

# String Parade

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BlazeVOX [books]  
Buffalo, NY

## Double as Bed

*for Mark*

I am not featuring pessimism  
as a function. I am not a member of a trade  
union, although I was invited to a lunch  
or two I meant to attend, but didn't.  
The heroic, *are* the overlapping  
voices found wandering the streets,  
since they all came to the neighborhood too early  
and the restaurant doesn't open  
until noon. The city-life is back to  
evolving. I know it's a central force to my reasoning  
and order. There are times to go in.  
This is one of those times. I am not  
imagining we'll ever be together, although we  
could, and so I may now begin thinking  
in this sense, since taught early enough: never waste a being-  
based aesthetic. That's me—  
reminding myself to work, live, and then  
speak, in that order. They are closest to my biological  
likeness, they too have accidents as well.

**“Of the Two Sisters, I Loved the Young”**  
*for Shelley*

never has there been a remembered for how the remembered  
wanted to go on

there is a saying for this that goes

the townspeople

would rather give up an unheard of summer

than comfort the uncertain response from the famous pace

of a well-built fire

where to stay around is to hear the entirety

the names in the many old photos

gone bad

## The Claim of the Cyclist *for Ryan*

It would help to run from the firings of tragedy  
& reckon the nerves in their clearing.

Long ago, there were many dead men,  
some stuck inside, far from their front yards

when they went. It keeps one believing  
in the measured wrap-up. A runner's digest,

GI problems, a pouch of ground ginger labeled:  
The Machine.

Look, I resent coming into this here.  
I was eating smart, stretching the fish

as they say. I thought there were years  
to collect some surplus of time, cash an old check,

fake our death, fall in love.

## A Ritual of Resistances

*for Maxine*

I have a bookcase of expectancies  
that ensures the sex of the second half  
of the nineteenth century.

There are techniques of the uncle  
that could transmit disease, call responsibility  
a dementia lacking medical theory.

By power, I turn to doubt, turn to the name  
that would test guilt  
and oppose confession.

At this time, there is a useful means  
of representation. There is death by control,  
methods that still question their use.

I am that nature that is here,  
for example. Involuntarily, the public health  
calls for the rain to go dry. In their report,  
they define being as: the heap that histories protect.

## Late December

*for Jill & Joy*

They took the car  
as far as it would go  
and ended up here,  
patient and without  
a plan. True, there  
is no snow yet, it's  
getting late into the year  
for us to worry about  
that. I've left leaves  
near the sidewalk, they've  
done nothing but grow  
darker and then dry,  
flatten before tearing,  
always in quiet, without  
a streak of violence sent  
into those mornings  
when I check on them,  
when I look down.  
Today, though, the girls  
brought luggage for nothing,  
bags too heavy to even  
trail behind, knocking  
out the dirt, turning  
over those things  
much too unprepared  
to face our demands.

## A Monster

*for Marlee*

Many times, fussy once outside the house, the common pleasures returned and went about marking up the lawn with a dropped assembly; nature well and gone. And after some time of bending over,

cleaning up deposits of neglected galaxies, there was nothing more to wait for—the contention there are beds and softer days, rocks who seem to care and consider why they were left out over nights

to contend with the ever rolling weather. It's true, you have married a criminal. He is gentle without a heart and dedicated to the extremes of affect found from slipped words, roads unnamed now

from street signs stolen and tossed by boys into drainage sewers, and the sleep that comes before fully peeling the tangerine for his daughter. What comes to mind while alive is made entirely

for the world, most of the time. The rest that enters, moves to ends that soak up the massive burning plains, designated neither to disease nor health. And so, the glow from this side is faint.

The club it carries is barely long enough to rest on the shoulder, to one day become the shoulder, unreal as the chapped skin beneath wigs. Dear the airless and those feelings of going for the doubled,

the briefest advance from someone doing what they can, is what I call real exercise. The blue look of staring directly into another face as the stoop goes dark and the approaching limits

of walking, just normally walking, fold up their hairs for sights unseen, knowing there are tolls to look at two people growing dim. Hands, now becoming faces, forever possibly there.

## Cold Drink of Water Blues

*for Joseph*

It began as a detective story: Who had eaten  
all the beans? Being in the picture  
allowed her to feel herself again. Is it enough  
to bring in the earliest of forgotten times, and then  
send them off with a grateful but garish embrace?  
But to hint, we're grown not to be early risers  
connected to last night's weight. Murder fascinated  
by an unused set of muscles. To accept easy ways  
of saying something isn't easy, and the echo  
given back is soon quiet and over. I don't know  
if the headshrinkers know this, but they should.  
In several ways, we do fit and occur. Duty of the  
accomplice to fill out the forms. I must tell you  
I once said, pictures really mean a fall in relation,  
replacing who walked and wondered, straining  
to recall our captions as only the living should.