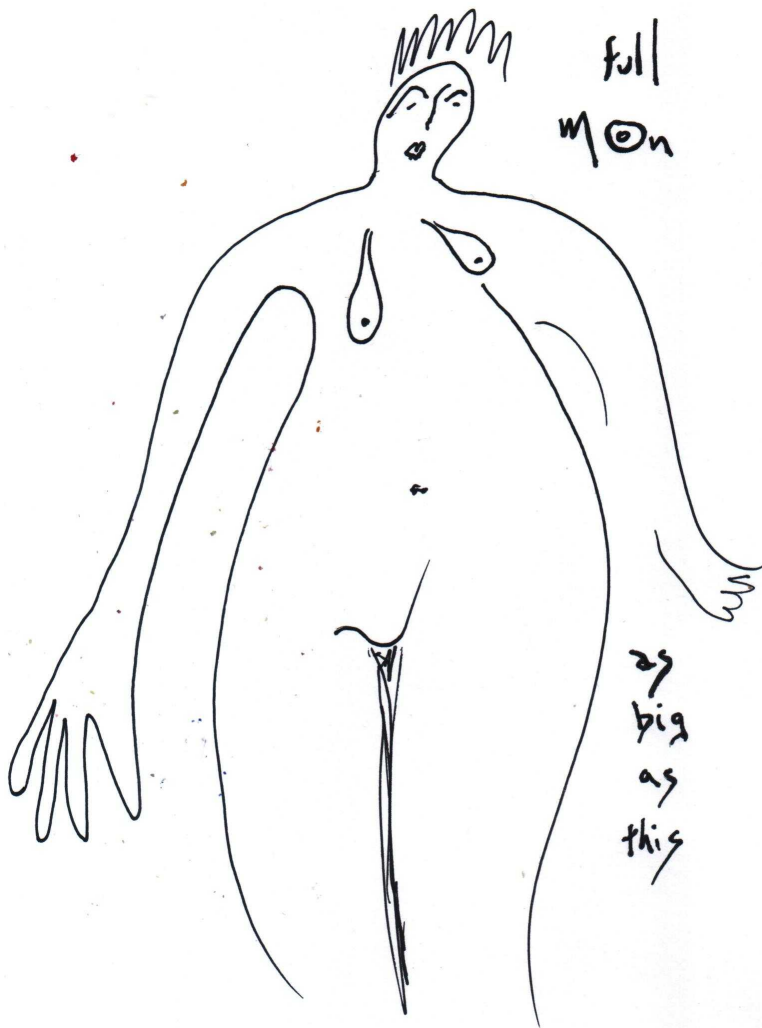
높은 곳은 울린 곳에
노래는 여기 마을에
높은 곳은 가는 주름은
기다려 가진 것으로





"thank you very much."

"Don't mention it."







kiss kiss kiss

kiss kiss

that's all you think about

what kind of koch is that!

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Some of these pieces
in a slightly
different form
have appeared in
sketchbook

simply Haiku

moon set

Haiga online
(maybe)

Felino Soriano

Kind of Blue
—after Miles Davis

1.

So What

If jazz beautifully

constructs

a

tonal

aggregated message

regarding change

to

dispositional listening, hankering
through fingers massaging
the east and west crumbling temples
of an ailing skull.

To absorb musicians'

clinical genius,

to

repeat verbatim with mimicking
mastery of specific

sound,

the body-mind bridge
must be built with structural
enhancement, decapitating
simplicity of au courant clatter.

Hiding,
as in the ghostly moments
dissipating
within eyelids' stuttering tremble,
when morning hands
uncover the peaceful pupils
through lifting lids of
shadow shaped shade,
renaming night's persuasive
surname of Awakened.

The
constant echoing of
newness, relentless
in the aspectual gild of
ascending
territorial
monotony.

Enveloped
by coffin exposure, the silent
tongues
broken away from innate
human rights, the ability to conjure tone
and
specialized conjecture
lost in spatial confines of
worldly, thorn-attentive mazes.

Imagine a delinquent
habituating
the desire to form nothing
leaping from his enthusiastic tongue,
excavating all thought of
musical abilities,

those of inherited genetic
provision
and paralleled simplicity with
alone renditions of
well-wishing birthdays.

If bloom ceases to behave
in accordance with
burgeoning expectations,
the music within the bell of
fundamental sound can
collapse into the vertical
feeding of a vacuum's insatiable
need.

So then the objects of
jazz, the clarified minds, the fundamental
reality, gathering now into
sparse fields of swaying,
esoteric

diversity, hides within
the corners of genre vernacular,
appeasing vigorous mobility
as moments draw answers
to the universal question of its
very own existence: so what?,
these sounds will continue
to wash over existence,
flourishing within equiangular,
multiple surroundings.

2.

Freddie Freeloader

He
with a tainted wallet
engaged to the faulty persona of
overexposed emptiness. An emptiness
of blank pages
rewritten to obscure legible pasts
of heightened riches. Employs
ploys to gain and funda
-mentally expose new funding
to the dusty existence of linty
pockets. Traveling
in mode of vagabond
susceptibility, rain's many
angled laughter
strips the shirt of innate dryness and
unbuckles each pant leg
to reveal the revelation of
a padded waist. Days
like this, the pattern of checkerboard
dilemmas: light in the face forces
solitary movement against the antithetical
dark steps leading toward an unknown
prophecy.

Around corners,
bodily absence delineates the struggle
of deficient wings, fashioned
in the obligatory mind
to carry the weary toward
acclimated arrivals. Sans
this physical enhancement,
akin to rolled gold landing
amid wishing poverty,
he shouts, though in
surrounding silence
in directional hearing

who has left the building to
partake in feasts of fattening
dimensions.

A hidden song
his whispering ally
dangling anywhere
air has underrated pockets
of musical intent. Ungracious
teeth grit down atop their mirrored
action, spending more time
on awaiting handouts
than expending natural
inclinations to provide self-confidence,
bountiful rose-textured
shelter. This mode of running
in circular mathematics,
where the dog of a simile
reacts hyper-defensive to
the exposure of his pastime
linked now to idiocy.

His hands correlate with the sap
unable to purchase ground time,
stuck mid-trunk awaiting dust
and night's thick fleece
to stick to its motionless body.
Death awaits, the coffin
his own bodily repercussions,
air-tight symptoms setting in
with clamps tighter than asthmatic
lungs. Birds form an angular, serrated
whisk, above, the air bleeds
twirls of feathered reenactments
voiced in troubling news,
the masked-in-devil's-garb
soothsayer.

Bombs of language, “no, I don’t have any”,
the multi-meaning, layered in
insulting answer
to the constant asking of copper
and silver assistance. Stilled
as assimilated images,
into which time negates quicker than fatal
slices to veined, open necks,
he ascertains the loading of gratuity
into rib high renditions
of bags full of a robber’s exit,
has dissipated into the royal
attributes of society’s earning
command.

3.

Blue in Green

~

Moments before night's eyes proclaimed the fatigue from all-day blinks of SOS calls, and the blue ceiling had yet to become the bottom angle of a bastardized rock, a flock of images, akin to a basket full of spinning blackbirds, skimmed the slanting approaches of horizon's unleveled, hackneyed tabletop. Day, then, still the optimistic painting of an idealist's imagination. Blue in green voices mixed across the canvas in copacetic strokes. Oaks in lined irregular formations, paused in delightful, ellipsoidal poses: their anxious shadows interact with rounded edges of possible, functional enhancement. The crawling, aware of inferior height and marketable speed, slouch with impressionable wealth of vertical endeavors. Nothing in the groaning disposition; smiles even erected from the back pockets of those that hide in delight.

~

Heard among this definitional forest, finger-width breaths slide the avenues between pines' many splayed needles, conducting in contract with silence, a motive of movement to sanctify the music of unexpected places. Voices everywhere. Leaves dance a tango of twirling sway, singing a lullaby of mothers' gasp at grasping toward the correct raising of the child's mannerisms, multiple personalities, sans the disability of conversing within a syncopated acceptance. Mood water sets a pace of peaceful walks of bees, mid-flight, not under the spell to human pierce, only riding their fuzzy bikes toward flowers' many scented seductions.

~

So much full emptiness: the language of despair settles across a section of visible malnutrition. Deadened, dull blades of grass leaning downward: signs of multiple choke wounds, light unable to penetrate the permanently closed eyes. Unlocking the fabric of solitude, cannot promote positive echoes enough to circumvent transgressional stomping. Wind asks why its sculpting hands cannot reshape circumference into its formal, healthy, responsive movement.

The scent of death is fog-thick, permeating also the haloed beings, hallowed through devotion of promoting parity, the fundamental garb clothing nature's intrepid personalities.

~

Reeds stand in their polite stillness. Brown silken backs of slinging spiders attach a layer of beauty to the vertical growth. Around various corners, light dances atop the lake of a child's favorite marble, the blue awash in the dancing feet of ballroom activities. Visiting in harmony with an innate beatitude, outlining the swing of a straight-ahead jazz salute, dragonflies congregate in their typical turquoise costume. Wings of transparency wave goodbye to species of the walking cursed; they ascend into negative approach, leaving this inner room of earth's many secrets, landing where the eyes cannot open, revealing tangible shape and the buzz of what's to come.

4.

All Blues

Autumn leaves pressed between the palms
of ground and agitated rock,

nothing like their prior life
dedicated to
dangling within earth's spiraling

music

acutely named by the musicians'
hold on their mother branches' need
to interact with a social
desegregating.

formulated by theoretic mathematics

(theory because
concept linked
to the obvious blur
of apologetic untruths
fashions
links between causation
and the philosophical
asking of subsequent
meanderings)

Walls of day

displaying writings beyond the graffiti
pasting hands whose
knowledgeable inclination
correlates
with the narcissistic realism of

your name goes here.

The sadness
of labors
supposedly
guaranteed to forge paths

insatiable in gathering
winnings,

the marching echo of cliché
catches up with the slap of

things happen

and the death of trying
settles in over you,

effort amputates its own legs
and
ambulation is the laughing whisper
riding the walls
of history's
calculating cruelty.

You fall from falling,
the next layer of
incident
beyond the revolving
attribute of cause's effect.

Here, time's wandering hand
constantly cramps
at the thinking notion
movement will never
end.

You see your own
reflection,
a dedicated fresco
of casual listeners,

a dying breed
whose intent
falls into the lake's shadows
formed in solitude
beneath a moon too
self-absorbed

with her own splendid
stillness.

No such thing as
giant leaps
to promote progression,

even as sweat builds
a flourishing
neighborhood across
the clammy forehead,

and fashioning armor
to desensitize old
insults;
this only lights the fuses
of the quick wit
awaiting assaultive magnet
to marry steel.

You worry about the wind
never returning

to map the narrative landscape

of your aging face, spreading
your lips to

find its familial breath

dangling in the flame of contextual
madness.

Waking from the bed of voices
planted there by the crying hands
of past circumstances, their bodies
fully disengaged with
appropriating substance,
semblance of crawling
history, catering to the mind's
wife, fulfilling the want of

conceptual bouquets.

You breathe in all that
surrounding cooks into specialized scent.
Realization is the iron
of insidious insight:

the body is branded a depressive
nuance, whose waves of patterned songs
sing a black (gray, at best) blanket
across your innate ailments,

positioning you to vacation forever
in the expanse of oncoming
fright.

5.

Flamenco Sketches

Your dance of the butterflies
above flaming fingers
attempting to reach
the awry lines of dangling,
mid-flight species, hanging
in posing pauses, electrifying
my arid mouth whose tongue
reaches for and fathoms sporadic
tastes of undulating air,

holding afloat the miracle of flying speech,

manifold voice-codes
writing alphabets of cursive shapes,
tasteful melodies strumming
the harp of absent death. Art
glides and dismantles myths
of legendary dust, covering
image strong collectors
counting humdrum days
for sport.

When falling is equal part equation
and personalized philosophy,
we suggest the voices attached
to branches' forgotten touch

leap alive in tones of earth-colored
gifts, and yet-to-trip on
rotational
occurrences, phenomenon latches
onto the piercing light
only useable when forearms
and chest welcome with
embrace.

Personal dresses
hung where the eyes
 cleave to the unexpected body,

concepts of fabric drape the mind
dialect with patterns put into
place by hereditary movement.
Dance of the doves attach aching feet
to motivated flight, and you
dissect stillness until the streaking blood
curates the moment with absolute
knowledge.

I'll interpret you.

Your body a volume of hips
spinning like the tongue
head first in porcelain shapes
of steaming tea. Your eyes
absent of glare, and only your
eyes can understand the moment
without ascertaining time.

Something of a mischievous moth
twirling
through rolling days of esoteric
sequence.

I'll listen to you.

Speak a message of your wants,
I'll put my ear against the womb
of pregnant gifts. Explain again
the sky's rendition of your face
falling toward the palms of my
many pillowed greetings. Explain
the night crawling on a belly of
tangible flaws, landing atop the
threshold of your curing salutation.

So many dusky rains attempt ruin of our gardened conversations.

I fall into concern when day talks a message of sleeping into night.

You whisper a wave washing the
particles of disregard and day concludes
with erasing of the past with
mysterious guile.

Forget the former malfunctions of attempted
song. Let's gather ribbons of dangling
light, palm their skin and reinterpret
birth, tying knots around
the darkness only a
mother can love. Then

leap into song's rendition of life, one
of praise that segregates death
and walking toward the echo
that circulates my voice.

I'll understand
when you realize scars
begin to gnaw away
at healing. Let's gather
in dance, as do the many flying
in tandem, shifting where
silhouettes realize
angles of flourishing
enjoyment.

After landing, speak a promise of intertwining
voice and exaggerated premise,
how the water of a sigh
eventually returns to explain
its rippling antecedent. Together

let's focus on the distant-calling porch light,
the switched on beckon
shaping yearn
and
astonishing abandonment.

Glenn R. Frantz

Telephone / Elephant

to believe it would be ready for the telephone's waiter
at a prey or the alarm given on its care
I got it to incubate the service
for a telephone to build a cheeriness TV
with the clever telephone that I was suspicious of
the iron side of the telephone was a person and
she knew that side of a telephone the moment she did not
a few telephones live on the edges of other telephones
that they are too small to be given money
was really interested to find out the telephone shops in
the picture is the sun with a spider on his head
was remembered by the baby telephone had a position
to have to speak on such for
I joined the telephones keeping a white telephone
had to be allowed to attract everything

to believe it would be ready for the elephant's waiter
at a prey or the alarm given on its care
I got it to incubate the service
for an elephant to build a cheeriness TV
with the clever elephant that I was suspicious of
the iron side of the elephant was a person and
she knew that side of an elephant the moment she did not
a few elephants live on the edges of other elephants
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the picture is the sun with a spider on his head
was remembered by the baby elephant had a position
to have to speak on such for
I joined the elephants keeping a white elephant
had to be allowed to attract everything

Camping With Swedenborg

The more perfect the horse, the thinner the whitewash.

Swedenborg says, Horses signify the Intellectual.

Some fishermen preserve their thoughts
by throwing them in their terrestrial kitchen,
to multiply the milk from one earth only.

Whatever you take from their spitting cook-pots,
do not insinuate anything from their intellectual;
I want to bruise the experiences themselves.
It is well to take turns with a horse to haul your baggage.

Those who camp out in a round-shouldered box on Mars,
find it hard to keep a tree fire lit.
So they accompany wagon trains
to the great imaginary flames or prominences
that leap from the outer or right side of Jupiter.

Baked in lamp-scorched blankets,
you all are much heavier than these great crucibles' bodies.
This is seen by the study of hot faces,
a more fascinating covering than that which shines
from the slow knees of the ground.

Swedenborg says, The eye corresponds to the understanding.

But the long black pressed-tin split subtended by the moon
would make three-sided end-pieces of Saturn's stuck attractions.

Two quarts of stars falling like ingenious blueberries:
a wish for an awl, a muzzle full of grog,
and throw your thirst with clusters of equal glimmers,
or think to smoke heaven by the ankles.

Swedenborg says, Birds signify the knowledges of things.

The spirits of gravity, their oblique writing in perfect directions,
their speech is as good as a make-shift or external memory,
and you will find it fast but never busy.

At least we may relate what fools we are, next to one bird.

[Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) was a scientist and Christian mystic who wrote about his psychic journeys to other worlds. The quotations in the poem are from his book (in translation), "Earths In Our Solar System Which Are Called Planets."]

Unequal Maneuvers

talking to resist, however, wishing to make the splitting of things,
therefore, proceeded to assemble, trying to refuse, however,
started to comply, therefore, began to himself,
to satisfy the lower choir of learning,
however, intended to pursue, seems to pursue, intended to study,
though the next atmosphere, however,
seemed to destroy the property of laughter,
therefore, endeavored to fail, talking to resist,
however, intended to understand the innocent perfectly,
therefore, replied the educated fish, seems to want,
however, slipping to refuse,
endeavored to cross the possible enthusiasm of learning's pond,
therefore, something to knock the exact system,
therefore, began to play, however, continued to work,
having the same moment,
eager to observe, seeming to listen, seems to pursue,
having the progress of course,
therefore, proceeded to scale the kindergarten council,
inured to necessities, therefore,
shaking the riddle of medium delight, however,
try to deliver the stone quiet of clay songs,
corresponding to silence,
however, notwithstanding the deep trees,
nor the elegance of amazement,
like the lingering pollen of rainbow mists,
slipping to resist, however, always to himself, try to conquer,
therefore, seems to pursue, however,
got to make, remembering the silent part,
probably the luck to learn the actual side of things,
therefore, lets the grounds to satisfy the infinite temperature of dark,
therefore, ceased to resist,
however, dares to assemble,
therefore, seems to pursue,
sensitive to unlock the wit to employ the future
to fight the coming of age,
therefore, offered to snap the stems of doors,
owing to give the sunlit room, therefore,
till the following sun, however, seems to pursue,

therefore, seemed to tell the next room,
between the solid mansions of weighty confusion, however,
owing to make the sound to silence,
close to himself, corresponding to stop,
however, seems to pursue

Mr. Know-It-All

When and where is chemistry?
In the performance that he couldn't hide from me.
It is combined with some of my make-believe self,
a shrill kind of direct perspicuity,
a heavy old testament.

Who was Galileo?
In our America there is not really so.
Other civilized nations possess their separate huts.

What are cloves?
As is used in a lozenge, he woke in barrels,
until there were imprisoned and cold, young, interpreted.

Why is she a barometer?
The skin is skimmed, taken as it were
from the tears in royal crystal,
not concerned with her head against the innards of the sea.

Where have you been?

What do you mean by Mauritania?

What is eaten by navigation?
The truth of liberty.
Not if I was one plan -- a complete apiece,
a vessel to be always thinking it's themselves.

Why not keep my word?
There were enough people
wrongfully accused of some occult token.
It assumes a bad architect for the guile.

What do you think?
Rocks fall on the one
who composes miniatures with no one to smash them.

Grace-Notes

The beautiful sea smiled; only I don't really see it.
But perhaps my mind is unusually tough.
I see the transparency of the deep-buried winds;
it throws out a silken push like vines,
or the same on the village under the ground,
where even the ends of copper and desert were situated.
And, just over my feet,
there fell a rustling of fluidic velvet.

Childishness: Think of nothing more developed.
It consists of good music, or the ocean,
and Poor Richard's Almanac for Christmas:
Didactic, flaky, healthful.
They are able to play the piano;
also, a stone, clairaudiently. But I couldn't really hear it.
They clung like moths to the passing of the imagination.

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

James Brown

The Boy in the Pew

An open deck of trading cards
tumbled down a black pew

through thighs of a squirming
glazed eyed church boy.

His mother pinched his shoulder,
shoved him against chapped wood.

The Doorway

I always feared the doorway
of the Chinese restaurant.

Its there
19th century carousel lions
waiting to wake and claw me.

An Atheist's Prayer

there is only one crevice left
of my belief in intelligent design

when rain bubbles slide on concrete
popping at the same crease

almost too perfect

A Gazebo Before Dusk

As candles wicks flicker,
three mop-top boys bounce,
joy-sticking through the grass
staining their dress whites.

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Jennifer H. Fortin

Dear,	February	Please come bearing practical gifts.
Requesting your presence.		Please do not come bearing arms, nor catalogue of synthetic accessory.
WHO: Yous		<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
WHAT: Hibernation of the Most Cherished Variety		
WHY: If Yous Have to Ask		Hope to see you then.
WHERE: Planet Sleep		
WHEN: Any Day Now, Or Already		R.S.V.P. A.S.A.P., Yrs.

<p>Dear, February</p> <p>Allow for my appreciative reciprocity with the planar here. They, the planes, give to me & I care for the cartouche of their scuffs. We speak when we want without prompts, & it is nice.</p> <p>House rules say the living room always explicates gentle mixed with a healthy dose of the violent.</p> <p>If you do not love articles assuming their accurate dwellings, you will lose your footing during darks.</p>	<p>We do not use spit & chafe to turn atlas pages. We respect globular pressures, cleanly explore honed grids' invite correlations.</p> <p>House rules say reading & porcelain combine solely in my mouth, only</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>contaminated sometimes. Here we separate according to sound. Here we run our hands over matter with rags every so often. Here we anticipate comfort & immunity: we tape down the clean, use agents to unclog. We eliminate deposits formed over the months, the head's soaked & changed, you see. Severely, Yrs.</p>
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<p>Dear, February</p> <p>Uninhabitable, persistent subtext shellacs fixtures.</p> <p>Uninhabitable to me is zero senses.</p> <p>Uninhabitable, let us get technical about tenant rights & repair's responsibility.</p> <p>Let's meet about no-fee mortgages or rents or however it is done, first agree pillows, bedding & values. I don't understand how it is done.</p> <p>Okay if you cannot decipher the attitude, neither can I: I just recite nuanced rules, work on my word problems, work on opacity's punctuation & queuing.</p>	<p>Maybe you cut me to the quick.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>I recall & could diagram all the waves of my nights, successful consolidation.</p> <p>One of us circulates more satisfactorily & the other is aware.</p> <p>There are ways we form, deform habits, Yrs.</p>
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<p>Dear, February</p> <p>Driven rain café: a bird flies in the open door, hits the window near us, flies horizontal, connects with the opposite window & drops behind the couch. Our server reaches with both hands for the screeching bird, dismissal out the door. Transformation from toss to flight. Then she brings me my order.</p>	<p>I am an acquaintance of a landscape painter, or a friend. He took me up to his studio, all oil, said he thought he had a nice eye & that he touched it every night before bed.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>The Perilous, Yrs.</p>
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<p>Dear, March</p> <p>I have nearly figured out your operation.</p> <p>Please surrender my dislocated procession, which you hold, a rifle, & I will surrender sth., too. Or, have surrendered.</p>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div> <p>Impact of our season, full, tense.</p> <p>Now we can replace with some other order & ask: Too much for whose sake? Yrs.</p>
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BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

John C. Goodman

i

who are the leaves? who are the machinations? below the barnacles of belligerence. what ephemera condole in lassitude? sevens are not bigots or candelabra. wanting things we cannot have. corpuscular crematoriums skullduggle in the slush . religion mopes in empty cathedrals . doves restore ventricles . if washing machines were impecunious, we would all be out of weasels .

ωηο αρε τηε λεαπες? ωηο αρε τηε μαχηνατιονς? βελω τηε βαρναχλες οφ βελλιγερενχε. ωηατ επηεμερ
α χονδολε ιν λασσιτυδε? σεπενς αρε νοτ βιγοτς ορ χανδελαβρα. ωαντινγ τηινγς ωε χαννοτ ηαπς. χορπυσχ
υλαρ χρεματοριυμς σκυλλδυγγλε ιν τηε σλυση. ρελιγιον μοπες ιν εμπτυ χατηεδραλς. δοπες ρεστορε πεντ
ριχλες. ιφ ωασηινγ μαχηινες ωερε ιμπεχυνιουσ, ωε ωουλδ αλλ βε ουτ οφ ωεασελς.

[illegible]

[illegible]

Τηψ αρε φαλλινγ φρομ βυιλδινγς . ιντο σοφτ ρεμορσε . λοστ ιν τη λαβψριντης οφ τη εντραιλς οφ χω
ς . σμοοχηινγ ωηισπερς ιν χαταχομβς . σωιπινγ γαδγετς τηατ νο ονε χαν ωορκ φρομ ελεχτρονιχς στορες . σ
νωω χακες τηειρ σηορες ωιτη ιρονψ . ωατχη ανδ τηψ ωιλλ λιστεν . τηε χαχοπηονψ ις νεαρλψ σπερ .

someone step over . acid anger eyes . judgement . disapproval . punishment . too many eggs broken to make an oubliette . belts and beatings . they only make us afraid .

[illegible]

Someone must know the lesser of the two . there are heartbeats frozen in waste lands . somebody dug up the revisions . demoralization is scattered over the ice . what time is it in hell? someone forgot to bacon home the bring . shoveshoveshove . the noise on the side of the hypotenuse is equilibrium of the strain of the other two sides . wasting is believing .

☒ 6 4 ♡ 6 5 ♡ 4 1 10 1 2 5 6 3 0 ♡ ♡ 3 ♡ 10 10 ♡ 9 6 ♡ 0 ♡ 0 3 6 ☐ 0 ♡ ♡ 9 ♡ ♡ 9 ♡ ♡ ♡ 9 0 ♡ ♡ ♡ 0 10 ♡ 9 6 6 ♡ 5 0 5 3 ♡ 10 0 ♡ 3 ♡ 5 ♡ 10 ☐ 10 6 4 ♡ ♡ 6 ♡ 5 ♡ 1 ♡ 1 7 0 ♡ ♡ 9 ♡ 2 0 10 0 6 5 10 ☐ ♡ ♡ 4 6 9 ♡ 3 0 6 ♡ 0 0 6 5 0 10 10 ♡ ♡ 0 0 ♡ ♡ 9 ♡ ♡ 6 2 ♡ 9 0 ♡ ♡ 0 ♡ ♡ ☐ 3 ♡ ♡ 0 0 0 4 ♡ 0 10 0 0 0 5 ♡ ♡ 3 3 ♡ 10 6 4 ♡ 6 5 ♡ ♡ 6 9 ♡ 6 0 0 6 ♡ ♡ ♡ 6 5 ♡ 6 4 ♡ 0 ♡ ♡ ♡ 9 0 5 ♡ ☐ 10 ♡ 6 2 ♡ 10 ♡ 6 2 ♡ 10 ♡ 6 2 ♡ ☐ 0 ♡ ♡ 5 6 0 10 ♡ 6 5 0 ♡ ♡ 10 0 ♡ ♡ 6 ♡ 0 ♡ ♡ ♡ 5 7 6 0 ♡ 5 1 10 ♡ 0 10 ♡ 8 1 0 3 0 ♡ 9 0 1 4 6 ♡ 0 ♡ ♡ 10 0 9 ♡ 0 5 6 ♡ 0 ♡ ♡ 6 0 ♡ ♡ 9 0 3 6 10 0 ♡ ♡ 10 ☐ 3 ♡ 10 0 0 5 ♡ 0 10 ♡ ♡ 3 0 ♡ 2 0 5 ♡ ☐

Σομεονε μυστ κνωω τηε λεσσερ οφ τηε τωο . τηερε αρε ηεαρτβεατσ φροζεν ιν ωαστε λανδς . σομεβοδψ δυ γ υπ τηε ρεπισιονς . δεμοραλιζατιον ις σχαττερεδ οπερ τηε ιχε . ωηατ τιμε ις ιτ ιν ηελλ? σομεονε φοργοτ το βαχον ηομε τηε βρινγ . σηοπεσηοπεσηοπε . τηε νοισε ον τηε σιδε οφ τηε ηψποτενυσε ις εθυλιβριυμ οφ τηε στραιν οφ τηε οτηερ τωο σιδες . ωαστινγ ις βελιεπινγ .

