

BlazeVOX 11

Spring 2011

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Abscissus

This is the body
we must inhabit, starved from desires,
spirited to dementia,
the brain a folded garment
thrown in corners
with ungraphable angles.

These are the rooms where walls
and ceilings touch, unmixed, simple.
This school's math teacher is going to die today;
the bank's vice president will consume his own afternoon;
the attendant in the parking garage naps at the bottom of his kiosk.
Today makes

death that more imminent. Our names are cloud
above ice, ineffable, torn away gently
over years.

Turned, bent—my heart

No eyes, no eyes
but these lamed by fire.
I was born human, no heart
but this one blazing through crowds
with a teenaged groin,
hungry, coughing at the memory
of tobacco, known at the edge of
town—junkpile with carparts; discarded
stoves fringed by grass; rickety
light from aluminum;
and dogs, their boiled voices barking
at street music. I don't want

to be good, but creature,
haunted silver thing
clutching the mountain—
roots and clods and troughs of dark air.

Poem on a styrofoam cup

A wordless ink-blot
wanders in my notebook,
spindle for nothing
because all I saw on the way
to work today were brake lights,
donut shops, and a purple
gorilla that sells Oldsmobiles. I wanted

a vision, something like the burning
sacred heart wrapped in thorns,
winging from my centre. When my ribs

yawned open, I birthed nothing
more than newspapers and packing peanuts.
It was

the office's fault, of course. They didn't
just want me to work, they
wanted me to believe.
So I exacted my revenge
in pilfered office supplies
and secret notes slipped under
the doors of my coworkers:
strange poems with question-marks
for titles and terrifyingly
ambiguous endings.

Downtown, under some malfunctioning streetlamps

Wash me in rainwater
blackened by the fire escape.
Let this oil
slick the alley, its trail
moon-bend the night—I want
to see in this dark.

Let me into this broken
parking lot guarded
by wire. I won't ignore
it just because the sign says 'no.'
I want to rush up to
certain strangers and
study their irises,
how they are both bright and black.

Erase me with heaven: dim,
abandoned buildings
crowned by midnight.
We are not faceless,
but gathered closely in.

Honestly

Inside of me is this little bird
who rides a bicycle,
and when I see you,
my brain sends him a message
to pedal faster,
because then we might just
catch up
enough to touch your face.