

Aphasia

by Beth Balousek



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BlazeVOX [books]

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publisher of weird little books

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Table of Contents

<u>Dream Seen Sideways</u>	7
<u>I Woke Up and</u>	8
<u>First Impressions</u>	9
<u>I am Beautiful</u>	10
<u>Succor</u>	11
<u>Around the World</u>	12
<u>Suicide Doors</u>	13
<u>Déjà Vu</u>	14
<u>Maybe I'm Doing This All Wrong</u>	15
<u>Don't See My Think</u>	16
<u>Bunker</u>	17
<u>The Trees</u>	18
<u>Red Letter Day</u>	19

Aphasia

Dream Seen Sideways

something about the. reeds cattails
dusty
or. something like that
fine fibers find the soft. spots
in my lungs
I can't get. away
riding some log. or
raft. I can't get.
away it's dark but not too.
dark more like a tornado
sky it's dark but.
not dark. I
smell water
that I'm not quite in. wet
I wear. wool wet
burlap pants. my hair is lank
eyes. sour with. sweat
rain curtains, fingernails raw. with
dirt through cattails
fibers thick
in my. lungs

I Woke Up and

Everything is on. Wrong
my hands are on the wrong
sides. Or maybe my. Thumbs
are all in the wrong places. I can't
find my hair. To brush. My eyes
they see. What I don't know.

My face is my. Lips
ahead of my. Nose
behind my ears where. I put my
glasses my fingers. Try to make sense of it
But they don't know
where to back. Put things. Where?
Things go. They don't know
where they go. Themselves. I hear
nothing. I don't understand
who did this.
To me. While I slept. While
I minded my own.
Self. Mine.

Take this jigsaw.
Downstairs
to feed the children. The kitchen
to feed them. All
the kitchen they want.
And get them off.
Get them. The

word I can't find. Almost
see.

First Impressions

I do not like my knees
they. Offend
my sense of aesthetics.
So. Jammed into my leg
so. Unbony my knees
belong on a FAT
GIRL'S body I am. Fat. Really. Just look. Oh
NO, I don't mean really look -
look. Past me
please.
Look into my. EYES
into. Not the color of my eyes
the brown that leads. There
such a pedestrian. Soul I've got
it my. Comfort ZONE
here
at the tip of my index finger
LOOK. Just
there, right there
at the tip. NO! Not
the cuticle
but the whisper
of fingernail that shows here
at the end.
That crescent. That
moony sliver ah
yes. That's it.

That's the spot.

I am Beautiful

No more. Ugly
is deeper than skin. Deep
words. When I speak
in my own voice. I say things
I don't mean to
Hurt you with. Words
are broken. Glass that cut past my lips.
are banished from. Exile. Let
me in. One room
you in another. Far away place.

Succor

You say this word. Soufflé.
You say Delicate
but I say Snow
and I say Cold.

I want to eat your. Soufflé.
I want to eat. Your
Delicate. But
that would not be
Polite. With my face. To plate
I. Eat.
Leaving some grease. On the
China, where there once was Snow.
Even I know Snow is not
greasy it. Is wet. What kind of
Snow left grease on my plate?

What food is this?
the more of It. I eat the
hungrier. I get
this soufflé. So cold it burns.
Blow on it first.

I have a pure cold. Hunger
it twists my guts. In knots
so sour.

Around the World

She held. her pen to a sheet
of paper he used. His finger to punt
the pen. Out from under. Her
pen from her. This
pen. To paper the phone
rang. For him
there was dinner mashed. Potatoes enjoy
not being. Chewed. There
was his door. Closing.

She needed. To breathe a
breath of. Air
she needed. The car to
drive to it did not matter
where she drove. And drove
the road. Before her. Unending.
She grew. Weary she. Drove on
for days it took her. Four
days. To drive around
the World.

Suicide Doors

on bridge. Occupants must remain. In their vehicles makes wide right. Turns left. lane must turn Left. turn allowed on arrow right turn allowed on Green arrow. through traffic use right Lane. for slow-moving Vehicles not allowed on. soft shoulder yield to oncoming. Traffic ahead. No turn. On red drug-free zone no. Parking on opposite sides of the street yield. To pedestrians have right. Of way. Pedestrians and bicycles. Prohibited reduced speed. Ahead twenty miles per hour Emergency. Stopping only. Speed limit forty five radar. enforced keep left. Right. Need help. No? Stopping on bridge. Occupants must remain. In their vehicle.

Déjà Vu

It's all over. Again.
I feel I've been. Here
before. I always want. What. I can't
have it all. In the palm of my hand.
In my hand is
worth two in the bush. Worth two heads
are better than one. Better than
One.

Wrong doesn't make
a right. A penny
saved is a penny, a rolling
stone gathers. No moss is a
penny earned. Cry over lemons
when life gives you. Milk.
Make lemonade. A stitch in nine saves time.
Saves Milk.
Saves Moss.
Saves Lemons. Saves
Nine's. A stitch earned.
Pride goes before the bigger they are.
They fall.

Maybe I'm Doing This All Wrong

Scurrilous urgency
to punch. In on time
punch. Out with over.
Time. Nothing but money
that needs. To be spent
right. Away so we don't
lose what. We've already
taken. On time
to pay. On time with
promises not to. Ever
be late on their. Time
not ours.

Don't See My Think

Trees blow, do blow.
Don't listen,
Listen as they rub. Rub
the sounds, obscene.

Don't see at me
don't look my think, here
This is mine, this air this.

My feet do move me.
Look. At them
sharp in shoes.
Look. Away they move again.
(They know, they know)
Don't think. You others
just out for strolls
or on your way homes.
I see a diner. That's it.
We must be going for a bit of eat.

This is hungry. This.

Bunker

The trees have done burning
leaves turn fallen
no more bright light
leaves.
No more bright light tree.

No more fire. In the forest
I hurry yellow. Put
a layer on.
Painting everything.
Two coats my rooms
yellow.
I paint so much.

The Trees

In my yard.
They are walking trees.
On most days
they walk from the potted
shrubs to the mailbox.
And that is all.
Lazy trees.

I asked the trees.
“Trees?
Will you walk with me to the store?
I'd feel so much safer if
I was not alone.”
They walked with me.

The next day.
“Trees? Will you stand in front
of my windows so
no one can see inside.
See what I do in there?”

They did not move.
They did not move at all.

Trees do not walk. Because
if trees could walk
I would teach them to run.
Put them to work.
Make them do things.

In exchange I would let them live
in my dirt.

I have good dirt.

Red Letter Day

Floor to ceiling
yellow Post-its
covered in my raw scratch
spelling out importance
in black ink.
Then blue.

My body fills any given room.

He tries to read my writing,
but
what's the point?
He knows me like a book.
Like the back of his hand.

*A dusty raisin gets kicked
across the floor so small*

I feed him.
Beef and shredded Bible,
a bit of today's paper for spice.
He reads, hungry. Chews.

*Swallow headlines and psalms,
horoscopes and apostles.*