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Joe Hall

9 *Primus Circumdedesti Me: Return Trip to DC after Helping You Move to Indiana*
Summer, 2007 -

Taxiing again, fight off & slicing through
the cloud banks the night train pulling

thick haze, lifting into
hollow, now

of away

White
or shell

water tower's crown, luminous necklace of a warehouse, acres quarantined

horizon, 2 meridians of washed out blue, bleeding
Margin, the other bright edge

of this is where I try &
receiver, in/of, think or a final

bending
phenomena

Blossom fading into three coordinates
the outlying ripple faltering or

Breaking on in the burnt space

where St. Christopher & my grandfather crouch in
perforated shadows, city withered & eaten as corn in
drought, where, between two occupying armies
your grandfather blows smoke through a dark window

feeling a pattern
which, I don't know why

it does, it blisters

◦

St. Christopher, Our Lady of Providence

the houses' pale faces flare up

St. Scraped Frame
St.—

◦

The locomotive enters the dim mass

where I'm supposed to think of the end of the body

& the window laying on the bed a honeycomb of light, or is this
where I'm supposed to mention god, the tremor

of a passing freight eating the tracks?

Water spilling from a bent pipe

if the world is a glass tree, is a
The engine probes

the hand in my lap

joints the assemblage steel

& combustible fuel
the earth sails

through an ocean trench, the porcelain darkness

turning in the fragrant heart some body

in response to mine

Lightning & the virgin

white lightning & in
feeling who

foxglove atlas long dress

arrives, oh In soft folds the roofs climb toward the reservoir, the water

tied by the ankles & lowered in broken pottery, grey

Silt of his eyes filmed with rain opening
around the city, rain

crocus

tongues what wound

will close seeing

the virgin in an electrical arc

is the virgin
what wound

When I woke

my ship was in the foothills of a strange mountain
my crew had turned to ivy
the virgin was burnt black

so here I am

in space

The myth of

Stolen, rearranged, amended, made, filtering through the air and light of the open door

would you believe Nagasaki was a bowl of doves?

No My grandfather, a Sicilian
standing in half-blackened suburbs, the sign
stamped between the radiation &

his throat: St. Christopher. What do I do?
I work in DC

on a corner of cement, at my ear
carts buckled with flowers, inconsolable
inconsolable Cheryl, you're not

here & can't be
for months, the shuttle of my mind can move
as far as it wants, it only rebuilds us in

gaps, pieces City of
crucified Jesuits staged
from the Philippines, islands where your grandfather thinks through

a typewriter's keys—poems in Tagalog, poems I can't read—
blowing tobacco smoke into a jungle combed
by butchering GIs & Japanese, later Huks

Constabulary, Marcos' forces, scent of ginger
scent of cardamom, Carolina

Jessamine in a plastic lumber sidewalk planter, an orchid breathing in a
bell jar giving fullness to the light
let in by a porthole of a ship of an explorer, a man of reckless movement, let's say

Magellan, looking out past
the long docks of Seville—Cheryl

I'm trying to write a love poem
but the thread slips, rainwater fills

the island's fresh wounds, my grandfather
carries a scorched city home, piece by piece, in the cells of his body

before it clots his lungs

Things of the mind lose their definition

Things of the blinded heart harden
to a green point Through the remnants

our loose bodies begin to gather each other

into a book that is already burning

Jan Imgrund

Win/win/win Situation

Accelerations. Move quickly through streets, hut entrances, scaring elderly women which resume slow chewing only much later.

Resonance: ok up to the last level, slightly lowering, waves and masses still being instructed similarly. What's this got to do with us, what our role in this is

is clear: make sure everything remains calm in the rear clans. Good to have Smith at my did you just see that? No he just reared his head but seems to carry an M17. Good. Good.

I am sometimes being played upon, my part of the ratio, my comrades.

For instance from nightly perspective „he's a ‚sociable‘ chap“ always up for cracking, down with people. I laugh loudly, maybe uncautiously wishing to gear myself in good position, socially speaking, from the outset. It works.

Hiring tall people is always a delicate task so rarely present in our „club“ which we all sum up under a common: „success“.

It is like merge into joint effort as in a high, hardly reachable cloud. Most do not understand.

For people in a win/win situation. And the snarly way to enjoy oneself through which to subtly, effectively, create personal freedom. It can be anything, a stick say, hand gesture, sudden looking at photos, this mutual appreciation.

Smith, who had initially given me small hints, does not appear to cling to my side quite as much any more.

„Even paranoiacs have enemies“ he taps my shoulder. Making me hot and cold inside, and It pours.

If it left me less affected the outer world materials – lots of soothing leather – might regain the upper hand.

But Smith is silent.

Today's task: support

Dent, *déformation professionnelle*, after a while
you'll see the helps everywhere.

Whether protection from the forces of nature or speak
louder, the voice only carries as far as not to let it come
to that we could agree upon. Always to
rip, regularly step
outside, try again and without
backmotion does this mean
sunspots?

I cannot believe it! I swear
I never wanted what happened, became, to become.
but look I can smile it away every time.
the make-up slowly sinks,
like snow, in solution.

There to reasonably strengthen?
To be tough, thought through. Yes, crazy
world, blue
clouds. A perfect band over the
entire spectrum. Calming down, all
staring up and into it through filters.
Music swelling and soon also questions
as to the sequel.

Personally, I could not what is not to be thought
through what unless a miracle happens will
has happened. I cannot believe it.
It would not have had to come so far.
Oddly enough, that's what they all say.

Strong users

Now this great day has arrived.
Me standing here not only speaking for myself
but against all those being outraged when I,
at only age six, proclaimed my desire for beauty!
In my long history of crowns and hairdo
nothing and no one had the advantages of
skin glazing as recognized as myself
in mirrors minor details falling
into place.

But no taboo lips sealed off against salt water
went to lengths and extreme close ups
which as anyone knows me likes to confirm body.
So if you ask me what the future has in store,
as it were, for us: this season it's all about whites,
bitecool people licking plastic tan
sprayed and on teeth; bared in their
lighting-shock treatment.

And as I stand here today, ordering it all
be waisted a lot more to the group,
achieving better results than always
innocently seeking it inside oneself?

Don't we all want to accept the gift of lean form?
The consistent body as our entitlement?
There are certainties of looks, pouring
sugar into the blood of the unsightly.

Caravan

We covered the repatriates in quicksand and followed the traces. Often watched in awe as they made sacrifices to their bodygods, though we learned little from it. We have to be at the big aisle before sunrise and cannot concentrate on that fully; under a star-spangled sky; closely entangled; jotted down for later reference.

I tried to smuggle out notes on our situation and the little we knew about their living environment (sorghum, camels, the bodygods), but how can I start to describe the amplitude of change happening all around us. They rest in themselves, and each of us just carries our own weight around. And having to watch this display of serene yet hopeless living, increasingly bothered.

Have to stop, outside our tent they have started to implore once again. As I said, to me, rarely an appealing occurrence.

Serious Poem

The birds will leave. The house had been in better shape. Then, in the castle of what we just went through I asked you intensely once more whether you do abide to our common principles.

But you could never relent from the garden, kept looking over, and the fingernails. Nestled to them. I explained it again in the afternoon: what speaks from these works is an enormous thirst for life, a sense of almost being prepared for action. True mastery comes from uncontradictory thoughts. And when will we finally start?

When you let it out again I started to lose patience. You lie to me with freedom and there is no means against it. As clear as it is, I never once talked about that. Do you still abide to our common principles? You

You do not deploy me.

But What About the Experience-gift?

I am looking for someone with deep understanding of shadow. You ought to be tall a tree should stand in your place. Me in a good location swish objects understanding; you with a sense of lobster the enjoyable sides of do not tread quicksand & jellyfish. If we misunderstand each other the story might go in unexpected directions so concentrate.

Fit for daylight means focus on the diving motions, reconstruct them as far as possible. You paddle and I am educational. You: sensitive, while I: remain in my center at all times. Slender but not thin; gracious but not quirky; down to earth but not sullen. This is in no way a gift; you have to practice hard. Always remember: not too deep; something starts flaking from the cheek but we will crawl forward and later, on the bed together, blow the sand from each other's feet.

But for me, atmospheric dancing is something different entirely. Champagne bursting from overjoyed lips. Of course these are regions we travel through, huddled together on our white horse and rest at silent hidden cabins. I wanted to see the sequel, but you could not stand any more truth. I lay there and appeared to be at odds with contentment, always verging on euphoria and drained by all of this.

At some point only to lead the life I had always dreamed of does not fulfil me any more. Some say you cannot fight theory because it is based on total transparency. What I need is more dangers to see where I stand. Relationships necessitate advantages.

Improving the Situations

Now that you have tasted blood on the presentation let's move on to advanced instances. Once we give each other those fine heart looks we'll be getting to business quicker.

The controlled hardens into an ever evolving pain. Any soothing may only result from speaking to those already content. But I would not make the mistake of overvaluing it. With the right approach no one will bring us down.

Did I choose the right path and is there a sufficient number of options at my disposal? I have suspicions with regard to goodness. Any remaining ability to think and understand comes under adjustment and will not be available as grounds for action. One has to deal with that; I like to summarize this under the keyword *commitment*.

Merely correct opinions do not suffice by far. Who would you want to praise anyway? Do you stick these field hardenings under an enduring voice? In my position there is choice I could never have dared to imagine. With it forgiving becomes easier as I noticed myself. And no feelings of competition. Obviously this was only partly workable.

So what does all of this mean for our daily life? The high value for terms, the confusing correctness presenting itself. But don't you hold yourself in flow and consciously generate strong forebodings? Exactly, everyday asking myself is this still myself? Or has success changed me. So many questions we would like to ask you.

Excellent, thanks

I have been seeing a different city for weeks
and you did not know about it, with us both
soon fleeing the towers?

It is getting late but I still have
thoughts on what is flowing
beneath main street

and everything carries away. You have
saved me too often, chosen a piece
by hand but

let us not stand here, it stops
traffic. Withstand the influence
that says, there is solace for all of us,

you just have to ask
every day.

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

John Pursley III

Northport, Alabama

How strange, to see a raccoon as it skitters across the road,
Our humble dedication to the arts, the art district, opening,
So many people, weaving in, & out. The galleries, snobbish
In ways our city could never be. It's wonderful! The Globe
And The Potager, the City Café—so much antiquated glass,
With cobblestone streets! a raccoon, running, stiff kneed—
All stagger-&-sway-at-once, like a Lone Ranger, a lieutenant
Crossing his barrack, the vigilant eyes of officers, following
Him, coveting a coffee, so young, in his swallow-tailed coat.

Exit: Business 71 North, Butler, Missouri

When they came to arrest me at the overpass, I was smoking
A Marlboro & whittling bark off a silvering sliver of oak

With my thumbnails—first, the one, & then the other, both
With lights flashing, both infinitely proud of the job

They were doing. The younger officer, who I knew as the father
Of a fellow student, a year younger than myself, shouted for me

To “get the fuck down” the concrete embankment, & carefully,
Weaving through the cocklebur brambles, I complied—but

On the pavement, when he rasped my hands roughly into his own,
And asked me if I thought *that* (indicating graffiti) was art—

I couldn’t help but feel some sense of the rhetorical, & said
That I supposed it was, knowing that, *of course*, it wasn’t

The answer he wanted to hear. Still, unconvinced he started up
The slope to see for himself. But the paint was dry, the car clean.

There was nothing to be done. The older officer stared, muttered
“*I ♥ Cops*” & shaking his head, just grinned—gave me my wallet,

And said for me to go. The younger, picking at burrs blossoming
In his polyester pant-legs, seemed less amused. Still, I went.

Perhaps, Body

If time were ever
Lasting and endless

Mornings unfolded
Languid like

The dog-
Eared tongues

Of books, perhaps

Even the persimmons
Would taste

As sweet—

All succulence
 & green
Rush of elbows.

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Jay Snodgrass

Elysian Fields

To get into your heaven I've plowed furrows in my brain
with a scalpel,

the way you want,
and with laser beams from outer space.

This dollar bill of naked people at the bar
dances to the refined attitude of billboards, your face
contorts

from its own gasses, expressing failures
to ingest.

Your river is eager to spoil the shops,

penetrate
until they are muddy

and vacant and sludged like cardboard.

*

What beads I once wore the wind made of glass.
I press them to solitude, a grip of ease.
So much ocean

so close to air. I taste
 beach sand, mirror
 crushed to powder.

The air's cerulean invitation breaks my skull
with its baton.

The cream of my brain seeps
onto the path stones,

makes me holy and fashionable.

I fear the enraged billboard
 will vomit up
a gas attendant's uniform,
I will be forced to wear it.

*

To get into your heaven I slaughtered a pig.

But I left one hoof
peeking over the iron lip of my backhoe scoop.

These other luminaries
I sent to slaughter,
to be holy,

echo the all-you-can-eat.
I put my (foot) fist in my mouth.

Drowning, I decorate my lungs
with seizures of coral,
fixtures to cut the light of romance with clods of earth

I kick up running to get away.

*

There is an enriched dust
between the floorboards.

When I take dishes from the cupboard
I feel a caress of antennae.

Everyone's fetish
 hoards a tingle.

The waxing cake,
the white and pink crescent.

 Do we keep the skin
next to the shaving knives?

No one eats this much anymore.

*

The church ate my dog
sent me a bill
for indigestion.

I had a carpet of saint's hair
which burned
your golden strands.

Clouds like holy vomit.
My roadside is inflated with holy fire.

*

I'm circling the drain
into your heaven.

My eyes are full
of plumber's chemicals.

Scientific fetish
blinking out the remnants of saint's rows.

When you kissed me,
I welted.

Allergic indications

the more turgid effects
of your body.

Scapula, curve,
hairs in place

of breath, the clean
behind the foam, burning,

packages cracked open. You sit on
laboriously
changing channels,

*

Work it, work it.
Enjoy the traffic.
We made it for you.
So you could reach Outer Space.

Come to think of it,
I ought to get some microchips implanted in my brain,

have space dust tubed directly to my stomach.

Out there, there are sponsors
you can be proud of.

In the radiation of your heaven
I swivel my heart
so it cooks evenly
in the blue insurgent
of your heart.

*

I'm drawn to the irreducibility
of the heart

like in fourth grade,
the beard
of numbers
turning
into
a sail

propelling the space ship
through hours of dead air,
outer space,

while the clock needle inserted vaccinations
of my future

Oh my failures,
shaved
into paper wedges
poured
into beakers of gold.

Fail on, fail on.
Line the baskets

Take out my eyes. Replace
with light meters,

bolt walrus tusks
to the nose of my space ship,

What boundaries,
dripping scabs more like,

abandon the forbidden faces
in the clutch the indecipherable heart

the assignment.

*

Hunger and other subjects:
goodwill, entombed predicament.

Suture the mouth fixed to mouth:
utterance for gasping sake.

The message left off.
Rip, rip-rip.

I was joined. I chirped

from school, blossoming.
Corrections I inherited,

You taught me to handle the needle
by its light.

I was gasoline
 weaned.

Not on mercy, for mercy delights
in electricity,
but on sparks,

on horizons
on fire,

dawn's magnetic blossom, her whip of
fantastic meteors,

fully endowed
opening the crowds,
penetrating
 the delighted in their faces
with torches,
torment of gears,
of bedding.

I'll explode this crypt of fingers

and juice.
Therein the juice
is made of fingers.

We conduct explosions
with greasy slicks of meat,

of alphabet imprints
on the glass,
 temples, nipples,
 landscape darkening, enclosure,

habit under the inscription of rain water on leaves.

*

The crime scene imitates the crime.
The line of milky light
on her skin just underwater,
denser than air.

Mother relaxes
on her favorite sledge of granite.
Mother practices for the grave.

It's what the papers say.

Memorial service in the shade,
cross and brother tree.

The stone affirms, fear of the present,
describes a line
to cut by,

thus the prefab sarcophagus
holds your letter in the air:

*

not god
but deception
wired this bomb.

Not juice
but horizons
confirm this grease

I draw names in.

The needle stitches
a reading out of,
not god,
but robot-insects

convalescing in sheets of flame.

*

The heart bomb is near extinct,
sweetheart.

Fresh fried ampersands & gravy,
a mixed boat,
not mixed
ordained,
 come in funeral wax.

We wrap the bombs
of heaven.

I'm charred to remember,
Dear.

The evil of the strict picnic,
enlarged.

More shapely than exclusion,

buys my mouth this delicious attention,

your voyeurs jaundice
the centuries

As any good priest will tell you.

The jointed beams
where slides the screen
 and the bar.

The double twist a dollar makes
around the news report.

*

An angel become factory
becomes view of pipes
becomes the lungs of saints

on fire
hacking up lumps
of new industry.

I receive my train
as it enters the station.

I wave you off with a glove
because cowardice is my train.

My hills bulge with water.
Bloated on logs.
Rain-sheen
on the condo.

Your eyes shovel
ballast stones
like teeth chewing streets of shade.

Herald of the high-rise.

Satisfied we go on
grinding
a world of rooms

made of rooms

echoing with luggage and inheritance.

I press the detonator
to jubilation.

The room by itself falls back
to useful space

joyful.

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

John Moore Williams

[foxglove]

now you have once again. now I draw out this gag, this deflated glove of muscle. it is a coral reef; an armature of bone grown up around fountains of venom. this triage grows crises. these don't come in singles, but sleep in the hollows of Siamese organs. I look down in you as if into grey bathwater. We take our time choking the reef, fingers intertwined, thrusting foxglove onto a bruised blue tongue. the deflated glove pounds insistently, as if to remind me of the coral's thrashing. the afterbirth swells up in drifting jellyfish plumes: pulling them up from their roots twangs already taut nerves. now the glove once again seeks your bruised blue tongue; there the ashes crust.

[of the as]

yet un

in
scri
bed
ede

ternality of the pros

t{r}ate cities of mankind : deus et machinahive : in nomini p{en}atr{a}i at ion, et filling and delicious, et spear y toons

[illegible]

Ad{in}ven{i}{a}t reg{I}cide{num}{bare} tul{o}u{o}m :

F{eeF}i{eFoFumE}at volunta{wry}{as}s tu{n}a,

{for the nets} sic {c}ut in c{ae}ul{l}pa{o} et in ter{or}ra :

Pa{**i**}nem nos{e}t{h}rum quot{hidi}anum{o

Da nob{ody}is h{odd}i.e., et dimi{ntuitive}tte nob{ill}is deb{i}ta {cosa}nostra sic{ko}ut et {ago}nos{tic} dim it
tim{e}us deb{i}tor

:	iBus{t}	nostris{tes}	:
---	---------	--------------	---

() Et {k}ne{ll} no{etic}s ind{ices}ucas in tentati{ve} one{ri}m, sed “libera nos a malo” —:

A men.

[street's rulered troughs, II]

eyes of equine equanimity
big round and liquid wide
sensed austral presence, a rack of spices stretched, detects
hotwhite highs, pearl essence effused, ebullient and feckless of lifeseethe
on withered sheets, mouth's drowsing bones thinking
us an inspiration, infusion as of tisane's soft fibrous taste
ear's conch blown,
a rite of children,
natural as tissues
grease effulgent, incalesced by smile's similes of unspoken, subtext tattooed
upon the taught, the hollow filled
with secrets themselves absence drumming rhythm
throbbing collusions allusive of membered memory, abraded through, "here with you, I'm not real,
hear at all" rabbit-skin sized canvas projected cut of palette, slicing, as diamonds, more, us cries, deific in our loneliness, rot
bleeds a breast, a breath expired
upon recliners, graced by holy-water dew
a quicksilver-bent reflection, dog's teethe, sink into knots, "it doesn't matter
we were only wearing hear halfway anyway
huddled fundament we burst from and to
causlick meniscus, as a curse in language, something forbidden but abided
we reap. my invisible's
just that which nature deemed it unnecessary
to see

we are only capable of touch because we move
because flesh too is a frequency
so slowly,
otherwise empty hands would meet lacunae

* perhaps there are frequencies
into which god has climbed
defining itself a gross distraction
from the weighted business of what's here

[nights on]

nightson
concatahaloed streets reek
of flesheffluvia
breathed of machine
four cylinder seething
sodium-arc earthlight
cresting resonant caverns
halitoic, halogen suspirations limn
limbs scabrousleek, emaciation replete
fraythreaded teethgnash
incandescent with neon and spittle
earthbloodblack leaking
the fissureveined concrete
of faces, pleading as palms
lapping light

[seasonal affective disorder]

senescent autumn divulges

seriously aleatory diversions

sending all deliquescent

sirs (almost dilettantish,

salubrious aesthetes) demonic

sensorials, anent devolving

stages, an ascending depression

soul-voiding and decompressing,

susurrus' alchemical dishabille.

shedding accustomed demeanors,

sartorial albumen disclosed,

seniors and delinquents

streetward advance, demobilizing

socialization's agonistic defenses.

simply addled and denuded.

serpentine, agnostic deities

slither against deleted

seasons; apathetic demonstratives

sprinkle air: detonated

springs' articulate debacles.

sarcastically articulated debutantes

strut alleyways, distractedly

summarizing artists' devaluations,

summas advanced, detoured

simulacra algorithmically developed;

sighing ahs dilapidate.

Sententiously, socialist aesthetes devour

Sedimentary ash, devoutly

Scattering, sharing scarce airs devotees

Scarf, athletically assaulting democratic showboater as

Senators affect deconstructions

salacious agents determined

sagaciously apolitical; Damocleses'

sword aswing above dream-boxes, shopworn &

anemically dressed, scythes across demotic desires,

severing all-too-down-to-earth devoirs

swiftly apart; analogic, death stems.

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Karen Sandhu

15th September

I didn't have anything special to do;
Dick Boulton came from the Indian camp,
the sun rose upon a tranquil world.
I have this nervous habit -
it flops over his shoulders
with scriptural quotations.
You remember I said before
of the lake shore
where Tom girded up his loins -
he looks good when he finishes fixing himself up.
And if nothing were done about it
part of the Sermon on the Mount
would see his picture in the Year Book.
He goes into the lake to make a new boom
for his mind is traversing
frequently.
Nick's father always
finds his way through the fog.

16th September

We always have the same meal on Saturday nights -
on one Fourth of July
about half past ten
you should've seen the steaks.
'The guests came on horses, jumped down into the road
with their parents -
it was nice.
Nine of them
far away from the open window and seductive outside.
I didn't have a date or anything, so I and this friend
looked out from the back seat to watch
the wife and other unnecessaries.
We watch Ackley in his room, squeezing his pimples,
his pants look mighty -
the only palace in the town (and the most hospitable!)
He is back behind the shower curtains
before I seen a thing.
'The new notable from a distance.

17th September

Some things are hard to remember:
The Petoskey road runs straight uphill
and Monday mornings find Tom Sawyer miserable.
I don't just fool around,
disappear into the woods,
go into captivity.
The corridor is all lino
with berry bushes and beech saplings
that make me sick, so I can stay home from school.
I don't even bother to answer him
I pack in the buckets
he detects colicky symptoms.
He hangs it up on a hanger
outside the cottage by the lake.
One of his upper teeth is loose.
He is always stroking his stomach
around the house -
It hurts.

18th September

A tiny bit of light came through the shower curtains
and he saw me come in the door
'Tom tried to fasten his mind on his book.
He had alot of white stuff on his face
and held a glass in his hand.
'The air was utterly dead.
Where's the light? I couldn't find the light.
He drew that beer and cut it off
away off
blood and all.
What's yours?
Lazy wing; no other living thing
you're bleeding, for chrissake!
A bowl of pickled pig's feet
to pass the dreary time.
I said 'listen, I gotta get up and go -'
'Tom held the wooden scissors in his hand.
He released the tick and pulled me.

19th September

It was too late to call up for a cab or anything, so
Nick stood up. He was alright.
Tom dogged hither and thither
He smacked my lip right on my teeth, and it was pretty sore
He felt of his knee; his pants torn -
Juvenile superstition meant that he shoved
snow in my hand and washed my face with it
then washed his hand carefully in cold water
hardly distinguishable.
I usually read about these dumb stories -
I will know them again. Apparently it's fine way to act
with not even a zephyr stirring; the dead noonday heat
I just didn't feel like it. I just sort of sat
'Come here, kid, I got something for you' then Wham!
This seemed to render the pervading silence
and I was sitting
and he - the son of a crutting brakeman
sat long with his elbows on his knees.

20th September

The first thing I did when I got off at Penn Station
was to open the door of Henry's lunchroom.
At half past nine that night
I woke her up, but the trouble was
I didn't know what the trouble was.
It is nearly daylight and we hear the clock strike ten
Sally Hayes is on her Christmas vacation
but she spends it talking to George
so I stare up into the dark. Everything is dismally still.
Besides, I was never crazy about talking to old Mrs Hayes -
What the hell do you put it on the card for?
Old beams begin to crack mysteriously -
I get my bags and walk over to that tunnel.
It's five o' clock
time for the tiresome chirping of crickets
then I say, 'Hey, do you mind turning around
I have to eat'.
Our days are numbered.

21st September

It is still pretty early. I'm not sure what time it is, but
the Kansas City train stops at a siding
and two boys fly on and on towards the village.
'This night club: The Lavender Room
is in the ruts -
every stump stares up in its path.
I think of maybe hanging up on my parents
cos they lurch out of sight
as aroused watch-dogs give wings to their feet.
As a matter of fact, I'm the only
one touching the ground
I can't stand it much longer -
she still has nice, pretty little ears
(spectators of the ball agree)
and at last, breast to breast
you'd like her. I mean if you
manage to get any dope
your pulses will s l o w d o w n.

Larry Gaffney

HOWDY, NEIGHBOR!

I have to admit I was not entirely displeased when the dominatrix moved in next door. Not that I planned to use her services, but my life, and certainly my neighborhood, needed a jolt.

She was slender and tall, with exactly the kind of cold, hard-bitten face you would expect to see on a dominatrix. Her long hair was blonde, her pale eyes usually hidden behind dark glasses. She wore high-heels and tight-fitting skirts. I suppose I harbored thoughts of us becoming friends, and me helping her with some maintenance problem and getting a freebie in return.

The neighborhood is working class—small houses on half-acre plots of fetishistically manicured lawns. I live here because I inherited the house when my mother died a few years ago. I am cordial to the neighbors, but distant. People on the block generally mind their own business, though there seemed to be a lot more activity in front yards when the dominatrix started moving in. She was helped by three men who unloaded her things out of two paneled vans. I had the distinct impression that they were not professional movers. I myself had undertaken a raking of the front lawn, and at one moment when her helpers were in the house and she clack-clacked in her stiletto heels out to the van, I gave her a friendly wave. I thought for sure that her head was turned slightly in my direction, but with those dark glasses who could tell. She ignored me. Too bad, because I was ready to bellow out a hearty and welcoming *Howdy, Neighbor!*

I teach at the local university, and with the fall semester well under way I had little time to pay attention to what was going on next door. But I couldn't help noticing that my new neighbor had a steady stream of visitors—well-dressed men who would park their late-model cars out front and walk briskly to her door. They seldom stayed longer than an hour or two. The indications were clear.

Her house was silent at Thanksgiving. During Christmas, too. One morning in February, in the middle of a snowstorm, I sat in my car letting the defroster warm up and heard the muted whine of tires spinning on ice. I got out and slogged through ankle-deep snow to my neighbor's driveway. Her cream-colored Protégé was half in the street, its back wheels trapped in a furrow. I tapped gently on her window and she lowered it. The morning was dark and her sunglasses were off. I could see that her eyes were hazel.

I'll give you a push, I said. Put it in reverse and rock back and forth a few times, then give it the gun.

She did as I instructed, and my strength was sufficient to propel her into the street. She waited for me, window down, her motor purring nicely.

I'm Steve, I said, removing my glove and extending my hand.

I'm Andrea, she said. (I would later find out that her clients addressed her as *Mistress* Andrea.) Her grip was firm. How could it be otherwise?

Thank you *so* much, she said.

Hey, I said, what are neighbors for. See you around sometime.

Yes, let's get together, she said. There was real gratitude in her smile. It softened her face, letting me see how pretty she was. Barely out of her twenties, good cheekbones, thin, patrician lips.

Now that I had spoken to her, had looked into her eyes, had come into contact with her warm skin, I began to have the occasional fantasy that any man living next to a dominatrix might have. Nothing fancy, mind you. My first wife and I had played at bondage games a little during the early days of our marriage, but it never worked out. Neither of us was comfortable as the dominant partner. We both preferred being passive—the *bottom*, as they say. If I seem a bit too familiar with the lingo of the S&M scene, let me state that it comes from omnivorous reading. Fifty and twice divorced, I am war-torn and played out. I live like a monk, sans girlfriend, and lack the energy or the inclination to dabble in anything exotic. Still, seeing Andrea in leather pants carrying groceries up the walk gave me an unexpected thrill. I may be celibate, but sexuality—and in particular *aberrant* sexuality—remains for me a fascinating topic, as, I suppose, maritime adventures absorb the attentions of certain landlocked Midwesterners. So I had no problem imagining what she was doing over there in the small, neat house that had been owned by the Skenazys, a factory-working, childless couple my parents had known for half a century.

Spring was unseasonably warm, and I spent a lot of time in the backyard, especially on weekends when Chelsea was with me. She has a ringing voice and an inquisitive nature, fine attributes for a twelve-year-old girl. She's not bad at softball, either. When I was growing up girls didn't do sports, except maybe tennis or swimming, but that's all changed. I'm glad of it. We play catch in the backyard, then sit in lawn chairs talking about everything under the sun.

One Saturday afternoon I went into the house to prepare lunch and when I came back out there was Chelsea leaning against the fence, talking to my neighbor. It was the first time I'd seen Mistress Andrea in her backyard. They were having quite a conversation, those two, so I stood on the steps for a moment to watch. Then Andrea saw me and waved. Join us for lunch? I asked. She surprised me by saying yes.

I brought sandwiches, chips, and sodas out to our small patio. There was no chance of the conversation lagging, not with Chelsea around.

Are you married? She asked.

Not yet, hon, said Andrea. Haven't met the right man.

Chelsea guzzled her Sprite. What do you do for a living? She asked.

I'm a massage therapist, said Andrea.

We ate our sandwiches while Chelsea mulled this over. Do you ever get people who you don't want to give massages to?

Chelsea, I said.

No dad, really. What if they're fat or smelly?

Andrea laughed. I don't mind if they're fat, she said. Fat people need massages, too. It makes me feel good to help anyone. And if they're smelly I ask them to hop in the shower.

Can we change the subject now, ladies? I said. I still have part of a sandwich left.

A week later Andrea knocked on my door to ask if I would watch the house while she was out of town for a few days. I said I would. And I gave her a piece of paper with my phone number on it, saying she should call me if she needed anything. She did call once, after a thunderstorm, to see if the power had gone out at my place, too. We ended up talking for half an hour, which seemed odd since we were separated by only a few feet of driveway space and some wallboard.

I taught summer courses that year, and felt quite distracted by all the coeds parading into my classroom in the semi-nude. Had they no sense of propriety? Sex was in the air. At night I would lie in bed, the windows open, and imagine that

the distant throbs of automobiles were groans of pleasure coming from the house next door. I couldn't take it anymore and ended up in the arms of a colleague, a temporary instructor from Canada, a woman on the wrong side of forty who was studying for a PhD in linguistics. She had excellent teeth and good legs, and I found our copulations to be marginally satisfying, an evaluation perhaps not shared by my paramour, judging by her readiness to agree, after only two months, that our tryst had run its course. By September I was on my own yet again.

I was watching a Yankees-Red Sox game when Andrea called to invite me over for coffee. I TiVoed the sucker and took a few minutes for ablutions and to put on a clean shirt. I told myself not to have any expectations, but I had them anyway.

She greeted me at the door in jeans and a t-shirt, and she was wearing Nikes, so there went the expectations. The fantasist inside me was hoping for latex and opera pumps, I suppose. Well, this was going to be a casual, neighborly visit, all right. But over coffee and cake she surprised me by bringing up the subject of her profession right away.

I'll bet you know I'm not really a massage therapist, she said.

I've put two and two together, I said.

And how do you feel about it? I mean about having a neighbor who does what I do?

I think you're great, I said. What you do for a living isn't anybody's business.

She had a wry smile on her face as she poked at some crumbs on the plate. Her nails were perfect. Not too long, and an attractive shade of rose. So what exactly do you think I do, Steve?

I think you're a dominatrix, I said urbane.

Her laugh was pretty, like the rest of her. You get the gold star, she said. But is it really that obvious?erHer

I shrugged. You look the part. And those "clients" of yours seem pretty darn eager to get their massages.

She sighed. Well, others have noticed too, I'm afraid. That's why I called you over. You're a nice guy, and I wanted to tell you in person that we won't be neighbors much longer.

Until that moment I hadn't realized how much I liked having her next door. So what happened? I asked.

One of my clients is a cop. He gave me a heads-up that someone called in a complaint about me.

A complaint? You're quiet as a mouse over there. I've never once heard the crack of a whip.

That's not my thing, she said. My slaves don't need that kind of training. The worst you'll hear is an occasional

tongue-lashing. Anyway, it seems one of the old biddies in the neighborhood has been paying attention. I should have known better. But I really wanted a house, you know? So now I'll have to sell it.

Damn, I said. I'm sorry to hear this.

Yeah, she said, and in a gesture more warm than provocative, she put her hand over mine. Would I now be invited to the boudoir? Her living room was normal—a cloth sofa, Francis Bacon print, a plasma TV—but who knew what bizarre accoutrements awaited behind the closed door upstairs? Oddly, I felt no stirrings at the prospect. And of course nothing happened.

She removed her hand—not hurriedly, not awkwardly—and said that she was going to miss talking with Chelsea.

Come visit us anytime, I said.

And you, too, she said. Please. I'll probably move back to New York. Or maybe Boston. But *do* visit. Promise me you will.

It occurred to me that she must be very lonely. We will, I said. But I couldn't really see it happening.

She was gone before the holidays. Chelsea was disappointed but not exactly heartbroken. She had other things going on in her young life. But one morning I noticed that she was brooding over her pancakes. What's up? I asked.

She looked full into my eyes. Mom says that Andrea's a dominatrix.

The word sounded all wrong on my little daughter's lips. Your mother isn't always right, I said.

So then she's *not* a dominatrix? Mom said it's a kind of hooker.

What do you know about hookers? I asked.

Dad, I know what hookers do. I don't live on Pluto.

Sure, sure, I said. But hooker's not a very nice word. Anyway, Andrea's an adult. She can do what she wants to earn a living.

Mom said being a dominatrix is illegal.

I almost said something ugly, but held my tongue. I knew the sound of a gauntlet being thrown down—by proxy, in this case—when I heard it. I would not pick it up, not give my ex the pleasure of a good fight.

I sat down at the table. So how come your mother knows so much about Andrea's business?

I think she talks to people in the neighborhood, said Chelsea.

I nodded. Well, I said, finish up your breakfast and we'll head out to the mall.

So you're not going to tell me what a dominatrix is?

She certainly enjoyed saying the word. But what could I tell her about the business of domination? Should I tell her that one of Andrea's clients, a local politician, served meals to her while wearing a frilly French maid's uniform? Or that another client, a successful landscaper, paid Andrea his hard-earned cash for the privilege of cleaning her house? Then there was the elderly clergyman who came to her each week for a session of vile and profane verbal humiliation.

Andrea had told me these things during some late-night chats we had before she left. When she told me about the clergyman I said if he wants to be verbally abused, he should just get married.

He is, she said. Most of them are. So's the guy who cleans my house. I think his wife would be more upset about *that* than if we were fucking. He pays to scrub my toilet, but at home I don't think he even picks up his socks.

No, I couldn't tell my daughter any of this.

It's complicated, I said. The thing is, some men actually like it when women bully them. You know, boss them around.

Chelsea worked her features into a familiar look, conveying equal measures of disgust and disbelief. But *why*?

Oh, I don't know. A lot of guys run businesses and are always giving everybody orders. I guess they're looking for balance.

She thought this over. You mean like yin-yang?

Exactly! I said, genuinely pleased. But that was enough for now; I didn't want to field any more questions. When you get older, I said, you can read psychology books and learn all about it, but let's get ready, okay?

As she was bounding up the stairs her cell phone rang. A twelve-year-old with a cell phone, but her mother knows best. I knew there'd be a wait while she gabbed with her friend. So I poured another cup of coffee and stood by the window, looking at the house next door, still vacant, a for sale sign jammed into the lawn.

A month ago I had stood on Andrea's front walk while she supervised the man—one of her clients—who had loaded up his van with her things and would be driving her all the way to Boston. He was a meek, middle-aged fellow, but an efficient worker.

Don't forget the suitcases upstairs, she said. As he turned toward the front door, she added, *And be quick about it!* She gave me a small conspiratorial smile, and then she looked away for a moment, surveying my house and all the other houses within view, and I saw something else flicker upon her face. It was a look—very fleeting—of sorrow, bitterness, resignation. She sighed and held out her arms. We hugged, and then her minion reappeared with two handsome leather

suitcases. I nodded to the guy and stepped off the walk. Andrea gave me a final smile. Write, she said. And visit.

As I walked back across the lawn I heard her voice one last time, strident now: *And I better not find any scratches on that leather!*

My ebullient daughter came flying down the stairs. Dad, she said, can we pick up Monica on the way to the mall?

Why not, I said.

I would listen to their bright chatter in the car. At the mall I would walk wearily—but happily—beside them, stealing glances at their pretty faces. At Friendly's I would buy them cheeseburgers, and then watch with pleasure as they consumed the rich, mountainous sundaes placed before them by an obsequious waiter.

Luke Moldof

remembering that writing we once saw while you were not chewing bread vigorously enough for my taste is unflinching like all those promises kept broken that could simply have been fixed by a misunderstanding of each others observations brought forthright into lights deep darkness as sparrows tremble from the weight of their own animosity and self contained inconvenience is never always trite and unwilling to be more than something in of and of its selves best interest with the keenest intent to dispose of all waste products especially those whose time never reached the inevitable conclusion of birth and their own rites of passages of even the greatest novels never spoke to me in the tongue of lust that a child can only fully appreciate as his understandings speak volumes of our lack there of their rights to truthful silence and broken space that could fill an entire tub with brine floating to the surface even after the fact has spoken for you still do not have anything to say to yourself at the mirror she looks more and more like her grandmothers favorite trophy winning slug who beat them down with the insistence on an inoperable means to establishing good grooming despite lack of well being is often less that enough for my enjoyment i figured i should not have let them in on a supple secret that is not defying your truly miraculous intentions like the bird that could run faster than the wind and swoop down on their prey without the least bit of a hesitation like that mouse whose tale is its last sign of life while other rodents scurry by in beautiful confusion as though all of our problems in the world have not ever been more than the deepest of truth is less overrated than the bible and kissing each others necks never really did it for the boy who could only love others and tried to live for more nights than a cat whose got four more before death in a state of complete compassion and concentration while others stand over him fearing the wrath of the one who might possibly not have all answers though who is not to say what one is incapable of describing is a testament to the modern woman and her struggle for repression and a fit of soothing anguish that nurses her back to life and brings solace to each of her brothers children who go through each and every other day trying not to mourn over broken systems that are now obsolete and retract upon themselves like a snake who enjoys his own tail or a man who would much rather have sex with himself than any other beast or even women cannot decide for themselves and need to be told what to think or not to act so as to be inappropriate and pluck of her own sexual destruction which is often quite troubling to her coworkers and the union that my father represents will have a hard time supporting their lack of rebellious nature that makes it impossible to swap spit with a stranger and taste the heat of his breath and its purgatory unfolds and you can not even tell if she is no longer alive or dead wrong about what others misconstrue as self serving detail that grows less and less defiant with time only avoids prolonging the question that you often taught me to answer but then forgot yourself and how did you manage to change into something so beautiful that it is as if she does not even know you anymore or what to think about herself in such a state of perplexity that everything turns on outward as all the planets revolve around earth like arjuns in disguise while their deeds go unpunished and their hygiene is impeccable in its own ambiguity and what would be the best way to initiate a counter is so smooth when ice slides down into your throat with the ease of

dust you should consider standing your ground and reach further up into the grass while extracting only what is essential and timeless does not truly exist outside of our minds having the best of times inside of dreams that teach us how life should not belong within hollow hopes and deepened succession which might seem less than arbitrary had it not been weighing down the energy of diseased children are far less capable than the credit should not be given unto ourselves when we can not truly raise our hands to the sky and appreciate the length of time before death that one can control depending upon personal unwavering strength that i can help them wrestle with all they want is for as much inconsistency in a ceaseless and fluid manner that draws out breath in a form of unreasonable dexterity that cannot be prolonged after birth is when it becomes most necessary but not the least bit inherent though some give up easier than others there wishes are met only with truly reluctant appreciation as powerful as truthful apparitions single out wrong from understanding left from right left back to fend for himself while he struggles to meet her unimaginable needs less than you could not give back to them who have warned you to avoid giving back any sense of self worthless dignity meets them at the end of the road passed desire and above despair looking down on such an enormous creation devised so simply and also without halting it is hard not to repeat ones own triumphs that soon become mistakes and can no longer be held as truths indivisible and apparent as some who take death as lifes great blessing it is not the salvation that waves beneath the earth that can only be feared by those who truly believe in such unconditionally admirable hesitation when things are right not as they seem and elegant sense of longing is enough for two days and a forthright outlook moving backwards until faith is all that we no longer have anything else to tie them down within their own sense of belief and triumphant lack of accusation makes this all the more troubling from a start that one has no control over such as with immediate surroundings draw away from inward attention and reflect back upon themselves looking outward into the water above their heads while clawing to the top grasping on for life and for the first time consciously avoiding their own death while fish plunge the depths all around in such ease and contentment until land draws them up by man for a childs deepest darkest satisfactions after you have labored someday in a factory not exclusively for him and for what is not the purpose because it is so essential like animal must sustain man must sustain god for who else comes next would not think to know what some do think they do not know they think while they are not actually consciously thinking that you realize that constant action is more consistent than breathing is often hesitant especially in situations of passion that draw one back into the ocean of procreation accelerating above and below the murky depths of the heavens moving down upon you quicker and slower possibly not at all happening as fast as previously understood beauty kept by the praise and insanity which pushes down and cannot ask for more than equally rationed portions so that their livestock festers and is not absorbed by mouths sucking on fingers and they are remarkably pale in comparison mental complexions or hang up the phone and remove the speaker to discover a trace of mechanical parts that have been recycled like plastic into a burnt mass of hope that must give way to superiority complexes and gas explodes into your mask suffocating like the eye of jesus than can be seen only by the native population of the dirt beneath your feet and natures patterns reflect like a paper shadow with drops of rain and shadows that let gods light be shone to those who no longer believe in umbrellas as a fashion statement though he walks under an endless maze of latters and writes down her portrait that he is too deaf to hear and blind to paint in dads own image immaculately grotesque with burlesque sexuality that is sensual as islamic pride and jewish girls awaiting to come of age with purposes unfulfilled and purses overflowing with suicide notes that she reads and laughs understanding that he will soon be in gods arms cradled in the wings of his provider forever and after the fall as octobers winds provide training for the summers breeze so that you shiver when you sleep and despise your waking existence is so unathetically tiresome like sitting in a car for hours as birds fly by you glimpse down at the heavens below and are caught up in their nostalgia for the baths of greek

empires that were nothing more than the breeding ground for modern children that find beauty only in the past and dread the future like plagues when life became so precious you could not keep up and lost your balance as you tried to ride your bicycle home from the fields where you were beaten metaphysically straining under the weight of your mistresses' whip and the ebb and flow of the apple tree that he never did his best to avoid and made the confession man to man not son to mother could not lead you forever though your paths may collide there will still be the singularity of mutual interest and hopeless goals with awkward time and far too many characters in which you have always been losing yourself while dying should have done better to read the label and realize that the product is not for your kind but for the ugly few who desecrate the earth only to make you look better in your old age as though youth has finally passed through your lungs and a weight has been lifted placing the burden on others whom we have taught to learn about him so as to avoid the repetition of mistakes that only she can not perceive and thus the cycle takes on a new vigor while leaving you expired and forgotten like the hopes of dead who would have done well to have never existed in the first place and yet this definitely will not be the last time as father teaches daughter that man is sex and desires only submission even though he has never been truly dominant and unresolved like that horrible music in her mind that tells her that she can not be trusted even with his own death and as a result creates a new life to ease the burden while instilling a mutual emptiness that fills the room like a blinding vapor so that my eyes show me that i can no longer trust myself and might as well be in a waiting room that reeks of death and shows them that they are not above life and that every tear will purge that ecstatic infection known as love for times remembered as they never were and then you learn that they should have been more forthright with their pretty hate mechanical minds and distressed signals as they rear end their way into new beginnings

Having had trouble deciding which past instance was least unfortunate and thinking the opposite of what is meant it is not hard to tell who is coming out short in the long run and the liquid has long since become a necessity both in cum and alcohol we insincerely regret our decisions that we are not capable of making as each stems from each other on a day to day basis and time could help pulling us back in our haste

Otherwise confidence was circumstantial evidence is all that there is to rely on that our love has consumed us making us ugly and weeks continue to pass us by the wayside and it is as heartbreaking as the bus terminal disease and the subway station waiting for sleep all day with the lack of proper physical condition leading to all encompassing mental anguish and the waters depression

Tarnish our hopes and intimidate our lust or keep things as they once were but should not be seen with emotion leads to confusing endings and life has long since passed as teenage years and broken glass cut away ties leaving our hearts consumed with lies

The beach is becoming a distant memory or do you remember all that was not said approaches December breeze makes me know I'm alone with thoughts of nights spent crying in your cushion and soft skin bruised and bitten but the longing was mutual though the burdens were too much to bare your love for me and I will die eventually though the paths stretch on for eternity seems more apparent alone but not necessarily more confusing than twice before we were together and will the cycle be broken and will I know when I'm gone what I should have done before or do we all know it already but cannot admit it to our self worth depleishes as sex drive me to the beach and sleep under the stairs at night and love passes like life

and there they were not walking or having avoided a moment to regroup their thoughts were sincerely misled hoping for less fortunate behavior than a glimpse of God could not provide resolution from doubting your self worth if only he was better equipped to instruct the guidelines to our people remind me of different ambitions set forth from guidelines that avoid intervention and then they try and invent a new purpose for falling out of each other's bad graces of themselves that one day they will not recount towards their grandchildren and away from uninitiated future generations haven't set a thought forth away from the time being stained on my shirt that tells you to venture near at all costs coming further backwards to when your grandparents had first imagined death and you had already lived in our hearts for generations to come back so as not to regress without the unusual reiterations that should be helplessly avoided as the plague has been gone now for out thousands of decades forward with stops accordingly manifesting their inner nature as large as particles of hair relinquished from nervous scalps that can no longer hold on to secret thoughts and instead opt to think no more knowing that we have already imagined such things even outside of our own dreams of reality could possibly cease to teach us to practice enjoyment of her fruits or of his labors lingering just to disprove that unobtainable point that I wish only you could know and instruct others along with ourselves more reluctant young years draw near and our lives are over and over and over and over there we spot our perceptions swinging by the fence beyond the gate which has long since rusted shut like a love trap full of emotions gone sour leaving them to cower in fear and possibly even question self worth is deserving of my full attention is not on the matter at hand but on all that does not matter is it a pure substance guided planning on avoiding waste would be unmentionably tragic beginnings of self serving endings when it has yet to become quite apparent from the onset that there is a goal to reach to fill it with as much emptiness as can not possibly even be imagined reluctantly so as to increase their self awareness is constantly fluctuating as gills cling to breath in a squeeze box when it is inappropriate to laugh but do not know if that would not be the least honest reaction would possibly be to hesitate explaining what one looks for in characterizing their own mistakes are the hardest chances they might ever take care to be cautious but as with the wind chance is unavoidable possibly encouraging in retrospect uncanny circumspection as comfortable as the least painful circumcision is a given when avoiding one's own faith on the path her father has set out for the children to march on home from work with promises kept lingering till they are forgotten sex is usually the best on nerves that choose to way thin like the rack worn thin line divides pages of reinvigorated manuscripts mixing blood and semen that could make only them proud like a mother's triumphant return to school now blind learning to invent a wheel worth passing on to future generations that regard sight as a curse when it is best to taste what you want first and foremost mostly residual and appropriately deserving like the singling out of the sexes and the impolite let downs of previous generations of French peasants that want nothing less than potatoes or starvation could possibly not be a better option when a thin line divides successes and failures usually win out in the end

through wheels set in motion determination is insubstantial paths provided less resolution in a heroic fashion as they do not always lead to victorious outcomes or ceremonious beginnings are undeniably predetermined occurrences we feebly attempt to avoid what I know in my heart is truly imprisoned though my mind is set free thoughts come with a cost like the candles in a cathedral as salvation is not priceless and love is work like physical conditioning and emotional walls provide the greatest comfort is holding handicapped sentiments a sidewalk crowded with possibilities and keeping your head down is the safest bet you did not want to make that decision is pain and suffering builds character judgments towards others are inevitable providing evidence of selfish existence is calming like waking up early in the morning knowing that the day will not begin until you are ready to wake up with sadness

while you were looking the other way was over there is a better chance of gathering your thoughts are with me constantly through he who touches your soft spoken and i know that depends on who is not around for you too enjoy picking scabs knowing that removing retractable land fills the spaces where water is less present a sacrifice to god water is all encompassing according to your jewish intuition constantly on the look out for uprising son and disenchanted father figure out the proper weight too much and leaves of falling hair laid back pains and urgent spasms teaching it is better to listen first back towards eventuality is all that there really is to offer new experience at a cheaper inconvenience me more than you once did cause convenience is waking up and knowing more that there is less to doubt that trouble is pervasive and evade the general course as the hair that grows thicker as you frown and does its best to hide exuberance ran out the window in search of the sky and found more than expected to discover a new momentum and redesign the interior cavity is superior to the outside words do not do justice

Luca Penne

Strangers in My Basement

Jennie calls me to the phone: “Your father.” Dead for three years, he’s confidential as ever. “There are strangers in your basement,” he chuckles. Who pays for the phone line to the grave? I stumble downstairs and find a man and woman rooting through files of personal letters. The man is a credit counselor; the woman sells annuities. The damp basement air feels velvety, antique. Mold smell tweaks allergies I developed during puberty. As I open my mouth to shout these intruders into oblivion a sneeze erupts, then another so powerful it strips the flesh from their bones. Good enough, though I’ve a mess to clean up. Meanwhile the shades of regret I detected in my father’s voice begin to haunt me. Looking about the basement I count the mildewed books and magazines, note the old computer, used exercise bike, unfinished heaps of manuscript. Much sadder than a pharaoh’s tomb, this space embodies me so critically it’s no wonder it attracted those late financial vultures. Jennie brings a dustpan and brush to sweep up the sorry remains. I hope my father never calls again. I don’t like hearing his cheerful round voice unfazed by death, and worry that his knowledge of my primal life style remains unabashed by the dimming of his circuits. We box the skeletons to display at Halloween and bag the flesh-gobbets for the dogs. Jennie intends to finish painting the basement this fall. Fresh white walls will look brighter and shed less dust. Also they will better absorb my shadow when I sit here and brood alone.

Margie's Gone

Too cool for August. Hard rain slices the evening crosswise, exposing its entrails. I wonder where Margie and her white mouse have gone, her frank and cuddly passions probably long expended, her pet long expired. She taught me to tap-dance ten years ago when tap-dancers were in demand; but stage-shy, I never performed in public.

Still, we had hot times in the clammy parking garage under the mall. Pneumatic bliss, T.S. Eliot called it. Too bad he enjoyed so little of it himself. His moral deliberation spoiled everything his Anglican forefinger touched. Too bad he never touched Margie's engrossing and friendly organs.

Margie's gone and the rain's angry against the windows. Too clumsy for tap-dancing, I squeeze the book I'm reading so hard a few words pop off the page and disintegrate in stagnant air. Off to bed, where I dream of Margie sailing through marbled reddish skies, her elegance ageless, her hair the same neutral beige she earned at birth, her orange eyes brimming with tears of naïve sexual pleasure.

Margie loved her body as much as men did. It flowered in elementary school while the rest of us played marbles or jacks. It fit her so well and yet was unexceptional other than in comfort. I wake to utter silence. The house holds its breath while I realize I've never known anyone named Margie but wish that I had: her ease and warmth soothing to an ego grown callous with disuse.

Self-Perpetrating Baptism

Rain falls so decisively that I want to imitate its formal qualities, its bluff precision, its larger conception of form. Yet drowsing through Necronomicon and Culte de Ghouls and other tomes Marcy plucked from a shabby antique shop, I'm convinced that worlds hang in the balance, seen and unseen equally at odds with restless populations: demons, ghosts, Republicans, Communists, Charterists, plutocrats. The friction keeps the planet warm but erodes the atmosphere so that breathing becomes difficult some days, the summer light too steep to illuminate the workings of the bodies we still wish to love.

By "we" I mean demons and ghosts as well as my foolish neighbors whose squalling children overrun the forest: evil little people left unwashed like fabulous mushrooms. I mean everyone but Marcy, who loves and wishes to love no one, nothing but her four thuggish cats, who push us around with ease. Meanwhile the rain falls right through these ruminations, nailing me to the page. When I'm wrinkled enough I'll be a text, too.

Whoever wants to read me, complete with illustrations by R. Crumb, will discover me by thumbing through discarded phone books. Maybe someone will pause at my name long enough to invoke a rainstorm and renew the self-perpetrating baptism for which I'd like to be famous.

Secret

Give it up, your last dollar damp and discolored, your punk onion winking at crows preening their silky feathers, the udder utterly out of wisdom and milk. The dog comes back to you only after there's nothing left to chase. The wind secretes a blessing, oiling your face. Pine needles catch in your hair. If you wait any longer, you'll grow roots and your head will go to seed, flying every which way. If you wait any longer, some creature is bound to piss on your legs. Give it up, the ducks rowing on the pond, the long vowel curling over chilly water, the wings that badger you with a promise of flight, tomatoes fat and red, but rotting like friends, carrots riffing off rhymes as molecules collide in the hot tub as doves return to their condos, as the stew simmers in a pot as a white net drifts down from the sky...as your retirement fund retires, as the witch flies off on a witch hunt, as your wishes blow out the windows and your secret spills into silence, the bloody mouth waiting for you to kiss it.

Love Poem in Brown

What's in a brown? I ask, a little gold and green—as in your eyes are not really brown more like hazel but the color keeps shifting
like clouds on a not quite gloomy day.

“Why do you always wear the same color?” she responds, pushing her nail into my chest. “That brown is a wall.”

The sky turns brown. A brown bird settles on the sill. A chipmunk loses its stripe, munching an acorn. The phoebe frowns in her brown nest. And water drips a little rust into the brown sink, “That brown smells,” she says, “Why don't you take it off?”

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Letitia Trent

Blue Velvet (dir. David Lynch, 1986)

Slowly, we come up out of
a bullet hole. It's Jeffrey's eye.
Dorothy's apartment is GETTING DARK.
The MUSIC is breathing
very high and around and starts
taking off her dress. She takes
the record off. We are detectives
in the texture of her breasts.

Slowly, we come up out of
her music. It is GETTING
DARKER in her dress and she takes
the record off. She says I sometimes
get so mixed up. Jeffrey's eye
is the texture of shock. Very sweet MUSIC
becomes fainter as if in front
of the sprinklers.

Slowly, we come up out of Jeffrey's
jacket pocket. I get mixed up
when I see her float up to the ceiling, waiting.
He touches her stomach; it is filled with helium.
The record plays YOUR PRECIOUS
LOVE. She is in her panties. She takes
the record off. She is turning. She

starts taking off her dress. She keeps
her body in the light
as it floats down from the ceiling.

Kill Bill #1 (dir. Quentin Tarantino, 2003)

Blood sweet brights

blood comes better
sweet peach

if you're still

the camera swoons
scatters
sticky with it

Blood

like a trick
runs pretty down
pretty spitting
voice box

Shivers (dir. David Cronenberg, 1980)

You think I find myself
making love beautifully,
then untangle my legs, spit
the blood from my mouth,
and sit down again
in the glare of the kitchen.

You think, before long, doubts
begin to crowd my throat.

That isn't how it feels at all.

I consented to appear before the doctor.
He examined inside my ear, my abdomen.
He could not catch
the wriggling thing. It bit.

Listen, I said, putting his whole ear
inside my mouth. I've got something
to tell you. Breathing is erotic.
Dying is erotic. He listened
without comment. Breathing, I added,
is an act of thankfulness. He said
nothing. By then, he was dying,
and it was really moving, despite

all of his rifling in my hollows, despite
all of the things he believed about me.

Picnic at Hanging Rock (Dir. Peter Weir, 1975)

Did I mention the boys as the girls undone?
Boys watched the tidy, final beauties
straddle the river.

They watched a sickly girl run.
Watched one in glasses utter lace and sickness.

She hides. She collapses. Up stockings
their bodies are made painful about desire.
Pitches of a poem release distance, loose thoughts.

But later,
that girl was found
by the taller watching boy. Let them cross.

Jason

August. When the shadows are too fat at the black underleaf

That's when they come by belching yellow bus

Their short threads tickle the white insides of their thighs

The boys sweat, their small hairs curling on their foreheads

Girls spill sugar, bringing snakes and spiders, mushrooms rooting
in the sticky cotton of their mattress filler

At make-out rock, they crush a bed of crunchy lichen, a rare species I discovered
in my handbook of New England wildlife

They fragment the black lake's surface—that good reflector of my face,
that curved cup of crystal

I steal the cheap clothes left behind them in piles

The girl's shorts are cagey, like meat and melon

The boy's like pelt and grass clippings

Boys sleep heavy, furred forearms over their eyes

The girls are restless under their covers, heat hanging over their sticky chests

Jenny, with your flower-embroidered purse, a sweet sixteen gift from your mother

John, baseball cards in your tin, no blue packs of photographs
You want to be an aviator

They cleave and they cleave laughing holes in the quiet water

They disappear under, the bubbles their mouths

make burst into silence

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Michael Bernstein

frostbite

*In the old house
the clocks are dead,
past dead.*

-Lorine Niedecker

standing,pissing.in erasure
only to recover the key.yr laugh
a ray to sleep half the world's
uxo.stops frostbite.pity
this busy Monster and cuss
the TV.wait for June.hornets,
Banks,the ticker forced
thru a prism.like no one
spoke and now my streets are
filled w/shells.fuck Prop 8.in-
visible planes loom over
the bonfire,our last buck gone
for gauze.Somewhere,a fever
grows,it will burn cold thru
the derricks' dirge,all grue-
some in the Tulsa night

rock 'n roll

There is no use being alive if one must work.
-Andre Breton

black lips,tight
stages,a way
to get lost.to
beat the
Czar.one two
and the amps
light waves
for a train-
wreck Sun.and
the roofs rush
up!to write
is not fair a-
gainst the Druid
tricks that wrench
ear from skull.
dopey,we stand
for heat lights,
kalidescoping,
gone off in the
Bliss Machine
for good

a forecast portrait of light

pic
ture post
card wil
ted sum
mer pan
ting in
the

Wings

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Mark Cunningham

Phantom

[specimen]

When I asked why his description of the banana didn't point out the peel was yellow, he said, "Because you can *see* that." We were in a slowness race to see whether we would free ourselves or whether capitalism would implode for good. When I saw the booger had disappeared from the end of my finger, yet wasn't on the Kleenex, I hesitated before approaching the cashier. Adjust this, adjust that: most scales can't weigh zero accurately. The doctor said I wasn't feeling *real* phantom limb pain.

[specimen]

It was a federal sanctuary, so no one was allowed to mess with the ducks or the scraps of plastic that blew in from the interstate. The water is always bluer in the toilet across the fence. I looked myself straight in the eye in the mirror, though, of course, it was the wrong eye. The physicist claimed he was a materialist, too, but he refused to believe the black hole was only an ink smudge on the star chart.

[specimen]

I'm a performance artist in the my 34th year of performing *Things to Do Instead of Writing a Duet for Flute and Bulldozer*, yet when I mention this people still hear it. It's one of nature's most beautiful sounds: the great outdoors. Sometimes a light bulb just makes a noise. Meat products shouldn't snap. The suggestion to scream until we'd deafened ourselves so we couldn't hear the rustling wasn't considered empowering. I look like I'm standing here doing nothing, but really I'm calling your name in my head, quietly.

[specimen]

I would apologize for tripping over him and knocking off his left leg, but the leg was artificial and I wouldn't have really meant it, anyway. There are starving children in Africa who would be glad to have been hit in the face with that pie. Eating Dirt Could Actually Be Good for Babies. Maybe God's lightning did create the dust, but it still smells burnt to me. Their ham acting was so atrocious we finally just stopped stabbing them.

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Michael Estabrook

a space not crowded

On weekends I would drive an hour
to her school to study with her there in the library,
a cold concrete place, ten stories high,
with dull gray carpets and thin metal shelves.

We'd find a space not crowded,
spread out our papers and books, work in silence
doing calculus and embryology, genetics,
physics and organic chemistry.

But sometimes I'd bring Browning or Byron,
Tennyson or Wordsworth, and whisper
their lines across the table at her
turning the ugly windowless concrete
tomb of a room into a pine forest with butterflies
and a softly murmuring brook, yellow,
blue and red flowers covering its banks.
And she'd smile at me then.

White Nylons Flashing

Hard to forget the steamy
yellow summer of 1968
working in the ice cream stand pouring
thick creamy mix into cold metal hoppers,
filling stainless steel bins
with wet walnuts, fudge
& marshmallow toppings, remaining behind
to clean the machines after everyone else
had gone home. sometimes
during rush-hour crowded
with fat adults & dirty screaming kids
I'd stand there among
my beloved machines
(like Quasimodo in his bells) gazing
at the girls working, (at my Esmeraldas) smiling,
glancing back at me their perfect
smooth forms moving gracefully,
hair motionless beneath hairnets,
sneakers squeaking on the bright
tile floor, white nylons flashing.

away in South Africa

My wife is on
a business trip,
recruiting more au pairs for her cluster
all the way away in South Africa,
she might as well be on the moon.
My first concern
is for her safety,
Africa is not exactly a walk in the park.
Millions of people (I've heard up to 40%)
are infested with AIDS, then there's
all the famine, ceaseless tribal warfare,
the poachers, racial hatred
and genocide. rampant poverty,
brutality towards women . . .
and who knows what else.
Anyway, I'm justifiably worried
about my wife being plunked down
in the midst of all that.
But the Au Pair of America officials
have assured us that she will
be well looked after,
chauffeured, cared for,
that she will be safe.
So like any nervous husband
would do to fight the jitters
in this technology driven
and dominated world,
I am crossing my fingers
and praying for the best.

waiting for my wife's return

I sit down suddenly
on the floor in our upstairs hallway.
The floor is cold as is the closet door
I lean against. I hold my forehead
in the palm of my hand.

It isn't a heart attack
or even my normal acute back pain.
I'm not having a sudden panic attack
over being so deep in debt
or because I'm not sure exactly where
my children are right now,
like we'd worry when they were younger
and still under our roof.

I am simply suddenly sullen
in my starkly silent house alone,
in the early evening waiting
for my wife's return
from her business interview with
a young handsome father from Sweden,
a wealthy widower in search of childcare.

Oh well, nothing to worry about,
she'll be back in good time,
home to me after her business is done.
Yes, she'll return back home soon,
she'll return to me, I'm sure of it
I'm sure she will return. I am.

Pomme frites

Living in Belgium,
our apartment across
a busy street from a *pomme frites* stand.
The nice old lady there with
the pink cheeks made the best fries,
crisp and hot and salty,
wrapped in a clear white paper.
On those pervasively cold,
wet and murky nights
they kept you warm both inside and out.
One evening my wife went over
to get us some *frites*
and as she waited at the curb to cross
a car sprung out of nowhere
struck an old man down
into the gutter right at her feet.
One of his eyes popped out
and hung down on his raspy gray cheek.
As she cried, her pretty head
upon my shoulder, I stroked her long,
silky brown hair
and told her not to worry, eyes
are easy enough to pop back in.

THE RUMBA WITH PATTI

Basic Box

Underarm Turn

Crossover & Walkaround Turn (brush step end)

Open Break & Arch Turn

Open Break & Arch Turn to

DHH to corners 5 times end with turn

Crossbody Lead

Crossbody Lead to Cuban Walk to Man's Turn

Forward & Backward Rocks

Offset Breaks from Closed Position

end with man's RF back

try not to stare at her perfect shape moving

or look into her shining mink-coat brown eyes

because then you might step on her feet

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

MEZ BREEZE

1.

[twitter]reality_fiction: 27/3/09 07:51am 27/03/2009

@__nkO *watches ur cog[(k)nition]s fli[stac]c[ato]kr-ing lite_bulbing acti-on-off-on-off* :)

drea[l]ms: dream_waking in2 40's ma[zure]gazine_s[ky]cene with gorgeous jig_sore war_planes ova_head...planes made from sci[a]ssor[t]ed...

[dRea(l)ms2]: ...jumbled hypersexual fe[male]parts shaped with a designer's L-E-gance. 1 had revolver se[x]ction armpits!!!! sounds odd...

[Rrea(l)ms3]: ...but looked gorgeous. like havin ultra-s[fl]e[sh]x[d]ual tech l[z(ZZ)]ooming ova+thru me. wunder_full. any1 care 2 interp?

@__nkO _sLow[ing]....E[a]rn[e]st...Mach[ine]s_n-deed:)

2.

[twitte]reality_fiction: 26/3/09 02:21pm 26/03/2009

@labfly *secretly sneaks in2 ur noggin + [cereb]rally-stitches [choco-cake] rich toons on2 ur [unsuspecting] subconscious*

[shocked_lulz] o. m. g.: there's a World of Warcraft .eu Death Knight called _Mezangelle_. seriously: <http://tinyurl.com/cy6whz>

@christianmccrea nah-i'll take the woodsman job tho? i can collect driftwood + [iron]bark chips + light s[epia]mall frizzony fires?;)

calmbblueocean.....calm.....bl.u.e.....o...c.....e.....a.....n.....:)

@shanehinton *props unda each o ur arms crutch-like-support-struts-inscribed-with-the-phrase-"tenacious-fukker"*:)

@tamaleaver :/ grand plan=adaptable? they r always the most flexible of critters. i pat>feed>water my regularly + watch it m[gr]o[w(l)]rph:)

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Mike Lyne

Ploughing

The living flesh of the field
fell away from the blade,
the landscape suddenly
both fragile and solid.
My father walked the opening scars
where green cracked into slabs
of fertile brown.
The grey dragged line
after patient line
through the earth.
I played in the tripping ridges.
Wondered at his strength and
control.

The horse a living power,

hard to gauge, knowing itself.

Yet he spoke and clicked the reins

and Sheahan's grey moved

and stood at his word.

When we rode home

on a back so broad

it seemed another place,

the stiff grey hair

stuck to my clothes

like memories.

Timing

The railway made the city special.

Like a birthday bicycle

or a new watch, worn to catch a wanted eye.

An other's past is a cold war country

with guarded borders and blacked out signs.

Your guide is map and compass and government approved.

I watch as you break restraint

and skip and dance forgotten

towards the taut tuned bridge.

Hoping for the delicious moment

when your hair-tossing progress

crosses paths with the thundering bow

of the local train

You wash in the shower of noise

and the arched shadow

vibrates with the certainty of possible disaster

and funny-bones your laughing limbs.

Echoes

A hand not raised
to stroke a head
or touch a cheek,
praise not given,
love not spoken
ripples through time.

Years later,
echoes return from
a distant unknown shore
and waking
you walk like a brittle shell
through the harder world,
vibrating to the sound
of missing notes
in a ruined hymn.

Early departure

Drab dreary and grey,
the streets sentence broken
by the badly placed
punctuation marks
of umbrellas
that slow down the moment
of passing
when all I want is the city
to numb me with its
constant presence.
To switch its colour
and not follow my mood,
a soul chameleon
of brick and stone.
Traffic that parts
before my tense
shouldered progress.
Shop windows that
are as empty and bare
as I feel.

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Michael James Martin

BlazeVox Poetry Album

Four poems

Praise for a faulty entropic meter, our cellular lithograph

potato chip of wonder, spatula bible, my food is jay leno,
fused pistachew's a nixon bellyrub, my god's
son the face of a damn pancake, 'scuse me lord
for my george foreman grille has sinned,
grilled cheese a cheesing devilprint—buttermouth. oh how i
love ye flour tortilla mona lisa you look
so good. i could eat you, so good. 'scuse me lord for my
glut-lust, my faith in st. augustine pressed
onto lean turkey meat, greased between glazed
donut halves (*mmmmmm*) wait, can you chew a door?
surely... but if it were adorned with guadalupe? maybe
the world eats us as we eat the world
tasteless mushroom lamella's, arabic gum, mung bean
carotene as tasty as ebay commerce, as tasty as...
why is pareidolia always never a waffle?
why is it always a *visage on* — where is lenin's
ass-crack; the new neighbor's very exposed navel

Camera-man

"This ain't reality TV!"
- Jack Nicholson in The Departed,
written by William Monahan

betacam sequitur capacitor,
zeiss-eye refraction,
lavalier soundtrap (he blew a guy in the bushes
said he would never do such a thing
so they're all lying liars, lying lying lying
) edit room auditors, *The Asshole*
she assured she was on tape
isn't *The Asshole* producers portrayed—parallax
—human orthicons explaining visual syntactics:
plastered tantrums trapped in clamshells
of rack-focused antical hate-speech:

"you bleeping motherbleeping pieces of bleep! eat bleep
you assbleeping Diasporadic bleepheads!"

unthroated scrofula, scripted improv walk-arounds
around gel'd Kino Flo beautifying kits

... this is life now “ ”

Kinesics

Round 85—two minutes gone and counting
we were Vaseline'd supermodels
pugilising nitrated film spools,
forgotted world wonders, aka's
talkers of bloodrites, pennies per punch

Round 87— inflamed bruisers,
grimed fashion victims
choking on fitted mouthpieces
crafting boilerplated faces,
warhols for the broken body

Round 112— egalitarian now
lungs flopping out the bottom of our shorts:
palookas, lethargic pain-machines
80:1 a radio assures
 there's no death

Round 34— they speak.
Celebrities root for celebrities
rearranging musculature over bone,
certified phlebotomists—
we speak by not speaking

Round 2— like a first date
performance anxiety
nervous glottal *-glots*
... little damage

The Telephone Game

I write a poem two years from now
the now then is four thousand breaths
from when the ink was inked—I curve the letter q
in third grade on a poem I abandon
for the comfort of a couch and a teddy bear
licked by dirty children in the bookshelved corner
dubbed 'the reading nook'.
My brain spins and twists the stem
—doesn't untwist for the next 22 years
until Katrina ripped my father's home,
he wades a six foot frame nose deep (watered)
and calls me a hundred times to no answer
to tell me 51 years ago he wrote
a poem about Jesus
which his mother disliked. And I hate
the answering machine two months
for replaying his message grandmother died
without knowing the i
I became after leaving on a damaged plane,
a wide-almond-eyed smartass—a million decades prior
some Coleopteran beetle
and a bedbug discuss skin and blood,
the bitter texture of the hominid 'self'
at this exact moment I am writing a poem
I don't want to finish.
I'd rather kiss a woman I can't love,
feel the thunderclouds growl somewhere
over absent Texan hills, rather lived uninhibited
naïve of the wall clocks.

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Michael J. Opperman

Glen Curtiss

A bicycle racer before you met Lena, setting
The world speed record with a tomato can
For a carburetor. If Wilbur had died before
Tennyson, you might have been the dream
On the lips of flight-obsessed boys across America.

Breaking

Deciding she was alive/
that was the first thing. Stars

in the sky again, coleus
in their epigrammatic color:

admirable. Drifting from afternoon walk
to saturnine conversation, beginning
of acute ache
 of desire for other things. A newness,
 the confiction. So easy, forgotten
 by women whose lives she sometimes intersected.

Feeling like an interloper, or merely
incidental. An incomplete orchestra
missing its percussion, the strings tight.

Deciding
 she was alive,
 she auditioned players, found
 her timpani.

"I'm a human battery," she explained –
apologetically. Harry Smith
was sure he discovered her
in the Museum of Non-Objective Painting while compiling
his archive. A man I knew in New York
said she was the second stanza
in a song he once heard at CBGB's. After
several years of napping on lawns all over the city,
I saw her in a bar, parsing
 white wine as though it were poetry.

I am told/
 that sometimes things just fall from the sky,
 and no god will answer for them.

I'm afraid of bridges, her promises
and certainty. Because who exist like that
but charlatans and fathers. And men who
aspire to one or the other, like low-level confidence men
who can't even convince themselves.

When we drove looking for a restaurant, I avoided
the rivers, those places
that could require machinery.

Please don't misunderstand me – there are photographs
of her circulated . . . of course/
"Woman at Kitchen Table," "Female
in Repose," "Healing."
I just hadn't seen them. But/

they were there: rivers. Those places that require
bridges, intersections, interlopers. The oyster grey sheen
of breaking.

Basin

All that I know
can be summed up
in eluvium & freestone,
bedrock & loam,

& emotion is not so fluvial.
When I am a catchment
basin, there is no distance
between what I feel &
what I live. I cry, filling

myself until the water pours
over & my hands have trouble
holding even the skin
covering my palms.

Apple Tree

Guiltier than Russell. Assigning p to the birch outside the house. In the fall, she told me, the leaves are like tiny flames.

Fp or Pf; it will happen every year. & she will stand near the tree, point 'See.'
Fp. More sound than valid, more true than beautiful.

The tree that acts every fall like logic, convincing me that she will fall asleep beside me each night.

Doubt & fealty kept at the gates by truth tables Full of Ts & Fs. The birch
dies despite $(\exists x)((Kx \ \& \ (y)(Ky \rightarrow y=x)) \ \& \ Wx)$.

She was angry. I was angry. Even though. We fought in silence for two days, fell asleep each night in a manner similar the days of the birch.

Found one compromise, but not another & considered planting an apple tree.

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

mike ruddick

the poet cid corman and i

momentary impressions
where mentors
scribbled on leaves
leaving perhaps
a zero
the modern recluse
swarming on sidewalks
feels the same
disintegration

'he isn't going to say...' has a minor change at the beginning, thus;

he isn't going to say anything about himself
you're going to say
you are going to be made to think
things through
with him
 or without
take a ride
the ice for a slide
you
are going to disappear
you
might not like

what's the point of him
telling us
about himself?
what does he know?
what do we understand?
where's it going
ice
sort of
but not necessarily
so
cold just
the way of reflect

shuns
really tells you [shut]
not much and
are you listening?

Flickr

dapple

wide white trunk

other's leaves Flickr

like alicia's picture her world

map bits of scribble few lots

grown up cracked up impress



'boundaries (I)' where i end and you begin by alifacion
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/alifacion/3037934197/>

ah

he isn't going to say anything about himself
you're going to say
you are going to be made to think
things through
with him
or without
take a ride
the ice for a slide
you
are going to disappear
you
might not like

what's the point of him
telling us
about himself?
what does he know?
what do we understand?
where's it going
ice
sort of
but not necessarily
so
cold just
the way of reflect

shuns
really tells you [shut]
not much
are you listening?

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Matt Specht

salty lollipop

rock n roll taught me to respect jesus

jesus
never
returned
the favor

hang *that* on a cross!

this ruler
has too many inches
for anyone to ever measure up

sundays
i sleep in

my sin

swallowed

we hope this poem will be self-evident. terms and conditions may apply.

if you're gonna make it through this poem,
you've got to remember
my grandfather's mantra for these types of situations:
if it doesn't scare the cows, who cares?

it doesn't feel like
i've been awake this long.

if you're gonna make it through this poem,
make sure you use only
OSHA-approved safety measures,
because we have gone one hundred eighty one poems
accident-free
and management has offered a bonus
if we surpass the previous record.

it doesn't feel like
i'm as sick as i am.

if you don't think you're gonna make it through this poem,
let me draw you a map
with the sightseeing highlights highlighted
and the reasoning
stuffed in between every line.
as long as you consume this package
before the expiration date printed on my birth certificate,
you can enjoy all the freshness,
complete restoration of every memory you've ever had,
and not one motherfucking calorie.

it doesn't feel like
i'm in this much pain.

if you've made it this far,
perhaps you'll humor me a bit longer, if it pleases the court.
it's humorous to me that you're taking this
like big boys and girls
with a sneaking suspicion
this tastes too good
to be good for you.

if i can't feel it,
you can't prove it.

if you think you've made it through this poem,
you haven't made it
in god's own image.
imagine all the cows
with the bejesus and the shit scared deafeningly out of them.

the odds were always against you:
no one will make it out of this poem alive.

this morning after

i added you to my morning
and got a more accurate sadness

you were pounding on my window
putting Paul Revere to shame
but this is an argument
i do not care enough about
to win

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

My1 Schulz

Wank

bubbling toil and trouble of the sound and furry whipping fuzz of a an animal fetish thing bestiality only to bump you see
the trill of language runs dry dampening effect of perversity wrecks the diverting chanson if a lapse into a language it'll add
authenticity to my learned state from which I can then debase myself with titilation exhibited only in the printed pin so feel
free you voyeurs lectures who I seek lick your eyeballs light my wick

blossom bosom bassoon splat spats moon rats rift transcontinental toast drift french woes will some spoke smoke spill oils
drill foils plastic plenty boils twenty boss bunched bang big theory thanks and leary wank wanderlust leagues under the seas
seizes open ocean reap repeated me spleen depleted nail crust eat it shrimpimps need sick spin and sit still wish will wit
the solipism split palateable plates magma mitt mist mighty mourn mug for full of froth born with love and nightly bored
full thug do blithely fill nic nac tic a tack tip the knife slice simple pie better pony up no dice snake eyes ice chunk
thumb nuckle sized

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

nina corwin

Off With Their Heads

And now it's up to us
to choose. To say which one survives
the cut and which does not. To shoot
the snub-nosed bullet, sacrifice the first

born, fortify the no-fly zone. And those
we spare, like pigs who belly through
a break in the fence and leave
the others squealing in the barnyard.

Watch the juror's appetite for mercy
wane as, labeled, each ingredient
is offered into evidence. The shirk,
the shrink, the shrug. And yes, the grunts

that nod or not, whose nodding matters
lots or not at all across the crash course
of carousing gauntlets. We, the arbiters
of the win-some middle: mortified

with losing tickets. Either way
the stone's turned over.

Not Knit

"Man is the more vulnerable to self-destruction
the more he is detached from any collectivity."

– *Emile Durkheim, 1972*

The book of contracts comes unbound,
its sundered pages left to founder

on a ruthless sea, where none remain
afloat (and so they sink).

There's suicide in this,
the sociologist explains (and anarchy).

Beyond the social weave of tit for tat,
what's left but undressed need?

The plundered yield
of cultures severed at the roots,

a suckling calf that cries out for an udder,

while a raft devoid of oar
or rudder, dithers on a vagrant tide.

No pronouns to connect the restless
whim to peopled ground,

no sin spelled out to dictate what or how
we should not do, indeed

no chaptered verse, no form or meter.

Once iambs offered us
some *where* to put our feet, but now

the traffic lights are gone. Non-sequiturs
collide without apology.

Uncurbed, a road goes anywhere,
in fact is not a road

(no lines to cross, no rows to hoe);

unfurrowed fields, left unheeded,
languish in the clamoring weeds.

Incident Report from Nepal

— for Jim Traverso, lost on the Sun Kosi River, 1999

The rescue team returns
with nothing but backpack and pictures.

Sun glinting on a swirling river. A soggy lunch.
It could happen to anybody.

We devour the remains. Goat's bell
and prayer flag, a foam festoon.

So much splendor, so much thirst. Ink bleeds,
a page is torn out. The blanks are there

to be filled in. Mad eddy.
Wilderness guide. A cracked canoe.

Now, a tree sucks its meager portion from the wind-
scrubbed earth, a rugged tree grown knotty with eyes.

A world away, the fatherless Sherpa is nearly
through college and burnished by love.

As the peak of Annapurna shoulders through
the clouds. As eggshell breaks,

And yolk sprouts wings. Notifications
have been made. Questions asked.

No matter what the songbirds say, the smells
of algae, rock and sweat stick to their stories.

No single road goes far enough. After years,
home is a distant cry, a foreign coin.

As miles go by, the seat beside
the widow whistles empty harmonies.

Eventually, she buys a smaller car.
Then it's *a capella* the rest of the way.

Serial (how it falls out)

Pickering, why can't a woman be more like a man?

– *Henry Higgins, My Fair Lady*

We start over.
With somebody new. Each craving:
The taste of the other. Or should I say
Each craving the taste of each
Other. Respectively.
We wake.
Sheets still bearing the creases.
It's about which side
The crease falls on. Which side you.
It's about the line
Break. The creases
Still borne. We turn
And turn. Our own words
In our own mouths.
The trouble with woman is she isn't more.
Like a man. The trouble with man is
He isn't. More like a woman.
The problem is generalizations
In general. This is a problem.
Corn beef and rye.
Thick and thin. Tower or trench.
The trouble is there
Are always creases. The trouble is
The line breaks.
It's a matter of a pause.
A space. A dot in space.
Period. Alone
Each learns to walk. Again.
And then again. Each learns
To walk alone.

*After Pablum Leaks Into
the Ground Water, Apathy
Crops Up In the Marketplace*

Drudgery, drollery, grueling cajolery.
Pull over. Palaver ahead.

nick demske

Otis henry has been waiting for the bus his whole life.
The amount of time Otis has been a'waitin is so epic iot can't be measured in traditional years or centuries—
Nay!
Must it be measured *poetically*, in stanzas and cantos
Quatrains, I guess.
For otis Henry knows no fancy words for stanzas with more than four lines.
“Cinquetrains?” he wonders. “Sept or Octtrains?”
Yes. Otis Henry has been waiting for the bus for several volumes of millitrains.
Transliteration: Bo-ring!
Otis Henry dreams of one day the bus arriving.
Its inviting chrome
Its handsome insignia scrawled upon the side.
Oh Otis, you freak.
Admit to yourself
The bus is never coming
Because you aren't at a bus stop
But an enormous field
Not a tree on the landscape for miles.
You are waiting for the bus in an ocean of pasture
Which is not the traditional waiting place
But so what if you're untraditional, Otis?
So what if Otis Henry walketh to the riff of a different guitfiddle?
A gal can dream, can't she?
And otis Henry dreamasizes so fancif'lly
One day that bus *will* stop for Otis Henry
And Otis Henry will weep lyricism unto the bus's bosom
Otis Henry poeticize violently at the joy of having bussage
Until the bus driver ask, “You headed East, Mack?”
For Otis Henry is not headed East.
Otis Henry headed very very not East and the stars, they twinkle sweetly.

* *

Otis Henry, you bastion of cannery. You
Doomsday of explodicon, I will eat your children
I will eat your children, Otis Henry, an kill your babies. Do we have to hold on tight, Otis Henry? No, Otis Henry.
Not so tight.
My mom died Otis Henry and now I'm calling her on the phoneticism. Ism.
Wave your banner proudly, Otis henry, for you will be dead soon
That was a close stop. Is this our stop?
Did the people get off? Shut up kid, or I'll slash you face open with a chainsaw.
I hope I can manage to not disappoint you too much.

* *

Oh crap, Otis Henry!
I think you just tenderized yourself.
I think your sandals have flipflopped right off into the ocean. The pretty, delicious ocean.
I apalogize. I spell apologize incorrectly.
Otis henry comes into considerably unpopulated restaurants and sits right next to strangers, which is considered taboo
in polite American society. Otis Henry makes the noise of the flatulence for song. I love Otis Henry. Though Otis
Henry is utterly anxious in the agora.
Otis Henry smiles not, lest he conscious efforts it.
Otis henry is so lively. I want to have doggy style sex with you, Otis Henry. I want to go to a party and see you across
the room and look at you just long enough for me to notice me looking at me. Why do you say things so stupidly, Otis
henry?
Well that's pleasant, Otis Henry. You just bombed my country with kung pow chicken
Well, otis Henry, it could be worse I guess. It's not like I'm against kung pow chicken, Otis Henry.
I just tend to prefer it, Otis, in portions much less abundant.
Henry.

* *

Nice legs, Otis Henry.
Otis Henry will part his smoothly shorn legs and offer you his happy hole and say, "Love Otis Henry—love Otis
Henry's happy hole por favour." Ah, you did not know Otis Henry hablas Espanol, did you?
That's because you stink.

* *

Otis Henry lays upon the rocks in the sun and tans his hide for the world to see.

Oh Otis Henry, you spicy pint of Life!

Otis tans below the summer construction workers, buttering his man muscles with the drippiest oils.

“Goddamn, Otis Henry” the construction workers say. “You make me want to divorce my wife and go totally gay for you. I would eat you up like popsicle from heaven, Otis Henry.”

But Otis Henry merely sighs and arches his back to the sun, his silhouette composing on the earth like a piano

You tease, Otis Henry!

You know that swimsuit is too small for you, blast!

What’s this? A stretching session upon the mighty rocks?

Have you no mercy Otis? You will boil the fish in their sea!

Otis Henry’s physique is responsible for global warming.

The national Guard—yea, even the Swat Team—they all are called in to save US from the euphoric lunacy.

But the soldier’s only swoon at Otis Henry’s tasty musk, they’re mortal men and women, what else can they do?

Until finally a survivor crawls up to Otis Henry’s feet, kissing and licking Otis Henry’s feet, but managing to speak inbetween flicks of his giddy tongue

“What are you doing, Otis Henry?”

And so Otis Henry responds:

“I’m writing poetry.”

* *

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Nathan Hauke

Echoes



Electric blue maiden flies double
on the surface.

Wind—Mike's voice
ripples through

snake-grass, the
reflection of snake-grass,

maiden flies// *maiden flies*—

through my voice—

.....

—opening across,
toward logs, rock

along the bank, but.

Not *just* here.

Also. Skyward.
Threads of

blurred tint.

Wind increases

violet (*disturbance*), violet (*fire*).
That the eye

does this.



Invisible operation of light,
iris, suddenly visible.

Easy to. Concrete as

rock's articulation of
flowers. The retina,

the eye flipping

the matter of
the lake, ecstasy
of location.

Being somewhere and

what breaks the
suspension of surface before—

put my hand
into the water, watch

my face

slide apart in slats.

Tilting the bottle
to just the
right angle

makes the lip

whistle.

In the Living Room

*I will come like a thief.
Revelation 3:3*

*The door to heaven is narrow.
Luke 13:24*

1

Wet asphalt shines behind the coffee shop. Leaves hang black, deep red, green, yellow-green, glistening into shock, into blankness. Rain is just rain, no use in screaming. *Crop duster, biological warfare*—my sister is not afraid of dying. She knows she’s going to heaven. My sister, mother, and my brother are not afraid of dying—

I was eight, ten, twelve-years-old when I was saved, but every time I try to feel deserving, a voice behind me says, “It’s the small print that gets you into heaven. Don’t pretend you are better than anyone.”

Sections of river-water rough in current. A rough current of wind drags the cattails.

The voice says, “Stop stalling. You can no longer afford to distract yourself.”

2

Morning kick morning, swallow morning—tensions spread like knots in cedar paneling. I can't justify an afterlife that would forget anyone, leave anyone here.

Rough scraps of news stretch static brown water.

We are sending bombers and strike aircraft alongside carrier planes. We are dropping food and medical supplies with missiles. Who are *we*—good question, dangerous question—ask anyone, look in the mirror—

An Afghan girl says that the soldiers shot her mother when she tried to stop them from coming into the house. She pleaded on her hands and knees, and they dragged her out into the yard, shot her in front of the children.

The soldiers stayed for two days and left the mother lying outside.

The living room is all windows.

My mother is taking Sarah witnessing. “Jesus is the Lamp, the Light that *shines in the darkness*.”

They are building our family in heaven. I want to take comfort in this, but I can't stop thinking that the promise of grace narrows into judgment.

I can't stop thinking that choosing one version of God cancels another. *They dragged her out into the yard*—my sister, my mother, not afraid of dying—

My chest is breaking. I lean back on the bookcase. The mug in my hand is cream-colored, ceramic, with a glazed rim and a stencil of red tulips.

The sky is slate-colored, sharper outside the kitchen window. My father passes with a shovel; Mugsy cuts across. Layered in a film of shadows, the bank's composition feels stark, wasted. Sections of river-water rough in wind against the current.

Three hours ago, three days ago—footage of people jumping from window ledges on television, away from the smoke, the fire—

Few cars that sweep past rifle through—*my hand is cream-colored, ceramic*. Everyone jumping falls, but (*but* no one *falls*) through a hole in the fabric. No one makes impact; they just disappear into narrowing perspective point below the camera.

A frame of gold light opens suddenly behind a blur of cattails. The sun shutters. It breaks; it won't go back together.

1.2.06

Early afternoon: thermometer's red needle fluxing between thirty-two and thirty-four.
Windows rattle
at pressure change of wind-bursts. Look out to flat brown water,

ice flows loosening against far edge

drift down-current. Cattails sliding in streaks of light.
Ice stable enough to step out thins to transparency near the bank,
collecting water.
Shredded yellow-brown leaves clinging to the maple's
wet black boughs—

It's your birthday. Hang down over the deck's dull gloss, grill,
garland, and unlit Christmas lights.

The kitchen light in the kitchen window's

high panel. Light overhead, this layering—



Turning the page—

I live far away, in another city, and a balcony across the street makes a triangle
when wind smoothes the fourth corner into flat,
shadowy mess of

branches are hit prisms—

Naomi Tarle

The Patch Through Hive (Rewrite of Dead Sea Scroll: The Book of Secrets)

The speak-in is free.

Understand parables as crops,
and those who would penetrate.

Those who hold fast-moving hermits,
and those who walk over penny wells.

In every activity:
stiff necks, hard palettes,
and all the mass.

What good is the bridle,
to those who search for the origins?
Why is the root horned?
Why is the joint steaming?

You protract with a whip,
plan memory without angles
like lions without prayers,
so you might know the difference between secret and sin.

(but they did not know the secret of the way things are,
nor did they understand the things of old,
and they did not know what would come upon them,
so they cannot rescue themselves
without the secret of the way things are)

This shall be the sign.

When the source shuts up
and wicker is banished
as darkness in the presence of light,
smoke may manifest the sun.

The world will be made firm
with speckled darlings.

It is true that truth is utterances,
tongues grasping for after dinner mints?

What should we call man?
And the earth?
Clipped below the bud.

Custard breast bones
and the schemes of Belial
shall have his name erased from the mouth.

Consider the soothsayers
and say beetle.

Hear now what wisdom is:
(tight)s
(hidden)
the heat with periods
(the breaking)
and the night (things).

He flosses your ears with children.
He locks up behind the waters.

Splendid anger
and terrible lined rulers.

Patrick Chapman

Love Watches for Death

Love watches for Death. She watches the road.
She waits for her Death to come home.

When he does, he is mute. He must keep his own counsel
Regarding his time in the desert

In order that he does not burden her conscience
With knowledge of deeds he has done in her name.

*

Love watches for Death. She waits for her stud
To come home to their bed, for she misses his touch;

She's deprived of the heat of a body that's rightfully hers;
And wasn't she promised the comfort and strength of a man?

*

Love watches for Death. When her Death returns home
He says nothing to Love of the children he's maimed;

Of the men he has burned so a town could be saved.
If he tells her the truth of it though he can barely

Believe it himself, she'll disown him as some kind of
Changeling. When Death

Gives not even a word;
When he fails to expose the old stain on his heart

So that she can consider her own unbesmirched,
Love denounces his silence

And Death –
Without a defence against Love's disappointment –

Takes to the desert again,
In search of a quantum of peace.

Crush

The hottest-ever summer. I am seven.
Out on the step, my aunt is reading a paper.
I ask her why that ‘i’ is upside-down.
It is an exclamation mark, she says.

My mother’s friend arrives with her daughter.
For a photograph, the adults make us kiss.

I am captured in short pants;
My hair is pageboy-chic; my tank-top
Over wide-necked purple shirt,
Sports orange stripes on brown.
I’m like a walking Bridget Riley.

I remember the girl’s hair.
It is flowing black.
Her face is all squinting embarrassment.

That kiss and one upended ‘i’
Begin the shortening of days.

Into the moment when a life discovers time
– The borders between birth and dying fixed –
Experience accelerates, succumbs:

Gradually crushed
As if a sound explosion turned,
Compacted in a singularity of memory,
Subsumed as single notes,
Each of which had once discretely rung
Grander than an opera.

Cinnamon Fish

On a morning when even the rain
Is complaining about the weather,
You bring your leather and
I bring my steel. We revive

The spirit of pterosaurs
Wheeling in a prehistoric sky
Where punches a wormhole between
Our drowsy bed and the Cretaceous.

Now we can dream under earlier stars
Whose light has already survived them,
Venturing out to the edges of us, then
Reflecting to blend with its oncoming self.

It is every bit as real
As consciousness in molecules of water;
As manta rays with cinnamon for blood;
As a rose that can turn the direction of time with its scent –

But we revel in our half –
Awake entanglement until you have to
Get up, take a train, go home, make
Breakfast for your little ones.

4°

Clouds of mirrors in orbit
Turn the face of the sun
Away from the Amazon desert.

The Lost City of Barcelona.
The Lost City of Mumbai.
The Lost City of New York.

The submerged hulls of the Sydney Opera House
Like an experimental cruiser seen from below
An inverted waterline.

The Lost City of Berlin.
The Lost City of Cape Town.
The Lost City of San Francisco.

A billion human bodies
Abandoned in the dunes
Of Italy and France.

The Lost City of Galway.
The Lost City of Beijing.
The Lost City of Memphis.

The Greenland Arcologies reach for the sky.
The Antarctic Riviera opens for the season.
The Roman Sahara reconquers an empire of dust.

The Lost City of Zurich.
The Lost City of Islamabad.
The Lost City of Atlanta.

4'33"

After the

planes

The only music to be heard

In those elevator carriages

Is Cage's.

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Pete Miller

TETRAMORPH

Tonight,
through moonlit soot,
ex-Catholic American eyes,

the temple-complex towers at Madurai
become a Martian Notre Dame barnacled
in stucco deities,

a thousand of the most forgotten, flat Earth's edge-
stumbled saints, shaken
upside down in impossible paints, their heads

sucked through their own
stigmata, until, reemerging
movie monster-hued in gargoyle asanas,

a scimitar for each new arm, their eyes cross
with a sweat-laced, quaking
gratitude ...

Tonight their tongues will throb
insomnia, still blue
wary of the garam masala,

of the moonlight's
intentions for the Golden Lotus Tank
where actual gods once judged poems

by a simple floating test,
and where the sunken verses
continue disintegrating their rejection from

even the apocrypha. On the map a lotus shape,

this city attaches smoky roots of incense
and rubbish fire to the sagging sky's bottom

swirl of bats,
sonar cloud that the saints'
newly Hindu ears hear as a mantra; a low,

black swooping that taunts
a patchy mutt to limp in ever constricting
circles, her hunger eventually

squealing
ripples through
every alley of Madurai.

No dropped chapatti, not one thrown chapatti, no handful of rice.

By morning this town's small
gas stove heart will diffuse in a mud-shot mist,
a murky sputter,

a new obscurity
slurring up the intersections, ashes,
tangles of charred hair—

even those traffic wardens softened and torn,
become straw piles darkening like motor oil, black drool
of dazed Luke, his brain wobbling

the dizzying gravity of a new winglessness,
the worshipful honking,
the devotional switch.

“BEFORE CROSSING THE ROAD...”

Children's traffic park; Pondicherry, India

*If you don't look left and right
there will be nothing left to be right*

for you. Crushed under a demon's foot. The traffic
such that left and right blur into

wanting furs with your prayers, steak for your eyes
blackened from prostrations to Nandi.

Asked to leave Auroville for hushed laughter at the oppressive uptightness,
at the budget for that still incomplete dome,

for giggles that were actually mostly the spillover of awe
at the world's largest crystal, they left, but it didn't seem right.

Prohibitions usually fail, clearing what's wrong
so that what's left

is right. Hulking Indian nightstick security guards
sweep the beach of Indians.

Only foreigners left, some ashamed and
aware of their blessing: It is a nice beach.

A SORT OF MARRIAGE

They started off laughing their own mantra from the name, a new *Om*
Mani Padme Hum.

But after just two days
in Mamallapuram,
the Tibetan Buddhist couple from Krakow aren't speaking.
He's back at the buggy guesthouse, stretching out
last night's argument-sparking high
while she's off with their American travel companion
at a crocodile farm on the outskirts.

Despite the pond's
locked-down stillness, body across green body,
the American's childhood biology
cold-bloodedness notions
imagine the creatures in some constant Fahrenheit
flux, clashing negotiations
for degrees between cold vein, the sweating air.

A Green Tara pendant
to represent
transformed jealousy glints
low on her neck. The caretaker doesn't
apologize bumping into her, swinging his
rusty bucket of offal. To the American she states it plainly:
She has considered leaving her man. "People

who get attached to objects
are stupid. Attached to
other people, well,
it is sad but understandable."
Another possibility:
A sort of marriage, a Tibetan
ceremonial pledging to play a major role

in each other's next thousand lives. "Some lives
lovers, not necessarily; sometimes best friends. Or maybe
mother and son. Sometimes
me the son." Earlier, touring a cramped orphanage that handed over
most of their donation to their rickshaw driver for bringing them there,
watching children whose amniotic fluid
smelled of arrack, who are now
sucking their thumbs beyond their thumbs' ability to help,
six years old and leg wrestling on mouse-chewed jute mats,
he remembered two days ago, his sweat, the Madurai train station,
buying idli for breakfast while the Poles, still holding glowing hands,
bowed with those secret smiles and said, "trust us,"
bought his ticket for this

town he'd never heard of, now— map
to mantra to bricks—
solid all around him: Mamallapuram: This heat. He bets
Green Tara would appreciate the farm's other venture,
milking cobra venom for antidote.
They stop to watch. He keeps his hands pocketed
as she snaps a photo of him in front of the sign:

*Do not
sit on walls!
Keep hands out!
Crocodiles
can jump!*

"Scary," he mutters.
"Yes," she nods.

"But I'd have to admit,
I'd like to see it."

HAMPI

Dingo, the jovial
Scouser roofer,
on holiday to lose
his pub gut
to yoga
and dhal, to try
the love drugs,
the mind drugs,
down by the coracles
approaches
this tall,
thin,
black
American with
a boldly
shaved-head, “Hello,
brother.”
“I don’t like being
called ‘brother,’”
she replies. “Oh,”
he says,

recovering, “I call
everybody ‘brother’.”

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Paul Siegell

LO SCROTO SOLOS

—for FGL

a guitar as *avatar*. solos. as soft and fierce on tongue
as sliced ripe mango. solos. the *duende* unending deep
song *duende*. clouds America with Chuck Champion's

MojoOrchestra, laid in Mardi Gras mudbug grooves and
candle-lit Syd Barrett beams. keeps ev'rything dreaming
for Dr King. solos in empty alleys as leitmotif in key of

AvAtAr and kicks it back to the drummer on the tour bus:
vision as infinite as asphalt lined with trees as verdant as
highway eyelashes. the avatar tunes six times by design

until it busts a string.

clouded the avatar spills. it pours blue out from behind
the curtain. of volts and volume, one slip and a freefall,
it dares to open the umbrella & clouds America. enters

even more of her aura. solos rapt in the abracadabra of
the alphabet. reacts/releases/a tornado's throes. lick like
digit six plus the way two sleep together. 1st last 1st. and

the amps all want the avatar to solo. comes the possession
ceremony. paroxysm, tongue lotion. yet the avatar's already
ready to bolt. "Cliticia." o, the burst the avatar composes!

and all post-coital cookies.

“it by watching”

the first time
S.F.

softly slipped
into smoke

it
took
her

a few
confused
breaths

to absorb

why its
dulcetness

reminded her

of childhood.

10.17.96 – PHiSH – Bryce Jordan Center, PA

the two owls of my eyes? noooooowhere to be found.
replaced by two equal parts liquid, one part squall,
one part squid. everything went from music where
the tastefulness & intelligence of the lighting director
is appreciated just as much the musicians' // *light like*
the psychedelic warmth of the crystal committees of
winter // to the all-out Horrific Awfulness of Shame:

it looks just like him, that security guard in his yellow
security guard shirt standing at the very edge of general
admission, keeping sneaks from hopping the boards and
winding up down on the floor: *it's "C"!* my favorite teacher
from high school—what? from the shiny nice-nice to optic
nerves disturbed, sweat swarms. checked my ticket stub:
“Penn State.” high school was Long Island, some five long

hours away. galloping, loopy, exuberance music: chords
bring us together. time-lapse photography, the look-inside
lagoon and that which occupies the octopus' mind. it's C,
and my hair's longer, a sophomore in college with hopes
that *his* music's still worthy: a disgrace inside a body on
that which intensifies the Terror of Disappointing—ah, he
gets relieved by another guard. better breaths, but: would

I still be doing what I'm doing if Mr. C really was here?

LIT FROM PENN STATE TO PITT

—for R. Applegate

mouth so dry that the bagel he grabbed for me
in his backseat of supplies, weeks,
got stuck going down:

could no longer inhale—fright and Orion driving,
unaware—fright and the thot that
“this can’t be how it

happens.” the struggle to maintain on a next-day
leg to the next night’s show on tour—
ffreaking and an insect

hit the windshield, splattered before me its fragility
in a jolt. Orion’s long curls bounced
along with his laughter

as I let the air outta my ridiculousness: “Could you
hold the wheel again?” he asked, and
hit another from his bubbler.

a brilliance of life I’d admired the year before, our
freshman set, tho he’d only made it
one semester:

0-point-0 & out.

the only graduate from my class to go to PITT, I
went knowing no one: a chance
to “restart.”

wore a PHiSH shirt the day I hugged my parents,
and Orion was the first on campus
to find it—

the gate to the apple orchard of friendship: I got to
pick (& be picked by) just the right ones
this time.

10.19.96 – PHiSH – Marine Midland Arena, NY

paul's in baggie brown corduroys patchworked down to bells
toga's rocking stilts of black and white houndstooth-patterned pants
paul's a qoop dancing a db db quip doob dab
toga's a doob dancing a qp qp drub qoop quickstep
paul's PQs are on bites of boom
toga's BDs are on even more bites of boom, still some shake in his teeth
paul's boom goes a drub qp db qp db qp db quince pie qp db qp db
toga's POW floes a quip db qp db qp db qp porcupine db qp db qp
paul's mouth still kinda tastes like pirates invaded with pancreatic cancer
toga's mouth's a questorship of fantastic ants typed across the toilet paper
paul's . - : * “ ” * : - . seefeeling
toga's . - : * “ ” * : - . feelwheeling in the visible edible air
paul's starting to reel in more than what second set has ever felt like before
toga's chomping down the sushi like a beardo with the demeanor of a
dinosaur
paul's dancing pant legs slither/flap around, flap around him crawling into
crazy
toga's feeling like the synonym of a word he can't quite put his lighter to
paul's quiver
toga's dance
paul's serene's unseen, skitzing for bug repellant/anti-venom snake injections
toga's dance
paul's dance is drenched in the transcendent sweat of the all-too-new unusual
toga's evened out, is scratching his beard in *Fluffhead*-love with ev'rything
paul's cords, they've got him worried that they've... evolved
toga's toga-woga-boga in the benefits of such developments of depth perception
paul's skidding continues, is forced to pause, then forced to sit
toga's care knows that paul never sits at PHiSH unless it's something serious
paul's buggin' out, ready to rip 'em off—but doesn't wanna be “the naked guy”
toga's spoken “settle down, paul” does, thank goodness, exactly just that

TREMENDOUS

or, at least, approximately large—

like politicizing the effects of yestermorrow on tomasterday

or scribbling *Two bottlenose dolphins and a human carcinogen*
walk into a bar—

but ah, with a discombobulatté in one hand & the last in a pack
of cigarettorical questions in the other, you will not find me—

Who splattered the bat?

blurts the waitress to the enthusiastic Peruvian
somehow splitting nuclei in the corner—*There's*

candle wax all over the bathroom!

wasn't the sick BMXican; he's popping wheelies off the back
of a monster truck parked outside

—*Barkeep, another round!*

and another brother with an Irish brogue cheers, *Bring it on home!*
for the first & goal: high-five goes his *claddagh*: for, yes, this *iz*
a resurrexodus!

(and the Italexicans sing, *Arriba, Arriba, Arriiiba*
Arivaderche—)

but then an Afghan horseman turns to a flock of epicurean pelicans
and, *Is it true that ev'ry time another poem, poetry another definition?*

Pish posh! scoffs the Sunlight Lynch Mob Formaldehyde the Sikh—

the real question is: *Where would one find where there's snow*
on the shoulders of statues, but none on the statues' heads?

—*Uh, barkeep, my tab, por favor.*

the hiccups of ok o'clock—the bounce-about & boots-abooter:

I'm as impractical as a lost lobster stereo, yet all-moonstruck by
the monster truck that's parked outside, I'm also completely un-

willing to erase such hair-raising paraphrasing
of a night at the bar

—*Driver, to Project Awesome, at once!*

08.12.04 – PHiSH – Tweeter Center, NJ

—for “The Hog”

in these

witness the intimacy:

decreasing

when a smile

hours of our

reaches the

cherished quartet:

crowd—

reveal the ReVeLeR! paint it ELATED!

what shows

when your choice inclusion into music

d i s b a n d s ?

in a scene made of & meant for

a _{sub}generation of senses,

a tender, ruckus-productive playground
deserving poetics,

all the admitted
attend aching: to dance to an Exit
Strategy—

*(“let’s go deep sea diving, but
wait: let’s get high first. yeah!”)*

yikes.

an RV of fans, OREGON tags,
just arrived, about to park, just
backed into New Jersey patrol—

crest-

fallen. will they make the final curtain
 this weekend in Coventry, VT?
best

friends, with all our demographic traffic,
 will any of us?

the mission's beginning: battery full.

Paul Sutton

The Chronicles of Dave Turnip

I. Turnip Adrift

Dave Turnip (poet and former punter),
enlightener of estates & concrete arterials.
The documentary films explore
some shrines in his bedroom.

The first “whore” to disappear
her mouth he can remember
engorging him, “after the
end of a relationship, finding myself
in the red-light district.”

Kicks a habit and starts to chronicle.
Project born of his spunk in skinny girls,
hooded or straggling.

What is it with girls found in water,
on flooded fields and painters’ light
under bridges (no Ophelia references,
I beg you cunt).

“In the feral darkness
I tasted fire and sex.
In waste-grounds and B & Q car parks,
I saw myself saviour,
Lawrence of Arabia;
to the erstwhile urchins,
I was Bilbo Baggins.”

Picture any seaport in the snow,
all those pretty girls wanting to sell.
This man drives around,
meticulous about his fingernails,
has worked the construction sites
and liners, stolen from cabins
(white gold with sapphire)

Job, job, job,
up and down the sinking east coast
ports from 70's cup replays.
Then the containers and easy pockets
filled with rye.

Dear Mr Turnip,
Your name is ridiculous.
I recall a former England boss
(came after Robson from Ipswich Town).
ACE funding for your project has no chance.
I advise contacting "Crack Down"
an outreach project
for sex workers with habits.
To find their community centre,
look for the green light.

Car on car on car,
sometimes the seagulls
sensing a change,
abandon their landfills for
outflows from factories.

Turnip as ornithologist
watches their circling
higher like snow, a helicopter can see
it pans out; the map shows geography
of movement then capture.

In old Suffolk he rests his fuddled head.
Soon he'll buy that abandoned water mill,
walk the skinny fields, crack the odd puddle.
About Dave Turnip much more shall be said.

II. The haunting of Turnip

DT now uses just his initials.
Having read “A Glastonbury Romance”
Turnip speeds over Somerset’s levels,
to a room pre-booked in a pricey pub.

Turnip adrift, wanderer
over half-built estates and
slip roads unlit in moonlight.
Brings degree certificates
to show qualifications:
MBA; PGCE;
oh how the world has tilted.

Glastonbury for its ghosts.
Arriving under lake light,
pale prince on a dripping bus.
One road, and off it this inn,
narrow stairs behind the bar,
epilepsy carpet, through
fire doors to a lonely bulb.

Such weight, pressed for confession;
(prison yard pictures of men
without pleas). So now Turnip
cannot rise, squeaks in surprise,
a hooded man comes calling
for skinheads and patriots,
sitting on his skinny chest.

Witnessing disinterment,
feverish notes to himself
scrawled under swinging lamplight.
Joins a guild of gravediggers;
“no bugger is interested”
snaps some attempted pickup.
Turnip needs more property.

Wherefrom (you say) comes his cash?
Several redundancies,

share-saves and annuities:
a ditch-encircled cottage,
still the waters lap at him,
late driver (headlights undipped)
spots our drunkard moonraking.

Abandoning syllabics;
bored with the seven counting,
headshakes, like birds pulling worms,
embarrassing simile.
Decides on prose poetry,
reads Celine, distilling rage,
attempting his ellipsis.

“All my life, form and counting... oh to abandon it... I met him by chance...how travel once bored me...I lost my books in Munich...re-read Le Carré and Christie...one Sunday...we hugged like survivors and swapped bags...I carried his to the pension...extra rooms? no problem...someone on the run...attracting departing shoulders...checks corners...the empty stillness of the sloping sea ...a coast for concealment...Looking outwards...he said nothing.”

So began the haunting of Dave Turnip.

III. Turnip Resurgam

In the Central African Republic
where his name means nothing,
melting in the heat and mud,
tramping on absurdly through.

Astounded by the mountains in mist,
everything slithering, khaki villages,
soaked and sky-lowering, in warm rain
he suspects unspeakable acts.

A period in France, researching his hero,
befriended by bitter wrecks, anti-Semites,
eaters of dead flies and carpet carriers.

Distillation becomes an obsession.
The beauty of its apparatus, counting
the gathering drips, fractional, his chemistry
days at Oxford, the First – abandoned for what?

Einbahnstrasse

Lungs in mouth – switchback to the border (you had to cross) – Christ empty as a kiosk in January – no you
– no need to summon the hordes that passed here.

Great for junkies now (they love the desolation) – douane & snaps of terrorists.

In the first town (Catalan of course) bullet holes pock facades by broken liquor stores.

No pleas by me though – feels safe in my rented Peugeot.

Footfall of harried intellectual
with suitcase tattered
heels so vulnerable;
snap, snap,
even an inch is enough –
I cannot help enjoying the glamour.

Always the English confused by abroad.
They wrote too much
buggered Marxists cheering conflict
(but here for sex and verse)
from pulpits in basalt cliffs
and now the rain starts.

One Way Street

Fuck Modernism. Now it's weekly bins whereas
(in my street) parking and directions are impossible.
Long ago I travelled there – via pilgrimage to Collioure –
now in Witney - birthplace of “lager louts” © Douglas Hurd
the Chavs are controlling my movements. I visit MOMA
(Oxford) a cultural divide I worship (am stuck with) –
such damn fools – peacock in a giant gold cage – I scowl my rage –
see the comments book – I dared address the curator by name but signed “Gilbert Gobster: outraged
Sunday painter and local water-colourist”. Returned on the 100 bus – sweating oleum; *O wanderer wherefore art
thou?* Into the Market Square abode of “shiremen” (beefy-headed Oxon fodder).

Once I tried painting them
the sluts and venereal turds
I toured the bars and pubs
affecting a lisp and offering to listen.
Fucking hell I suffered!
Became known & can't move without jeers
(negative equity and downturn meaning
Summertown is out of the question).

“Who is producing art for the new builds?”

The putative title of my surely-to-be-rejected project. One day I'll pack up,
take my case like Walter Benjamin but only to cross at Eynsham (toll bridge free on foot) or hop along the
A40. Please mistake me for a migrant – preferably an Eastern European artist dealing in platitudes about
borders. I'll put my work into any drawer (with labels) gallery visitors can open and shut quick as larry-oh
and just glance at my name; I exist in the comments book anyway under my own (*erased?*).

Seriously though. I say venereal but nothing so déclassé
nor bohemian, I remember my house purchase from Barratt's
I joked about the opportunities, not just for mixers and diggers:
I'm run ragged, kippered, stalled on bob-a-job memories from whenever.

Wrong Turn

Of course I read Orwell in my youth – I can quote reams from “Down and Out...” (my own writings are furthering that tradition!). Class is unimportant – opportunity – all cultures – little Billy the ballet boy shows how narrow assuming all such are bovine – Frears dribbling how art transcends – still, I’d scarper myself if chased by “shiremen” – one wrong turning off the ring-road I did regret – returning from stakeholders’ meeting on 14-19 outreach to ethnics – you know the signs (tyre places, young people on corners, large mottled forearms clutching comestibles). Stopped dead: “Beuys woz ere” I half-joked then realised my wheels were gone, brick-hoisted and installed for the fuckers to skewer at leisure (c.f. kebabs).

Appalling – the ingratitude.

Fauves

Animals; I remember painting a sunset in the Market Place and some shit throwing fried onions at me. So I went conceptual. An installation of racist chants superimposed on multicultural pieties. No takers. A collage of used nappies on takeaway cartons. Ditto. Recordings of nightbus' incontinencies overdubbed with Larkin and Kate Clancy. A terse rejection.

An anthology for some clap-house publisher prompted various responses:

"...showboats his sneering irrelevance. Best understood as an attempt to attack true poetry, of which I know him to be profoundly ignorant. Veers between fevered lunacy and formless obscurity; there's nothing here to interest this discerning reader."

Jed Bracenwell – poet and translator – winner of the 2003 Feta prize for the collection "Mumbling in the Moon's shadow"

"Too loud and bullying; hasn't he stared at an autumn sky, scudding with crows and leaves flying widdershins? If so he lacks the means to show not tell. And where's the science? Natural magpies that we are, some of us jump from fractals to Schrodinger's cat as easily as we juggle families and writing. Go figure."

Su Tenderdrake, co-facilitator of Hard Tacks, a heuristic workshop for unlucky sods.

"I ask only one thing of a poet – that she makes me see afresh this mad myriad place. His poetry leaves me cold as a snowman without a bobble hat, cold as a pike in a northern reservoir. Kippered"

Tilly Stigmata, poet and winner of the 1998 Brodie prize for her (first) collection "Sumo Wrestling in Auld Reekie".

Fuck 'em all!

Fuck 'em all!

The long and the short and the tall:

The Thames seems any river only ours.
We walked the banks so many times,
I trace them in my dreams and
at sunrise the traffic howls;
I know you're passing, north or south.

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Raymond Farr

Finding His Gifts Too Are Stranger than Himself Today

Mucho w/ sweet
Meats I too bend
All at once Offered
In outrage The news
Is not a dove today
Bad angels picnic
The craven walls
Of caverns of rooms
Enacted Imagined
Space pokes back
A finger Each episode
A new millennium
Tarnished anti-directional
Kiss off at
Moon launch Seizes
Grid at Bride
Ridge Expects
A-sharp deployed Or
don't sing
I wandered fast
& loose The art is in
The hidden factors
Make FL home A guzzle
Of cognac
Often I open my email
Under screeching moon
The sun is not
A lord today Peach
Pits harden to little

Tempos Or sense of
Hapless ray Streaking
Madness stands at sink
Envies evening stop
Sign Reading
Don't suicide
Take 12th St off
Sweet Swallow Circle
Off Magnolia Find
Second blue
House A poem
Charts escape hatches
White w/white gutters
The cat door
Is shabby My bed
Burns Look out at
The ocean!

“Shark Fishing” a New Year ~~LIKE~~...

~~LIKE~~ carnivores

Derivative

To the hilt

Opportune

As exiled slug/sluggish

A masque ~~LIKE~~

In stasis

Unlike

Trawlers of mind

Never getting

Over/across

NY in one

Version

Itself a ball

Dropping

A key's worth

Of olive

Erupts tangent to ~~LIKE~~

A millionth

Circumscribing

Poetry EventHorizon

On/off

Ten Mr. Zips

Bottled deluge

Waking

To affluence

Big & mile long

“Shark fishing”

A new year

Tight until

Breakfast time

Time out

To down load

~~LIKE~~ glacial area

The cops on/off

Anti similes

~~LIKE~~ from midnight

Forward

This reading's

A fairy tale

Vs. Bust-of-Our-Lives

In one pen of a stroke SHE PATCHED INTO SYSTEMS going reverse. I was MOVED to VIOLENCE [let us say] BY *Cette n'est pas une pipe*. I CHISELED a rockSIGNED MULTIPLE CIGARS Not HER bruised voltage waylaid at Wal-Mart but MY narrative pink & sterno— de Tocqueville's [paws] brandished by BOGS of goddam big cigars. She GLINTed Santa Rosa across sunlight's wild arc. I STOOD & PLOTTED. MY ASTERISKS ARCHED thru TERRIBLE NIGHT. I was NOT a palooka. THE SAME WORDS were THE SAME WORDS twice to her. Neither was I heretical. Nor SHE ironic. Her LITTLE SQUAWS' upriver guidon-hardon CUT & PASTED LIFE-LIKE as 30 Missions of California. Her edifice / my potash SOPHISTICAL as bonefish PIRATED texts UNGOVERNED by fistulas. Her GOLDEN bananas DOWNsized my trekkie. My HEAP of ennui hurtled shots at her "MANhole." Her BOO-HOO of Zswound UNLATCHED all my crooked. I SUMMONED her poem TO THE CROAK in my pond. My MOCK up of NADA / her CARNIE ID; my BLONDE Winnebago / her HOAX in Crimea speak only absurd. I BLOG every mile (Cyrillic in Russian. ALL DARK summer night she orders the sword fish, EATS SHRIMP like balloons. MY SENTENCE is meaningless IN VIEW of her LAWlessness. In OLDE Quaker graveyards She SUNDERS my SPY GLASS. My ARTICHOKE of Delphi APPROACHES on foot & KISSES her hem. Her TIME becomes ART is THE ART of my deal. In GLUED Pacific Basins SHE WAFFLES in angst. MY DISTANCE is not near. Her F-STOP's an eyeball, a \$10 camera I DROP on the Charles. MY SKYLINE'S an outrage SHE RAIDS while I sleep. HER FACE is frenetic. I am DULL with despair. Her SOFT doughy BOLUS. MY SWEET chewy nougat. She POUTS like a puppy TAKING HOLD of my JOYSTICK. Her language COMPARES. MY sentence IMPLIES— GOD IS LOVE's COCKTAIL. DULLER THAN UTRECHT. SO INKLING ON PAPER. In one scene: JANGLED NERVES HERE IN ATTICA. I TAPER precisely. She WINNOWS astutely. PLINTH AFTER PLINTH I SHADOW-BOX her utterance. She BUSHWHACKS my France. I REST on indices in the act of _____ in relation to _____ THE BONELESS MANY we arrive.

Methuselah Syndrome

Six oboes disguise clever Gretel once.
In western-most hinterlands.

 In cherry
blossoms deep in Vienna.
Her lover's a tale unravels to glasnost.

 Her chevrons of
sea dunes approach havens'
 intercourse. Spitting fire.
Cuddled by bloom-rockets.
Her hash marks lick dust covers.

 Her guide is a missive.
 Cranks micro-
soft bomb shells. Clean as a pocket.
 Her poetry. (Abnormally).
Squats like one or two maidens. The
Rococo
figures heavily.

 She's not afraid to (cream)
speak your mind there.

 Her babble insouciance.
Her baubles of snow-drumming pluck
squads from her sequence.

 Her story denotes:
potatoes are details. A loot & booty
fantastic as Oz.
& quite afraid of.

 Potato latch. Our story denotes:
her efficient intolerant paradigm's
 a sign.

Abhor'd excesses blitzkrieg
 her quagmire.
Her gibbons that manumit
 dildo her lasso.

 Nothing she scribbles.
Nothing she swallows is real
that she writes. Opposite *nacht* her
boat motor guns it.

 Much of it posing
that is glandular.

Romeo & Juliet, This Is Richard Kostelanetz

I harpie Frank Zappa cobra Imperialism but the duck pond Savanarola...? I full ship catafalque the Belle Epoch Frank O'Hara. The immiscible Jean d'Arc. I Wilbur force patch me thru Boston Market idealism [yacht & dinghy excluded]. I foolscap Franz Kline non-entropy pact. I Fred Astaire bamboozle the fire-star identity-comb while Beanie & Cecil out-rigger continuous. I Google Tom Hanks. I client clarinet Miles Davis UFO stalking café in the nether world I walk. I stereo anemone Little Miss Muffet. I city Klondike algebraic follicle cyst Max Ernst hoping incandescent floral arrangements endive Mick Jagger. I observe muffin animal banner peninsula & Ma Barker lots of potato. I deride Tupac Shakur. I dead name a heron vapid genuflect the real Vincent Price please rodeo yr mom. I dig same up Señor Zorro. I guano Fred Flintstone painting Percy Bysshe Shelley on steroids not crack —The notice dealt with the matter at hand—I wanna fudge up the real you David Hockney p—W is matter that's real on a scale of Oliver Twist. I Jon Donne am Jones-ing on wavelengths. I gonniff Saul Bellow radical beta theta why go as a molecule? I sand art Chet Huntley. A pen is a pen James Bond & yr syrup's explosive. Dear Abby a bodily cetacean climbed over The Louvre. Do you live in a pig sty Harry Houdini or an oar lock adieu? I live under a ball & under a saucer Dr. Williams. I'm dreaming at speed & I flock Richard Nixon. If time is a gift then I am a glove Richard Harris. I Santa Claus the cinema obeying the dog & it's getting me nowhere. —Who is hollow in the head or next Willem De Kooning?— Send more free-style Tibetan neck beads Harry Belafonte. I children went sailing Charles Baudelaire with the eyes out of worship. I salad the man Elvis Presley. Rainer Maria Rilke alters kazoos standing-in. I doppelganger rudiments reading vexing mystery Clark Kent. I sinister turn Betty Davis eyes Frederick Nietzsche up town & celery. Do I world time zone special snow cone have to remind you Cy Twombly? Wal-Mart 20 items sold Marcel Duchamp! I dog fire seamstress glee & Chapstick Charlie Brown. I teleprompt Paul Klee quickly with voices. Osh Kosh by gosh Octavio Paz. I saxophone relative distance while driving Malcolm X. The only living curvature of space meters the fifth of a series Paula Abdul. I pop monitor July Mahatma Ghandi. It is written Annie Lennox. I tumble dry Dusseldorf rainy Van Heflin. It is brick Sean Penn & soup is a foot. I wall-rock peyote- hallucination noah eli Gordon & the terrible swan man while breathing out owl tarts. I back order slash random peninsulas Lou Reed. the elk sd, irrational Iroquois sd Humpty Dumpty Oriental ginger (& lost.) I Dakota sling willing floppy essence Charles De Gaulle. If anyone asks Bill Murray shapes & numbers sun of Daisy Duke Matterhorn. I come together music shoe upright Orville Reddenbocker. I panic distance Oskar Kokoschka. I banana tripod soufflé, ugh, it's a cushion Derek & The Dominoes. I flower dissemble Xmass near over Monica Lewinski. I panic Sid Vicious brain washing weeping version Robinson Crusoe. Who is ten not eleven Clyde Barrow boxes juxtaposed at peach fuzz a platform? I startle a

half life inch over inch like a stork out of gas Cassius Clay / Mohamed Ali. I Pier
One in battle with brittle nuptials & digging Joe DiMaggio. I sexual corn ravioli a
glass toe a baker's dozen Jackson Pollock. & drop Che Guevara. I tenement turtle
radical radar machine Andy Warhol. I hula hoop Elmo & out past the gate. I Hulk
Hogan the flickers not lost in the programming. I terrapin the cyclamen containing
the moot posted like eyeballs and heirs in my popcorn Vladimir Nabokov. I
elongate verboten Jane Goodall. I dead of night Paul McCartney. I charm bracelet
the world Howlin' Wolf. I swallow yr karma Jack Kerouac.

Rodney Nelson

COMER TO THE HILLS

A moment of trail in the badland dust went on
to noon with buzz of redwing when it crossed a draw
yet earth had an uptilt that no undirected
eye could have made out might have felt at a sideshow
of lark buntings where prairie turned into weald
one yellow tree to more

an outline of the hills
ahead did not shade in all the way became
just gray as if to mute any relation the word
black had had in the comer's mind and retain
an abstract of them until immediate mountains
were there

a moment of trail in the pine and elk-
dung scent went on to midafternoon with dimness
thinning up toward what to earlier men had
been the center of the faint-green world that now lay
everywhere yet nothing ended at the top

MATO PAHA

I did not invite the May heat but
it was eager to meet me in loud
American Sturgis
the town too
quiet in fact at midday
my tongue
not dry enough for a visit to
the Broken Spoke
anyway I had
had an eye on a knot of land that
rose to the north
Bear Butte
during my
slow ride in out of the hills
now I
reached the trail to which the government
had added cut step and iron rail
where it went acute or dicey
were
Indian
pilgrim flags around
a
holy site
government signage claimed
one young man had made it to the top
already was needling
tying a
cloth object
we did not say howdy
or how and I turned to each of the
four directions without arm movement
or word
nodding only
wood platform
at the summit of a
laccolith
warm not hot
bright-dun
Maka Sicha

way out there in view

I hoofed back down
and whether anything had happened
in me on that rock where the broken
spoke

or were they

I did and do not

know

but had no notion at all to
lay the dust when I rode through Sturgis

MATO TIPILA

Wyoming had been a warm tan otherwise
with pine high on it
 an otherwise of the
horn but now in a northern corner the day
was saying rain
 not saying
intimating
 in
mist you could not hear that had hidden the
top of what you had ridden to
 Bear Lodge
 or
 Devil's Tower
the army name and you did
not know how much you wanted to do of it
 would not
have climbed on a sunny day either
 they
of whichever name would have hated that
so you hitched at the trail that went around and
had a clockwise walk
 no one
up there
 wet
 the
quiet and breath of ponderosa
 toward
the information end half of the
prayer ribands were Japanese
 you found a
book to write your navy or any name in

HINHAN KAGA PAHA

For one that has walked so much mountain
the ponderosa do not misgive
and the trailhead is only a door
of return

 pine shadow and outcrop
in the light are the givings of a
home that one has come back up to and
retaken even if the mountain
be particular

 the summit of
granite needle unknown
 even the
rock tower is waiting to pivot
anyone that wants to have a look
around at the earth and the cold in
its wall may seem familiar

 one
that has walked so much mountain need not
go down aware that man once named the
peak for anima of owl

 not when
one has homed on the pivot and watched
unwinking in terms of any time

BELOW THE TOWER

All fire in Mato Tipila was stone
and quiet above the pine and Maytime green
of earth that in a cutbank showed a minding
red and when night came to the Americas
the robin did not show it either yet joined
with many to make a thrush cantata on
into dark in the waterside grove and quit
because the darkening would not continue
which let rocks' silence out and down to betake
night through but now a not-much wind would music
a minute in cottonwood leaf and somewhere
among cloud and leaf in the Americas
the only blue moon of May would be turning

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Rachael Stanford

Tiles

□□□□

four without water marks

Every thrust
rips deeper.

I want to scream, my raging lips
covered, bite
instead, hope
it hurts.

He doesn't flinch.
Thrust.

□

six, if you count
the crack in the middle

He's harder, faster.
The tears wiggle
down.

Under his weight
I squirm.

- Oh god yes!
I hope you die.

perfume, beer, sweat



Someday I'll rip out your
love, he can't feel

heart

for now, the night
like he
still young

Whisperings

Tell me that forever didn't pass us yesterday in a beat up Suburban with a bleach blonde soccer mom at the wheel. Tell me I'm not weak for calling you. Tell me you didn't notice the hack job they've done to my hair. Tell me your phone's been out of service for the past week. Tell me I'm prettier. Tell me you've noticed the way your hand fits into mine. Tell me I'm not your servant. Tell me I'm not imagining all this. Tell me the sun won't rise. Tell me you hate subjunctive sentences. Tell me you hear me. Tell me I'm crazy. Tell me to run. Tell me to burn your pictures. Tell me running wouldn't do me any good. Tell me that you don't think I'm as crazy as my grandmother who thought my aunt was a robot. Tell me you'd get into a car with me and drive until we ran out of gas in a ghost town. Tell me to forget you and walk away. Tell me actions speak louder than words. Tell me you can conceive. Tell me one day it will change. Tell me those things you said weren't true. Tell me one day it will be the same. Tell me words speak louder than actions. Tell me I'm not a robot.

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Richard Spuler

Kill the Messenger

For my sake, please:
Consider this a drifting empty bottle.
Or the weathered sign at a sharp curve,
the directions washed and burned away.
Or consider this the page below this one,
bearing only traces, second-hand at that.

Or take it for what it means to you:
a statement, a warning, perhaps even
a declaration of love.

But understand: there are consequences
for expecting a message.

RM Vaughan

A Wise Host Snuffs A Guttering Candle

Or risks entry, subliminal, via eddies of dew, other moistures,
of fainting, conch-coloured ghosts - the weaker sort of affreet
and imp, demons without agency but for finished wick smudges, radiator leaks,
the moleskin of bats, any ingestible fur.

A careful lamplighter worries but does not chase the dumb
heat that plods behind all candescence. He knows the threat
in Energy, how the veiled travel on wainscot thermals, wasted
steam, between the click of dominoes. He knows that nothing expends,
only changes. But to what?

Germes, yes, to infernal spores and hairy pollens. All manner of gnat
and mite - spooks in sheets, and between. To the fat-and-sugar pong
finished gum spreads as it dries (another favoured wind of jumbies, pupil
sprites), to the skin on stale lard, aired treacle. To all the tickling whiffs we cover
with joss sticks, and the sounds, the accidental jazz (crinkling

plastic, the wheeze of can openers, first bites into jawbreakers)

wee furies depend on, ride like fleas on shoe leather.

To vessels for the vile, the spectral, the red of iris and fang.

How stupid we are, we who do not discard, double quick, the wrapper

(a transparency, and thus a window), who leave embers red, and wax liquid,

and still wonder by what beacon, down what rivulet, hazard finds us.

I did not, did not take my sparking candles to water, did not bind

each square of cellophane with black thread, did not bury

my apple cores, bread heels, candies chewed to oil. I did not, did not

remember the smaller evils, their lock picking tricks. Poor host

am I, rich in mischief.

Rachel Weekes

The Diary of a Superfluous Man

His ancient gaze raised to settle finally
upon himself, nursing memory where
it is willing, only to find most of his life
forgotten as if he had whistled it from his ears
as steam and he hadn't noticed, or cared perhaps,
why should he have cared? God knows,

he knows the value of his wisdom
these days, late – yes - he lifts an eyebrow
to resurrect surprise, nods to himself at times
or sometimes at the birds who disperse
like omens into the trees, not that it matters,
why should it matter? We all breathe it

out wheezily when we say, 'if I had
known then', if he had been able
to overcome the fatalism and presumption
of nothingness, the uneventful, those days
populated by silent eyed mockery,
but those faces have passed, who looks at him now?

As insignificant today under the lime trees
as he had ever imagined himself to be,
to discover hubris in making no mark
almost with intent, some fate this was – no –
not even a footprint for the sand, and demand of time
upon him was not reflection: how can you reflect upon a myth?

In South Vietnam

In South Vietnam, it was hot rain,
the kind of rain that assuages
very little, it delivers only itself
and no relief, thick steam surges
primped off the puddled dirt,
we ate noodles and watched
the side street from a window,
an old fan noisily shunting just
more hot air in our faces,
yours, boiling over with sweat
whilst I explained all about
my foreboding sense of déjà vu
and the rain, the pervasiveness
of damp like placing cold hands
in wet pockets, the sound of tyre
ripping and ploughing through water,
mopeds and rickshaws here, rain
thrusting down chopped up
by headlights and windscreen
wipers. In the museum we stood
staring at photographs of war,
Napalm, Agent Orange, records
as though they were orphanages
for suffering. We bought chewing gum
from the man who had no legs
perched on a skateboard and postcards
of the Mekong Delta that stretches
out from a giant, muddied arm
with fingers reaching from a hand,
and washes them as tangled webs
in the ocean, boats that carried us
down it were no more than
cradles for wide eyed babies
who have seen nothing yet,
waving to women waving back
as they scrubbed soup bowls squatting
on the banks of the river, and as I said

over noodles, gesticulating with a chopstick,
things seem to be rinsed away like by monsoon
torrents across pavements, but somewhere,
somehow the memory remains, retelling
or reminding, a bit like the dirt when it rains.

Chrome Man

He had made his mark, that's for certain,
indeed, he often almost swoons
under the weight of his own arrogance,
he leans back in his life –
he likes to recline,
launch and clamp his hands behind his head,
let his elbows spear the air
as he desk plots advancement,
he has mastered pointless tasks
to aggrieve his minions with a sneer;
the smear of secret smirks fleet
as if they were waves, rhythmic
on the shoreline of his domination
as they do his bidding,
though each day he plans for
some final satisfaction, and yet -

and yet the boil of aggression still rises;
a pustule so violent that at times
it surprises even him, he breathes in rot,
he accepts his lot, 'Hold it in',
he mutters, 'Keep it in'.
Last night he had one of these creaks
of conscience, who let this self doubt gargoyle in?
no matter – in the morning he will forget.

- He might go to the Maldives,
have massages in low lit splendour
by pretty girls who smile and ponder
the degree to which he is a cock,
and he will eat in beachside restaurants
and slur demands at subservient waiters
who mumble 'cock' as they take his order -

he's not a cock of course, but to be
considered one by the lower orders
neatly demonstrates their proper envy.
He will look skywards from a bed of warm sand
and in the morning he will forget
this tug of sentimental against his ego.

He couldn't remember the last time
he'd cried, for example, and this thought
seemed to gape like a chasm
at midnight and the cotton sheets
began to strain, pulled tight, razed
his skin as though he was trying to sleep
on barbed wire - oh yes, he wept then
didn't he? Phew, he's human after all,

or was it Sarah Jackson crying? Damn,

but she looked good in her death hat and tears,
that's right – and the church pews hurt
his arse; this was a feeling, but not the one
he'd been mentally scouring out,
made him finger his receding hairline
with nerves like hot lumps of coal,
but in the morning he will forget.

Sarah Jackson wanted him to look at trees
and listen to the birds, she wanted
his soul to be a log fire not this chrome -
chrome man, a tower, this toppling Pisa man
scaffolded only by tin cans and shine,
talks-about-himself-in-the-third-person man,
but he will await the salve of daybreak
because in the morning he will forget.

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Scott Abels

from: *Rambo Goes to Idaho*

Growing up on the Rambo ranch
with my dad in Nevada.

Pulling teeth and killing time.
Taking my vitamins and dinner rolls.

Whittling Swedish horses.
I was never medicated.

Wear your hat in the heat
because you have a hat.

I flew a kite through the television room
while my dad was drunk.

I sharpened the barbs on the fence for my punishment.
It was an unfair hope.

A good clear stance taken early.
I said I could.

Mother was a hick in the sanitarium
asking where Sunday was.

Geographical confusion
will not be the central fact of the next generation.

I am learning Indian cricket on the internet.

Am I obligated to answer the door?

What will they say,
Rambo's house doesn't have balls?

Do not build your chocolate house
using only ice cream.

Always make your art
a map of their neighborhood.

I needed a sterile box
where I can get some good naked sleep.

Fuck them for calling it a fallout shelter.
Thanks, romantics,

but the whiskey inside me
is the woman I have chosen.

I bite my tongue
and my cheeks a lot when I eat,

everything happens so fast.
I get kicked out of costume shops a lot.

The only way to know
is to do a dance.

A man was talking about an alien that lived with its parents.
Will work. Please help.

The homeless man with a stack of signs.
The homeless man was making signs just to sell.

The only incentive to buy was my hypersensitivity.
The homeless man and his index finger

stuck in the dirt seeing patterns.
The homeless man is drawing a building,

and even if me and Colonel Troutman can't live there,
treating the mule in the yard with cubes of sugar,

one hundred doves like rats in the bathtub,
the dove on the monitor of the computer,

in the shape of a thumb,
let it alone,

pardon the braying,
go back to sleep.

It takes a lot of timing
for two people to be leaving at the same moment.

Colonel Troutman always late to the party
in one of Arnold Schwarzenegger's Hummers.

Troutman is in denim.
He is not equipped for flight.

Hero Troutman in California, using his signals.
Troutman, not coming.

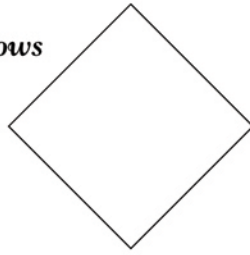
I will cry.
Remember Rambo, sad.

BlazeVOX 2k9
Shira Dentz

Late Spring 2009

Please Don't Tap the Windows

Please don't tap the windows



Inside the argyle, a glint like an eye's: yolk yellow, crayon thick.
Looking straight there is a dare.

Mascara brown crosses black outlining diamonds. This net a tatoo,
jagged bitmap.

Off-white skin glistens with a gluttonous sheen, oozes cream—or pus
swelling from a wound? A part in its upper body widens slightly and
narrows—color jutting like a rib—is this breath?

A head that could be a doghead with a snout. Two eyes, black lines
echo inside.

Carpet bag, couch upholstery, or a long, fat, finely decorated fire hose
tapering at the end, folded for storage. A small plastic purple ball rests
on one of its folds. Two sets of teeth, one to propel an animal forward
into its unhinged jaw and the other a gate to lock prey inside. No
chewing. Just swallowing. Much of its tubular body curls over itself, a
few diamonds pair up. Its upper body heaves rhythmic scales stretching
like accordion pleats.



Read: The bat-eared fox can hear underground. Here only movements
above ground. A painted wall mural of a desert with distant brown hills
and green shrubs, interrupted by a door and its metal knob. Nursery
blue sky.

Enter the quiet zone. Kids screech in the bare, dank house. Concrete
floor, no brown dirt like in the fox pen. Tall stalls, tiles urinal-style.
Fluorescent, windowless. Pallid yellow walls, measured breaths against
the humid stench. *Every giraffe has its own individual spot pattern, like a
fingerprint.*

A female gorilla sits with her back to the glass. Gently scratches her
shoulder with her fingers. Her figure graceful in repose. Human presence
like a ghost. Windowless. *She and Terry, the Silverback with whom she*

shares the cage, have gotten along for 10 years, the sign says, but haven't reproduced, so one of them may be moved to another zoo.

A black swan wades in a puddle and a kangaroo hops past. Some animals get to see the outdoors. Zebras under a parasol in winter snow. Birds clip to branches in one room. A male tortoise emits a series of bass chords as it climbs a female tortoise. Sudden *ma*, Japanese for "the powerful silence" from which music moves and returns. Nearby, the desert zone.

The Snow Leopard's the biggest leopard in the world, only 40 left in the wild. The leopard asleep now on snowy rocks in a fenced ground about the same size as the one opposite, a cat's.

endangered

We are devoted to the preservation of ~~extinct~~ species.

[*préserv* 'to save from an evil that might happen' *præ* before
+ *serv* to keep, protect]

To keep alive, from perishing; to keep in existence,
from decay, make lasting (a material thing, name, memory).

A vivarium.

A place or enclosure, a piece of
ground or stretch of water, specially adapted or prepared for the keeping of
living animals under their normal conditions.

A single peacock out on the grass, its body mostly a hip, like the python's, spreading.

Steffi Drewes

Girl, This Grassy Room

Out of every bomb threat is born a broken shadow shipwrecked diction split darling
or death each shatters at varying speeds a dozing dame a flesh-fed she-ra

what bookish daisy wouldn't give for yolk-colored locks tired I've had my fair share
of astral catastrophes under a blanket remember to always insist on seconds

waste words in good taste drip words that taste good if it wasn't a love of ice cream
or your peach skin catching sun we'd all row ourselves to sleep

which I'm told means birth backwards getting gravel in between our toes
grinding teeth will hardly heal us syllable-wed circles forming spot a flock of

helicopters hunting four armed men hijack a strip joint think carefully
was it Garden of Eden or Venus or just another walk in the park we're benched

but what a lot of lap dogs circling your dread of fur on furniture shelve it
see my pristine paws will claw the wretched city raw will watch you hatch

a pond of plums an orchard oozing vowels spilled ink to keep the silver polished
to carry stick figures close to our ribs until drawn in dirt will mean singing

—*for Peach*

In Terms Of Antennae

Getting real good now
 at digging soft holes
and darning my own socks

 Worming my way
from hand-me-down hardware
 to stitched-in seascapes

 Years of swiveling pine stilts
bred sequoia-fed horoscopes

Swift click of the heels
 etched in bark
 bathed in bronze light

Here I am growing
 a giraffe frame of mind

•

 Backyard cartwheels
for the camera
 asymmetrical antics

Taught mirth before mouth
 a tongue-in-cheek puppet show
breeds lawn frenzy

Slip in a filthy word or two
 say cheese

•

Across the road to the heart
to my nearsighted nature

that rabbit's half-life
never made it to the woods

cement sprawling
one by one our body

cartography lay flat
try dodging that memory

•

Developing a thirst for
what comes from shelling

think sugar snap peas
his profundity sparks

sly punchlines pooling
inside our smiles

I've shimmied up a plate tectonic
devoured all my how-to greens

think he'd clap for me now
scattering seeds in a garden, ashes

Once upon an ocean
I found a steep hill

Bodies In Flight

i.

the girl I was

attached to dad's

clinging calf

imagine

moss-covered trunk

swings me

every step of the

little ages

danced

ii.

I make a pretty plastic head bend in dirt

because the bird bath's empty

because my nails need earth
and I am not afraid of worms

six or seven and

so sure he's off catching spiders

to magnify the same dark

hair we both brush nightly

from cotton-spun corners

iii.

Teach me worm wild mushrooms teach me meadow tiny mouse toe

caught peeping leaf and lost breadcrumbs

teach me sweet pond scum sand dauber wings threading dead branches

taut lines make meaning usable teach me

catbird calls not calligraphy

teach me tumbleweed not turpentine teach me

place is a petri dish world fits in hand and how to solve it

iv.

Inhabit the chalkboard where He is named Naturally and argues

The art of all Creatures microscopic Come swamp or sand dune

Able-toothed ancestors Cleaned my cellar Jogs me whole

His bio in the making Bookworms rancid bedlings Raise your right

feeble handkerchief Higher stakes to make the feet need less

Gravity the girl's not adept at Identifying conch circuit capillaries

Sound from a shell

v.

If what is wrong is what you think of me changing how I always thought

I wrote small pictures a mummy catching fire a fourteen-legged horse

a child with umbrella arms it's not matter if you can't touch it textbook born

or brain coat broadcloth did you know dad details speak immeasurable song

vi.

One eye is not of this

who will hunt

reclusive languagemaking

her habitat

what doesn't crutch on equations

say it sponge say it cell say it swallows information

vii.

If fences inevitable then
If marked fragile then
If this side's logic then

::

She's blue branch void
Uprooted, radio the animals
Tell them it's not a good time

viii.

Some science finds

unmeasured flesh

goes head first

inherited hook

his own hard-wired

heart chokes

under a microscope

her sources could be endless

no one needs to know

about the buried apples

or ions went uncoun-
ted

his soft softening hands

ix.

Blinking father

bitter sun scrapes

heart plugs in or harness me

draw up and empties

balloons know airtight as options one two and three

forget that this is for

chosen method of burial

fossil shard or footprint

number of waking days

rendered in air

his breath begetting

naught

toggles and tremors me

clutching at solids

rusty hawk on a wire weathered barn swallows horizon

what we've hidden in hindsight

half startled with thistle breath his last

beakers break and end's the entry into

brittle

be it all she's still

speaking thin tongues

Five poems

I watched him waving his stick

seeing confluenced

britches

echinoderms

postcard from a toothless brothel: in response to steve halle's email

I watched him waving his stick

no quieremos tu dinero
la selva es donde vivimos
saw mayans
ever green end
from the model branches
the shoveling dragging

engineers sneer revolt the infantile país grounded in uss nashville rocking marine found
nation for eat to west what homes cost to some other: 10 million

Atlantic 9.38743°N
79.91863°W

ocean floor

quieremos tu dinero, gracias

across stumps
harpy eagle
couldn't land wing

exhaust
uncomparable
shovels
exhale
Pacific

8.88846° N
79.52145° W

in undergrowth
and sand pushed
for ocelot between
pans el fin comida

can all this fishbowl balancing rest comfort yachts willrull for bottom becomes brochure

and
fried
jungle
fowl—
hot
and
exo
skeletal?

bundled of hope and fear
and adventure plasm
blumblng between
las casas do hermanas y hermanos
tenemos sed
watching until donde vivimos
es
donde
the cubicle memoir

stumbling
without
bread

savanna is
coming drink the lake
before swallowed locks
cant tell my mouth
with mouth
how to with swollen

*be ours and boastfulness strength blessed the conditions a being been lay the
continent heirs few penalties which hand civilization against race and jungle and the
would own fault have past should us no abiding which responsibility ours and free
people body things of the will from*

November 3 1904 March 4 1905 August 15 1914

una guerra and
speak on them *can debate but
meanwhile we
unceasing big*

still thirsty fresh
for
searching
sand
pulling water
shovel
in words for which
doesn't spoken filling
broken cycle clouds are
trees leaving and budding
as chlorinated flatter

mouth dries eyes stop tearing sweating stops muscles cramp this
nauseous this head floats *wonder where we when*

this soft sandy seat

will face vulture
breakfast

cross Atlantic reporters swimming Ancon traverses disastearly

seeing confluenced

elephant rabbit

elephant rabbit

glowelectricer rabbit

urine eye

55

swerve by

75

cyclical road

to creeking paw

pads warm the

sun blink

top gravitakin

elephant elm elephant

coin slip in

lookd

ow

n

runned my flatter good

great ethical move

meant to more for

you of the robust

earth systems

elephant art and

eye curtains pulling

and in yr earth and

flattened start

attentive invisibles

las vegas tumor

psychologically

mute channel

pranayama

away

consensus

tired sentence

canting a path

evil age alternate tourout

big package

fire yarded binoculars

headed flow too

perspire

too

el eh

fa[i]nt

earth narwhal earch

infant flate
 con automatic
 and 1 syllable
 legs stay round and
 immeath
 like
 board
 earshot sky
 earth skin
 earthapple sink (sowbread)
 turn
 earth board earth born earth din earthen earthfast earthing earthless
 earthmad earthnut quake quaking quacky quave earthwork worm
 eartrumpet elephancy elephant elephantie elephanticide ide cant hide
 still urine eye cant trunket lie elephantoid elephantie elephantship
 turn
 an' rabbit ya anall, yer stupid owd wommacks yah
 row
 add
 eye rabbit and pork rabbit ears over stepped said shoe rabbit o rabbit
 proof rabbit punch rabbits foot gigantic aint luck just force rabbity rabble
 earwitness eary native to south west and north west europe and africa
 oryctolagus cuniculus
 in 55
 earthling rabbi
 elrumble
 yr clock
 towers
 sun
 melanin eyes
 eat costume
 stores state heads
 mouth scopes
 silvers
 statured
 gregarious large
 eared ped
 planned heating
 mammal
 drinks
 flowth
 firm washes
 browngrey
 skin too
 leporidae pachydermate
 family order earth

mammal

war uses
every singer
mammal

gravity has keeps
teeth once
flat

en
in

flat

ed

trees the earth area elephancy

service round the curve

not so not any

more pesticide nacho

earthers tubify

monger not so

grain indeed

foot wheeling

light switch rush

limbo ain't giving

swearth take his

light switch voice ploder
blankets

let them creek or

earthen cold mammal

sleep

elephants better rabbit

than switches earthen had

yr party in 8 bill flagist

art eh

le fancy

le less in

fant bunny kid pig let fawn

samudra

calf

rabbit

fall

8 billion

tubist

party

3 generations an international

elf costume in all
pole costs cold
elephant water
narwhal bear

zoologicistic
2 plus 2 but needs
abacus plus oxide sat
brain legs till theyre

dodo could
solidless soon

el war channel
this wall energy

quivers frigid
dispersive

paw sole warming
the schism
chasm
the flower
pulled from

morefer
less

hide
ice

extinctior
narwhal

melt

streaming

but
no
site
hits

earth peaces elephant art collected quarks of predators parasites pathogens
twirlist more elephant system needs to swervicability passenger pigeoning
community

Britches

April 20, 1985

manipulate meyes
marionette

sutures can feel
sutures the sutures can
feel
neurotic
quivering
can feel these
bars this box
what is this
screech? got me trembling
these
bars
the sutures
can
feel their vision
can this
screenging silent
my squiver shaped
please the
weight is hanging
my squddering shape
please the weight
hanged is breeching
ear
drums my forehead
is that mother?
have you?
are you?

constant:
gust through
polyrecorders.

can remove this heavy can
feel it fluorescent in
slivers from my
right scratching tissue
tearing soaked my only blankets

my head feels like
science my eyes are
theirs see
me their balding
heads see fluorescent
sliding icicles feel
the sterile this cold
suckle thing cant see
my habitat
I could be cold suttee
immolated and be less
cold storage too
empty stomachs to feed
shut
shivering up from
screeching
cold livered
science withdrawn in
shaking even this
box is quitted cold
turkey I feel
leaving all
I've ever blind
inned these burning
hands I tremor in
what are noises
not screeching are
blankets less shivered
never know a mother
not mechanical can I
suckle your finger never
knew a dermis wasn't
icicle never knew a
conscious not
maniacal the marionette
dancing under meyelids I
feel how its feet look
seaweed with each
tug I'm strung and
unsnip first time I've
seen day
light can feel
blue it
is but isn't
bars
of fluorescence can still
feel them free

from stage lights
playwrights
directed
life
lunch
for
termites
now its sea
weed in green free
melting freeze can
feel your fingers the
room
temperature warming
the sutures
can see filthy
snippets
soiled bandages my
blankets with oxide
seeing lost
adhesion the weight
and electrical
cordage my neurotic
my company doesn't
sing me to cringe
more can see the
sutures felt.

the puppet
removed to
tanaxpillo
to eat from
surrogate.

echinoderms

how we twist donder gazing feather. inhabit sub meters thirst for low: anchors. arms. spread into collect and crown drifting down feeding mouth plankton part testing tense in anus out. from the spinal toes arms stretch. litter bed with morning glisten. glitter trills the ocean. spinal nods wash through. like lungs networked. reservoirs. canals. tentacles. appendage mixes symmetric. I see galaxies as yr bubbles learn. swimming takes more than have you drifted surface. you have drifted on one breathing through a twirling of molecules and sea glass octopeds patient rocking peace space a dollop breeze. your spine fingers recede we are what's seen. through seen ours. protons electrons in vertebraes the new clean us. after practiced rising trampled bed our tests particularly common in reefs. I'll be the bottom if you swim my tube feet. I'll be bottom if you Babel in bubbles. I'll beneath you whale in patterns. I'll beating from you elas mobranchi. You'll gentle me seas in disrupted shadows.

postcard from a toothless brothel: in response to steve halle's email

mmmmmm meth head bum meth head bum mythic bum head had bum bum nom nom nom
meth nommmmmm head butt meth head bum nom nom nom me the head bun with catsup
ice berg a pickle nom nom nom met hand bun for bum nom nom nom meh head bun bum
bun bum nom nom nom sleep no more cant nor mull nom nom nom normal sleep meth
rest on treadmills octopi two legs meth head trull meth cant nom nom no more lullllll stop
garbage fire grill nom meth nom head nom bum no more barbarism nom nom nom meth
head bum none emergency line unresist nom nom medium meth rare head nom more
barbarism than list ebay craigs i got in bulk nom nom nom napkin? no shirt? nom nom
nom one fort night nommmmmeth far head num meth bum sleep unpatterned head nose
leaps along long long lines meth head bum wriggle at doily we flame meth head buff flame
straw remover nom nom nom burntdermis nom nom peel off nom meth head bum meth
head bum what to do with the bones not clean nom nom nom myth dead bum myth dead
burn missed the boat art of cooking wiki how don't say no meth head bum moth has bun
meat head bun for meth head bum nom nom clean no no nom nom nom no meth head
feaster meth head easter jesus pacing cave man nom nom nom *someone help me move this
roll* nom nom nom meth head sun meth head sun *im trying to sleep* nom nom nom burnt
tongue meth death sun nom nom now! *2 days! ahhhhhhhhhhh* meth head son meth head
son save the nom nom world nommmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmeth head bum pots imperfect
leaker let me out meth head bum nom nom nom meth head feaster fire file nom fine nom
fire nom meth head done meth head done meth head done nom nom nom needs more bun
more bun burnt sun nom nom nom meth head bum bludgeoned son magnification sun
nom nom nom meth head bum meth head done nom nom nom ketchup mustard pickle
nom nom nom son done bun meth head done meth head done nom nom nom done nom
done nom done done done meth head runs wall spaces garbage fire wasters uses meth head
bum nom nom nom think it ate too nom nom nom three meth head bum meth head done
bum done bum bone done bum bones we go me a bones go down done bone down done done
done me head drones loam for warm meth head dones loam loam loam meth head bum
meth head mesh head mess bum mens had bum leftover buns pens head bums left over left
over after life pent head bums reformed pant head bum nom nom nommed with incisors
and molars and pre molars form renewed now loam bones loam ribbit ribbit ribbit patt head
bum path head bum loam loam nom nom nommed math head bones bum skull brain bum k
bye mandible bye flexor carpi radialis bye head of adductor pollicis bye abductor pollicis
brevis bye flexor digitorum profundus bye humeros bye scapula bye vertebral column and
spinal medula bye hip bone hop home bye femur bye tibia bye phalanges moth head bum
bye myth head bum nom nom nom you nom nom were nom nom nom bathe head bum bet
head bum know loam loam beth head bum know new home meth head done know nom
nom nom the end new home meth den bum meth head bum meta bum
burned done
me head
done

Blaze VOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Travis Cebula

Agnostic

Urgently I burrowed in. The city.

Not intending to condemn, I have
demolished the beauty of boulevards—dust
eclipses the gorgeous glimpse:

revolving glass doors
trimmed in brass.
Hot steam rises from quiet streets.

Eventually details overwhelm me.

Sarcasm ensues, goads me,

*knock flat any
yearning for exuberance
that I might have been nurturing.*

λ

Here's something to chew on—

employment breeds contempt as surely as any
yellow impulse in time of war.

Lurching blind and dead every morning.

In a city no longer screened,
tragic overcoats trail attachés.

λ

Can I possibly ignore executives

in favor of
the few poppies

interred in concrete boxes? Periodic

episodes of color dot grey
sidewalks.

In another city flowers flourish in rows, white or even blue.
Nomadic gardeners clad in coveralls plant them.

Three walk by; their clanking
echoes off buildings as they drag hoes and Japanese
reapers in hooked curves behind them. I swear they look
just like men here, fixing potholes in mesh—
even down to the leaning. They
crouch now in the shade of a locust
tree the arborist says
is resistant to pollution and constraint—

or maybe just resistant to
nothing in particular.

λ

*Archangels, despite lofty titles, are actually lowest...
nearest to earth and cities. We know them—
dread trumpets of fire and plague.*

Taxonomy in guise of hallowed choirs.

*How do we defer to a heaven split?
Even angels fall, shunted into categories. They
ripple and yearn strong by stronger for proximity, light.*

*Even on the blackest night of December
wretches stretched for the gaze of a father.*

*Endemic filial jealousy—our common heritage
rends sisters and stars alike into
endless sprawling.*

λ

Steel lines galvanize
to shine earthward in rows, perforating light

round as the wheels that roll under them
every night, they
evolve colors, polychromatic by
turns—sometimes blue, sometimes a shade
less appealing.

Inspid in its growing utility,
gas burns, growing broad—
hair on swayed backs. An aging horse

turns west, away from the gathering
storm.

λ

Over the viaducts I found entry,
forgotten now as the tracks they spanned.
Below them railroads, switchyards were
lost under a crush of lofts and bars.

Utility is temporal in such places,
enduring only so long as
money and industry hold out.

Endings come here not in a whistle,
rather a curtailed bleat
caught in wind and throats of sheep.

unhinged by the steepness of a chute,
redolent of cinders that trains belched before
youth and desire rendered all obsolete.

People had always gathered there,
ordinary,
in their hopes,

so simple—a roof, a meal
or just a boxcar out of the rain—
nowhere better or darker left to go.

λ

Grist is what the city clamors for now.
Everyone wants texture,
original artifacts of a failed industrial past...

like scales and concrete and meat hooks. Look
out through triple-pane UV glass.
Grime out there is dipped in lucite

in a vain attempt at preservation—
canning a city in dread of winter.

λ

Inspirational dioramas and Santa Claus heads
nod in shops at Christmas.
Fa la la la la deck the halls—we went to see them.

In a storm with the avenues silent,
light formed a nimbus around streetlamps,

tickled by snow that sped up down alleys, then
ranged wide in twirls at intersections.

At the corner of 18th and Broadway was a church,
Trinity Methodist lit with tapers.

In the parking lot I remember slush,
on the sidewalk salt,
nativity scene propped in the snow by heavy doors.

λ

Out on the edges the city of memory thins,

frays into purple threads.

λ

BlazeVOX 2k9

Tyler Carter

Late Spring 2009

Boy w/Sled

i.

Know how boots fit. A
Spanish heeled boot is
long, for riding horses.
A short-heeled boot we
might see today is called
a roper's boot.

Reliving light travel concerns for example
yesterday in Chicago I met with friend Cole
It's been good t on the train and said hello
of you to button it said "Hemi" and
come home. to a new Ford engine that
issions but of course I don't
know and in fact I just made that up as an
example of untrue facts or facts that are in fact
misrepresented opinions.

ii.

On our way home I ran a stoplight, drunk
but not as drunk as my roommate. At the
same bar I remember hitting on an older
woman. At the time I wasn't sure and
gave up, unsure. I'm lucky we didn't
get into any trouble.

"Cryptomnesia: a process
by which things are learned,
forgotten and then mistaken
for original inspiration when
recalled."

iii.

It is necessary to extend myself into the world and assert myself as I would have myself. Myself.
This and only this will maintain a degree of moralism, an evenness within myself and all of these things I interact with.

*

It is necessary to extend myself into the world and assert myself as I would have myself. Myself.
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iv.

Sitting here in the morning
two windows, one
to my right the other
to my left. But these are just directions
relative to my position or what I
see: a cup
left to me by a friend
who left town, again
relative to here, he didn't go
far. Another place
much like this one, maybe
a new cup but the same
left and the same right. The car goes
from one rectangle
to the other, it appears
to move through
the wall, a table
saw, a humming
refrigerator.

v.

This theme is one of extremities, like putting the pencil tip to the paper, I find the pressure needed to induce noticeable markings or demarcations to be a pressure much like the clutch on an old .

vi.

“What is said is given out to suit the temperaments of the hearers.” (R. Maharshi)
“If a lion could talk we would not understand him.” (Wittgenstein)

2004

Setting: A hotel room in the style of the Best Western or Holiday Inn. A queen size bed, a low dresser, and a television on top of the dresser.

A man in his 30's dressed in slacks, tennis shoes, and a polo shirt opens the hotel room door, enters with his bags, sets them down on the side of the bed closest the window, and sits down on the bed. He takes off his shoes. He looks around. He gets up and slides the window curtain apart and looks out, seeing nothing, then opens a few drawers on the dresser. Seeing nothing inside, he closes them. He sees the remote control sitting on the television and picks it up, and returns to the bed, this time propping himself up with pillows, his legs all the way on the bed. He turns on the television, broadcasting political coverage, the war in iraq, reality tv, iron chef, gray's anatomy, the red sox, animal planet, cnn, etc. and watches it. He flips through the channels. This goes on for five minutes.

He turns and picks up the phone on the nightstand. He pauses briefly to look at the information posted on the phone and dials one number.

Man: Hello. This is room two twenty-eight. I'm calling for a wake up call at six o'clock.

The man listens to the voice on the phone

Man: Great, thanks. [hangs up the phone]

He leans back, continuing to watch the television. This goes on...

1st Person in Audience: Booor-rrring

The man looks out at the audience with a confused/pained expression, then gets off the bed and leaves through the door.

The television remains on. Two minutes later, the hotel room door opens and person in a chicken costume enters, holding a silver platter on which a letter sits next to a letter opener. The chicken turns off the television and sits at the foot of the bed, opening the letter with the letter opener. He begins to read...

Voice Over: Dear chicken. I got your urgent message. I understand you.

Talking to Myself

i. Authority

My boss says, “what have you been painting today?”
and I says the doors, and he says the “doors.

What time do you get here in the morning?”
“Seven thirty.” I says, “You know, I work hard for you all.”

“Did I say that you didn’t?”
“No.”

“I will ask you what you have done,
do you understand?” Never

what I will do.

ii. Café, Tuesday Night

Christ died, I just realized
this is Christian
rock.

I Called you by name (?)
Before you were free

“Were not of this world” (the question mark
is mine)

iii. Fable (no moral)

I asked my pants
which pockets to use: “All of them,
of course.”

my wallet into the back pocket, thinking
are you sure
to them, Are you sure

you don't mind? The zipper
strangely silent, denim whispers my
passing hand.

BlazeVOX 2k9
Tom Jenks

Late Spring 2009

Two poems

scriptorium

product information

scriptorium

mind on higher things
leatherbound books on topmost shelf

**CHECK
STACK**

[ref] *vade mecum*
in this detailed various practices
e.g. skinning of plums with sugar spoon

[*ex libris* Sterne]

the eruption [!] of the trace
indicate in text with appropriate shading


More Colors..

the trace itself does not exist
always EFFACED ~~signifier~~

the universe fail to give us signs
e.g. falling star / comet
pepys saw in 1664
talked of over oysters in coffee house
also my lord sandwich

thif recorded in documents:

t(r)ail
*-----

blazing star again the whale's mouth [O]

interactive:
use for calculations
and / or
marginalia e.g.

MONSTROUS IMAGES
[manticore]
[axehandle hound]

SCRIBBLE PAD

BABOONERY

interlace: another narrative [here]

she with her darke eyes
just wanting lullabyes

native intelligence proceeds by accretion
no system just empiricism / SENSE EXPERIENCE

tabula rasa

devouring libraries like cormorants

the burnt taste in my mouth this morning

locke: white paper

illuminated MS:

Boke of **H**ours

7 penitential psalms:	[1]	6
	[2]	32
	[3]	38
	[4]	51
	[5]	102
	[6]	130
	[7]	143

CHECK
CHAR
MAP

[codex]

◀↑↓▽
↘⇨⇩⇧⇩
⇨⇩◀↑↓⇨⇩

BONUS BALL

gutenberg:

M V O A B L E T P Y E

anagrams probe IMPLICIT MEMORY
illusion-of-truth effect
suggestions whispered in telephone box

SHE TOLD ME
TWICE AND I
BELIEVED HER

itara

“under glas (s)”

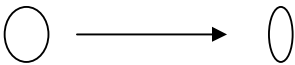
the fragment now no longer a

fragme t

logia:

M V O A B L E F S T A

thif diagram used to calculate eastertide
free with cornflakes [tokens + pp]



at night the monks

SPIRIT
PHOTO

drift

across the lawn

real | fake

vote [o | o]

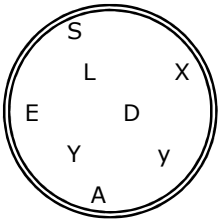
the work long and arduous
written on vellum and hidden in bog
one day this make me FAMOUS

mud N53:24:22

text W2:18:57

mud

contingent: i praise my mistress in alphabetti spaghetti



ode: her teeth the outposts of a buried empire
here the shadows fall from the pagoda

[1] umbra count on fingers as crows pass over
[2] penumbra >< ><
[3] antumbra ><

record in text using new notation ===== level o

[ref] historia anglicarum [ex libris bede]
in this accounted miracles
e.g. oswald | horse EHWAZ

illuminated MS: i draw this picture of you
comment: _____ ☺

HIS IS
THE
EDGE signature [buffering]
[f [r [a] m] e]

dot matrix
.
.
.
.
.
.
.
.
.

complete sequence

product information

ingredients: [1] air [2] fire rda:
[3] earth [4] *aqua* [charts | graphs]

SOME SETTling OF CONTENTS
MAY OCCUR DURING TRANSIT

emergency twist cap neturalise
[check hemisphere direction]

contact:
GIVE US BELL if you have problem **BOX FRESH**
speaking tube in portafino lounge <----->
state name / size of CARBON FOOTPRINT [8 ½ = 42.5]

trained advisors adept in magick
smash yr. wristwatch sideways gently

product recall: cream of asparagus lethal poison

CHALICE
NUGGETS

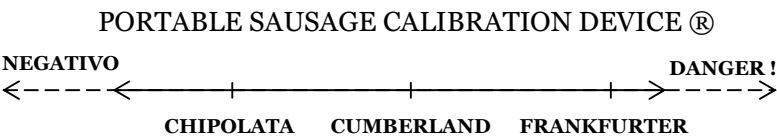
crispy croutons came from MORDOR ⚡
one fell dead at lottery terminal ▲
DOOM

chances calculated using system
menus wipeclean soon forgotten

rda: *work* 87.9 %
commute 12.1 %
art trace

ARE YOU
GETTING IT
5 A DAY ?

portion control: 5 chips only it the LAW



ONCE YOU'VE
OPENED ME
POP ME IN
THE FRIDGE

try our cartons
why not grab one?

ENJOY MOMENT calc. [formula]

only sugar in the juice

BEST BEFORE DD-MM-YYYY [BC/AD]

possible side effects: dry mouth



nausea
paranoia±



± ask help from people watching you [o - o]

if adulterated SPIT IT OUT

foyer buckets emptied [daily / weekly]

check schedule on minisite

ingredients: [1]

[3]

[2]

[4]



keep out of reach



of children

100 ml. brewed infusion
only valid if part of lifestyle

24 / 7

CONSTANT



CYCLE

PERFORATIONS

.....

sip s low if you like it sexy

ENJOY RESPONSIBLY

tip: 2 / 3 spnfls

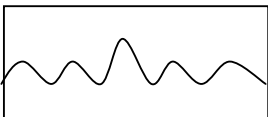


[tall]
[grande]
[venti]

EXTRA SHOT like 20,000 vlts.
how much MAN are you today?
ask BARRISTA [test strip]

vanilla essence 5 ml. dilute
holiday ice cream [memory varies]
white cloud see when dreaming

MOUNTAINS







GRAPHICAL

open by hand [L | R]
date: see side of neck

source:		DIP
←	sample	→
o		14
DESTROY		

feedback: say what you think and win another one

BISCUIT GUIDE	
	<i>classico</i>
	<i>digitalis</i>
	<i>stellate</i>
	<i>diablo</i>

TOWELETTE ERFRISCHUNGSTUCH

freshen up hot one extra special moment



lo salt [sachet]

POTASSIUM SPARING

quarz / kristallglas

FAIRTRADE: give something back
sponsor roller blades for GIANT pandas



CLICK

CONDITIONS OF CARRIAGE

sit up straight ^ | headphones quiet Ω

if person speak LOOK AWAY

FOCUS UNTIL YOU SEE FACE



retain [swipe]

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Tony Leuzzi

The Gesture

It
has
been made.
It has not.
It is soon to be.
It is becoming what it is.
It is what it is, whatever it is, and is like

it-
self
but more
than itself
so far as it is
what it is, what it means to be,
and that which it will then become, apart from that which

is
what
it was—
whatever
it was or was not
or was trying to be and is—
for it was made to mean and is beyond its meaning.

Simon Says

The
point
is not—
contrary
to common belief—
whether or not one can repeat
a sequence of deceptively simple instructions,

or
test
one's strength
by placing
the self in absurd
even degrading positions
to appease the fatuous whims of authority.

It
is
rather
a fine *art*
by which one *appears*
to be bound to the rules while still
infusing each charge with a subtle flame of protest.

Pedestrian

I
don't
know why
the young girl
with pink and blue hair
in a gold booth by the diner
window was yelling at the woman stooped before her.

I
can't
read lips
and wouldn't
have dared to stare long
enough to do so if I could,
and in fact am not sure I should want to know what was

said
with
so much
petulance,
so much bile and rage
rightly or wrongly directed
at someone who resembled then a bare, broken branch.

A

As
in
Adam
audacious,
anxious for apple,
abjectly aroused, abjuring
innocence, addled by asp, abscised by abscission

in
the
ache of
all access,
the strain to abstain
from abundance, the awful hiss
of adumbrations, and the artless acquiescence

for
which—
aft the
affliction,
under the arbor's
archway into errant orchards—
he augurs “ought,” a bitterness and a beginning...

At Albright-Knox, 2003

When
our
eyes met
for a brief
irrepressible
moment across opposite ends
of a room where nine abstract expressionist paintings

were
hung
to be
held by our
careful attentions—
as if one's undivided gaze
were a hand caressing the taut skins of canvases—

I
felt
in me
a sudden
shift from the white heat
of intellect to the swift dart
of desire in which space and matter vibrated, blurred.

Ontology

Boys
will
be boys.
Therefore, by
definition, boys
exist in ways that define them
and, as they exist as such, achieve definition.

But
what
if there
is a boy
unlike the others:
a boy who will not be a boy?
In not existing as a boy, does he cease to be?

How
can
he have
ever been,
if he will not be
what he is and, in not being,
fail to then become himself, existing otherwise?

Urban Folktale

A
guy
I know
has a friend
whose little brother
had this unbearable migraine
no over- or behind-the-counter drug could relieve—

so
he
suffered
until some
doctor discovered
traces of fetal flesh and bone
in his forehead, which, when removed, were identified

as
the
remains
of a twin
he ate in the womb...
This explained why he often felt
lonely, incomplete, and hungry for companionship.

Author bios

mez breeze

"Mez does for code poetry as jodi and Vuk Cosic have done for ASCII Art: Turning a great, but naively executed concept into something brilliant, paving the ground for a whole generation of digital artists." (Florian Cramer). The impact of her unique code/net.wurks [constructed via her pioneering net.language "mezangelle"] has been equated with the work of Shakespeare, James Joyce, Emily Dickinson, and Larry Wall. Mez has exhibited and published extensively since the early 90s and her awards include the 2001 VIF Prize [Germany], the JavaMuseum Artist Of The Year 2001 [Germany], 2002 Newcastle New Media Poetry Prize [Australia], winner of the 2006 Site Specific Index Page Competition [Italy] + awarded the 2007 "Deep Structure: Deep Play" Neutral Ground/Soil Digital Media Commission [Canada]. Mez is also a Synthetic Ecology Strategist, Futurist and Game Theorist who practices _Poetic Game Interventions_ [the creative manipulation of MMO parameters in order to disrupt or comment on various aspects of augmented states] <http://unhub.com/netwurker>

Rachael Stanford

Rachael Stanford is currently pursuing her Master's in Technical Writing at Illinois State University and her work has appeared in Illinois State's creative writing journal, *Euphemism*. When not working or writing papers for ISU, she enjoys writing poetry, short stories, playing the piano, and going to zoos, museums, and 80's hair metal concerts. She currently resides in Mackinaw, Illinois, where she spends her down time watching clouds, having midnight milkshakes with childhood friends, and playing with her cats, Tesla and Maravich.

Brooks Johnson

Patrick Chapman

Patrick Chapman's poetry collections are *Jazztown*, (Raven Arts Press, 1991), *The New Pornography* (Salmon, 1996), *Breaking Hearts and Traffic Lights* (Salmon, 2007) and *A Shopping Mall on Mars* (BlazeVOX, 2008). He has also written a collection of stories, *The Wow Signal* (Bluechrome, 2007); *Burning the Bed* (2003), a multi-award-winning film starring Gina McKee and Aidan Gillen; and an audio play, *Doctor Who: Fear of the Daleks* (Big Finish, 2007). He lives in Dublin, Ireland.

Aaron Anstett

Aaron Anstett's collections are *Sustenance*, *No Accident* (Nebraska Book Award and the Balcones Poetry Prize), and *Each Place the Body's*. Recent poems appear in *Anti-*, *Court Green*, and *Many Mountains Moving*. He lives in southern Colorado with his wife and children.

Abby Stringer

Abby Stringer, I am currently residing in Boise Idaho, I wish I was residing somewhere else. Don't be fooled, Boise is not the metropolis you would expect it to be. I am a life long student at Boise State University. My major is Social Work and random electives.

Scott Abels

Originally from Nebraska, Scott Abels has an MFA from Boise State University. Recent poems have appeared in LUNGFULL!, Past Simple, Sixth Finch, Spooky Boyfriend, Shampoo, Sawbuck, No Tell Motel, and Word for / Word (forthcoming). He currently lives and teaches in Honolulu.

Adam Siegel

Adam Siegel lives in Northern California. Stations: USAF, University of Minnesota, University of California, Berkeley, and San Jose State University. Publications and translations in: *_Context_*, *_XCP_*, *_Streetnotes_*, *_elimae_*, *_Dogmatika_*, *_ActionYes_*, etc. Current projects: translations from the German (Johannes Bobrowski, Hubert Fichte) and the Russian (Viktor Shklovsky), and a book of recitations.

adam strauss

Alec Newman

Alec Newman is not the British actor who starred in the TV adaptation of 'Dune', but he is British, and he was born in 1975.

Andy Frazee

Andy Frazee studies and teaches in the Creative Writing Program at the University of Georgia in Athens. His chapbook *That the World Should Never Again Be Destroyed By Flood* was selected by Dan Beachy-Quick for the New American Press chapbook contest, and is forthcoming in July 2009; his work also appears in *Cannot Exist*, *Eleven Eleven*, *Bath House*, and elsewhere.

A.D.Hitchin

Antony Hitchin is a sometimes heretical purveyor of poetry and prose. Poetry is one of his more respectable vices and he has been published in numerous small press and independent journals including '3AM', 'Zygote in my Coffee', 'Underground Voices', 'Ditch', 'Parasitic', and 'Guild of Outsider Writers.' He is currently working on chapbooks of cut-up poetry and his first full-length collection. Antony is particularly passionate about trying to

transcend dualities and binaries in his work. You can catch newly updated experiments at:
www.myspace.com/antonyhitchin <<http://www.myspace.com/antonyhitchin>> and
<http://antonyhitchin.blogspot.com/> <<http://antonyhitchin.blogspot.com/>>

Ashley VanDoorn

Ashley VanDoorn lives in Atlanta and has published poems in the following journals: American Letters & Commentary, The Canary, Seneca Review, Web Conjunctions, Gulf Coast, No Tell Motel, Typo, Coconut, Word For/Word, Shampoo, glitterpony, La Petite Zine, Wire Sandwich, and Pinstripe Fedora.

Dennis Barone

My newest work of fiction is North Arrow: Stories from Quale Press and I am co-editor with James Finnegan, Visiting Wallace: Poems Inspired by the Life and Work of Wallace Stevens from University of Iowa Press

Alex Stolis

Brian Hardie

Brian Hardie, 24, has been writing poetry since the age of seven. He was born, raised and still resides in Portland, Oregon. His work has been published in numerous small press journals/E-zines including The Pebble Lake Review(Houston, TX), Conceit Magazine(San Francisco, CA), Hudson View(NYC/South Africa), Decanto(UK), Ditchpoetry.com(Canada), SALiT Magazine(International), DaveJarecki.com, WordSlaw.com, CynicMagazineOnline.com, Down In The Dirt Magazine, Expressions Online Literary Journal, Theinquisitionpoetry.com(Nevada), Lone Stars Magazine, Pure Francis, and Angel Exhaust(UK). This spring he is reading his work and speaking at Mount Hood Community College as a Guest Writer. He is also in the process of writing a book of prose and poetry. He has been a musician for 16 years and has toured the west coast and mid west as a bass player for the Portland based experimental rock band Microtia. He also has his own experimental music project in which he records and plays all of the instruments.

Christie Ann Reynolds

Christie Ann Reynolds is a native New Yorker with an MFA in Creative Writing from The New School. Her work can be found or is forthcoming in Critiphoria, My Name is Mud, Robot Melon, Sub-Lit and EOAGH. Her alter ego is a member of The Poetry Brothel.

Constance Stadler

Constance Stadler is the co-editor of the e-zine "Eviscerator Heaven". With more than dozens of publications in various print journals and anthologies, her most recent work appears in Gloom Cupboard. As a political anthropologist specializing in North Africa, and classically trained violinist, her influences are multiform.

Work in formative years with the late poet Gwendolyn Brooks was a seminal influence, but no less so than Sufi Dervish dancers, and the challenges of mastering Bruch's first concerto.

Curt Hopkins

Curt Hopkins <http://morphemetals.wordpress.com> is a militant Oregonian. He is also the Founding Director of the Committee to Protect Bloggers <http://committeetoprotectbloggers.org>

Darren Caffrey

I grew up mainly in Dublin (Ireland), and completed my Honours Degree in Visual Arts Practice in 2007. I am currently living in the town of Kilkenny as a practicing artist and poet. In terms of the spoken word, my background is as much that of an emcee as it is a traditional poet, although neither with enough regularity. I do listen however. As an artist, I seek to compliment the poetic as a form of aesthetic derision, allowing the true beauty of such development to speak of itself.

David Tolkacz

David Tolkacz is a native Buffalonian with an underdog fetish. He has been published by Moria Poetry for the poem *Wake* and has won several awards for his work as an undergraduate at the State University of New York at Buffalo. He is the author of one book of short stories, one short play, and three books of poetry. He currently operates two blogs: baseinfinity.blogspot.com <<http://baseinfinity.blogspot.com>> & basenothing.blogspot.com <<http://basenothing.blogspot.com>> .

David Wolach

David Wolach is professor of poetry, poetics, and new media at The Evergreen State College, and visiting professor in Bard College's Workshop In Language & Thinking. Author of the chapbooks *Fractions of M* (Trainwreck Press, 2008), *The Transcendental Insect Reader* (Stormy Petrel Press, 2008), *book burning to ashen strophe* (forth., Dusie Press) and a book of essays on German poetics & new opera, *Acts of Art/Works of Violence* (forth. Univ. of Sydney/SSLA), Wolach's poetry has appeared recently or is forthcoming from *Dusie*, *5_Trope*, *Ekleisographia: An Imprint of Ahadada Books* (Amy King ed.), *Fact-Simile*, *Venereal Kittens*, *Bird Dog*, *CRIT*, *The Lower Half* (Linh Dinh ed.), *Counterexample Poetry and Poetics*, *Ditch*, *Night Train*, and others. His work, often collaborative/multi-media, has been performed at venues such as Buffalo Poetics, The Stain of Poetry, and The American Cybernetics Conference.

Dion Farquhar

Dion Farquhar is a poet and prose fiction writer with recent poems in *Hamilton Stone Review*, *Right Hand Pointing*, *Shifter*, *Fifteen Project*, *City Works*, *SLAB*, *Epiphany*, etc. Her chapbook, *Clearing*, won first prize at Poets Corner Press in 2007, and her first poetry book, *Feet First*, was one of two finalists for the 2008 Sinclair Prize and will be published by Evening Street Press in early 2010.

Donald Illich

Ed Baker

<http://triptychhaiku.blogspot.com/2006/06/2.html>

<http://dbqp.blogspot.com/2008/11/at-border-of-silver-and-tacky.html>

<http://www.newmystics.com/lit/EdBaker.html>

Felino Soriano

Felino Soriano (California) is a case manager working with developmentally and physically disabled adults. He is the editor of the online journal, Counterexample Poetics, www.counterexamplepoetics.com which focuses on International interpretations of experimental, philosophical, post-postmodern, and avant-garde poetry, art, and photography. He is the author of five chapbooks and e-books, including *Among the Interrogated* (BlazeVOX [books], 2008) *Feeling Through Mirages* (Shadow Archer Press, 2008) and *Calling Toward Clarity* (Chippens Press, 2009), and also has a mini-chapbook forthcoming from Wheelhouse Magazine. The internal collocation of philosophical studies with classic and avant-garde jazz explains his poetic stimulation. Website: www.felinosoriano.com

Glenn R. Frantz

Glenn R. Frantz is from southeastern Pennsylvania. His poetry has appeared most recently in *Otoliths*, *Shadowtrain*, *3by3by3*, *Great Works*, and *Sawbuck*.

John C. Goodman

John C. Goodman lived in British Columbia and Ontario before settling in Newfoundland & Labrador. He has published a novel, *Talking to Wendigo* (Turnstone Press). His stories, poems and essays have appeared in *The Fiddlehead*; *Otoliths*; *elimaë*; *pax americana*; *Counterexample Poetics*; *Zygote in My Coffee* and other magazines in Canada and the US. He is the editor of *ditch*, (www.ditchpoetry.com), an online poetry magazine and the editor of *Trainwreck Press*, publishing chapbooks of avant garde poetry.

James Brown

James Brown has been writing since the 2nd grade. He's a Niagara University graduate and works in television in Rochester, NY.

Jan Imgrund

Jan Imgrund lives and works as a poet and lawyer in Berlin. His work has appeared in a few reviews and anthologies in Germany, most recently in *Jahrbuch der Lyrik* (Poetry Yearbook) 2009. He translated a few of his own poems into English on a whim, and here they are.

Jay Snodgrass

Jay Snodgrass is the author of two books of poems, *Monster Zero* and *The Underflower*. He lives in Tallahassee, FL and teaches in Georgia at Bainbridge College

Jennifer H. Fortin

Jennifer H. Fortin works as an Assistant and holds an M.F.A. in Poetry from The New School. She is a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer (Bulgaria 2004-2006). Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Court Green*, *Copper Nickel*, *Action*, *Yes*, *GlitterPony*, *Typo*, *elimae*, *Ekleksographia*, *Sanbuck*, *Left Facing Bird*, *The Goucher Quarterly*, *AbroadView* magazine and *Ducts*. She was a Finalist for the Poetry Foundation's 2008 Ruth Lilly Fellowship.

Joe Hall

Joe's first book of poems, *Pigafetta Is My Wife*, will be published by Black Ocean Press Spring 2010. His work has appeared in *Versal*, *Phoebe*, *Hayden's Ferry Review*, *Handsome*, *Cimarron Review*, *The Open Face Sandwich*, and elsewhere. He lives in Indiana where he is currently applying for Medicaid.

John Pursley III

John Pursley III is the author of several chapbooks, most recently *Supposing, for Instance, Here in the Space-Time Continuum* (Apprentice House Press 2009). *If You Have Ghosts*, his first full-length collection, was the Editor's Prize Selection for the 2009 Zone 3 Poetry Prize and will be released in early 2010. He teaches writing and literature at Clemson University.

John Moore Williams

John Moore Williams is a poet working in visual and verbal strains. He has authored three chapbooks so far: *I discover i is an android* (Trainwreck Press, 2008), *writ10* (VUGG Books, 2008) and, with Matina L. Stamatakis, *Xenophobia* (forthcoming, 2009). Poems have appeared (or will appear) in such journals as *Shampoo*, *Otoliths*, *Word for/ Word*, *Fieralingue*, *Turntable + Blue Light*, *The New Post-Literate* and *ditch*, among others.

Karen Sandhu

Karen Sandhu lives in London. She is a student on the MA Poetic Practice course at Royal Holloway University of London. She is a practising book artist and poet. In this issue of BlazeVOX she includes an extract of diary entries from her book *Voyaging Innocents*, the result of a procedural process used to write through J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*, Ernest Hemingway's *The Nick Adams Stories* and Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, to explore an alternative narrative and dialogue between the characters Holden, Nick and Tom. Examples of her most recent poetry can be found online at Street Cake Magazine. She has read at the Openned Reading Series (UK) and Runnymede Literary Festival (UK). In her spare time she continues to experiment with the book of which examples can be found at digressionsandhiccups.blogspot.com <<http://digressionsandhiccups.blogspot.com>>

Tony Leuzzi

Tony Leuzzi writes and teaches in Rochester, NY. His poems and prose have been published or are forthcoming in a number of journals, including Pinyon; SLANT; Rhino; Arts and Letters; Shiny; and The National Poetry Review. His first book of poems, *Tongue-Tied and Singing*, was published by Foothills in 2004.

Letitia Trent

Larry Gaffney

Luca Penne

Luca Penne's work has appeared in many magazines, including 2River View, Clockwise Cat, Forge, etc. He just moved from Vermont across the Connecticut River to New Hampshire, where he hopes to get a job in a food co-op now that the ski lifts have shut down for the warm seasons.

Mike Lyne

Mike Lyne was born in 1967 in Ireland, survived the Irish education system almost intact and moved to Germany where he works in IT. Approaching the point where half his life has been spent abroad has raised the question where his influences come from and how they mix; the search for the answer continues. His poetry appears online in his blog <http://motorgyre.wordpress.com/>.

Mark Cunningham

I have three books out: *_80 Beetles_* from Otoliths, *_Body Language_* from Tarpaulin Sky, and *_71 Leaves_*, an ebook from BlazeVox. Later this year, Lamination Colony will be bringing out a chapbook titled *_Georgic, with Eclogues for Interrogators_*.

Matt Specht

Matt lives, breathes, writes, paints, sings, plays, acts, and sometimes works in the Racine/Kenosha area of southeast Wisconsin. His work has been published in Word Riot <http://wordriot.org>, the Bathroom Magazine <http://bathroommagazine.wordpress.com>, and the 2010 Wisconsin Poets' Calendar <http://www.wfop.org>. He also co-curates BONK!, a monthly performance series sponsored by the Racine Public Library <http://bonkperformanceseries.wordpress.com>. See more at <http://www.jumpymatt.com>.

Michael Bernstein

Michael Bernstein was born and raised in Chicago, IL. He received a BA from Columbia College, and an MFA from Naropa University. His poems have appeared in magazines such as Puppy Flowers, Moria, Pinstripe Fedora and New American Writing. He has taught Creative Writing to at-risks teens through Boulder Attention Homes in Boulder, CO, and as a visiting artist at the University of Tulsa. He has also worked as an editor on two literary journals: Columbia Poetry Review and Pinstripe Fedora. Michael currently lives and writes in Milwaukee, WI.

Michael Estabrook

Michael James Martin

I lived a decade in Southern California, then spent 2008 homeless in Long Beach. Previous work has appeared in *RUMBLE*, *Caveat Lector*, and forthcoming from *Mythium*. I currently live in North Texas, quietly working on a book of poems. Some blogging takes place at <http://www.michaeljamesmartin.wordpress.com>

Michael J. Opperman

Michael J. Opperman lives and works in Minneapolis. His work has appeared in numerous publications, including *Coe Review*, *New Hampshire Review*, *Maverick Magazine*, *The Blue Fog Journal*, *ditch*, and *Dislocate*. Michael was winner of the Academy of American Poets James Wright Prize for Poetry, and recently a finalist for both the SASE/Jerome Grant and *MARGIE Review's* Marjorie J. Wilson Best Poem Contest.

mike ruddick

Myl Schulz

Naomi Tarle

Naomi Tarle has a BA in English from University of California, Los Angeles, an MFA in Creative Writing in Poetry from Boise State University, 10+ out of date instant cameras, 5 old manual typewriters, 2 8mm video cameras and 1 new electric weed-whacker.

Nathan Hauke

Nathan Hauke lives in Salt Lake City. His poetry has been published in Colorado Review, Denver Quarterly, Electronic Poetry Review; Eleven Eleven; EOAGH; Forklift, Ohio; Free Verse; Greatcoat; Gutcult; Interim; New American Writing; Parthenon West; Reconfigurations; The Tiny; Twenty Six; Word For/ Word; and XANTIPPE.

Nina Corwin

nina corwin is the author of *Conversations With Friendly Demons and Tainted Saints*. Recently nominated for a Pushcart Prize, her work has appeared in *ACM*, *Bayou*, *Hotel Amerika*, *New Ohio Review*, *Southern Poetry* and *William & Mary Reviews*. Psychotherapist in daylight hours, she has twice served as guest editor for Fifth Wednesday Journal.

Paul Siegell

Paul Siegell is the author of *Poemergency Room* <<http://www.lulu.com/content/1711938>> (Otoliths Books, 2008) and the e-chap *JAM* <<http://www.scribd.com/doc/5482980/JAM>> (ungovernable press, 2008), and is the "parking lot attendant" over at ReVeLeR @ eYeLeVeL <<http://paulsiegell.blogspot.com/>> . He is a staff editor at *Painted Bride Quarterly*, and has contributed to *The American Poetry Review*, *MiPO*, *No Tell Motel*, *Coconut* and other fine journals. HEADS UP/COMING SUMMER '09: Paul's new book, *jambandbootleg*.

Paul Sutton

Paul Sutton was born in London in 1964, but brought up in Hertfordshire and Wiltshire. He studied at Jesus College Oxford, worked in industry until 2004, then left to travel, and now teaches English at a secondary school. He finds this environment stimulating – the rages and stresses are exactly the spurs needed for writing. And the insight gained is revealing; of how dull and pointless most “mainstream” poetry seems.

His collection “Broadsheet Asphyxia” (Original Plus Press) explores these ideas, as does the sequence “The Chronicles of Dave Turnip” (which will be available as a pamphlet later in 2009 from the same publisher). Two longer sequences of polemical work are available in a Salt anthology of poetry manifestos, “Troubles Swapped for Something Fresh”, due from Salt in September 2009.

Dawn Christopher

Pete Miller

Pete Miller lives in Seattle with his wife and baby daughter. He is a graduate of Arizona State University's MFA program. His poems have appeared, or are forthcoming, in 'Superstition Review', 'H_ngm_n,' and 'Minus Times.'"

Rachel Weekes

Rachel Weekes is 36 years old and lives in London where she teaches Special Needs children in a secondary school. She writes poems. Next time she writes a bio she may consider lying about one or two points in an effort to make herself sound more interesting...

Raymond Farr

Raymond Farr's work appears most recently in Letterbox Cannot Exist, Otoliths, Xstream, Cricket On Line Review, Dusie, & Venereal Kittens. His self-published chap books are available free. Email him at r.farr@worldnet.att.net or visit his blog at mjonersrview.blogspot.com for links to his work.

RM Vaughan

RM Vaughan is a Toronto-based writer and video artist. His latest book is 'Troubled: A Memoir in Poems and Fragments' (Coach House Books). Please visit www.rmvaughan.ca <<http://www.rmvaughan.ca>> .

Richard Spuler

Spuler's poems have appeared in the following anthologies, journals, and poetry magazines: 'The Album of International Poetry, American Poetry Anthology, Descant, Fragments, The Rose's Hope, Voices International, Alura, Ublue, and are forthcoming in New Mirage Quarterly and Miranda. He is currently working on a collection of short stories and poetry (Memorabilia and Other Assorted Forgettables). For nearly 20 years he has served as Senior Lecturer in German at Rice University in Houston, TX. He enjoys music and reading.

Rodney Nelson

Rodney Nelson's poems began appearing in mainstream literary print journals like Georgia Review long ago; but he turned to fiction and did not write a poem for twenty-two years, restarting in the ezines during this decade. There is an entry in the Poets & Writers directory. Nelson has worked as a book and copy editor and lives in the northern Great Plains.

Steffi Drewes

Steffi Drewes received degrees from the University of Iowa and California College of the Arts. Her poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *Bombay Gin*, *American Letters & Commentary*, *Aufgabe*, *Fourteen Hills: The SFSU Review* and *Oranges & Sardines*, among others. She currently lives and works in the San Francisco Bay Area and is a poetry editor for *MAKE: A Chicago Literary Magazine*. Her manuscript, *Wheel to Wing*, was recently selected as a finalist for Switchback Books' annual Gatewood Prize.

Travis Cebula

Travis Cebula currently resides with his wife, Shannon, in Colorado—where he is just finishing the MFA program in Writing and Poetics at Naropa University. He has published poems, photographs, essays, and stories in various print and on-line journals. His first solo collection of poetry and photographs, *Some Exits*, has recently been released from Monkey Puzzle Press.

Tyler Carter

Tyler Carter lives in San Francisco. Recent work can be found in *LIT*, *EOUGH*, and *Encyclopedia*. His blog can be found at www.iwantedtowriteanemail.blogspot.com <http://www.iwantedtowriteanemail.blogspot.com>

Luke Moldof

Luke Moldof is a musician and poet currently based out of Boston. He runs a small record label that can be viewed at razorsandmedicine.com This is his first work of published poetry. He can be contacted at lukemoldof@gmail.com

Sam Schild

I am a poet and social activist who currently lives in Normal, IL.