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Free

LVNG II
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FREE

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WILLIAM FULLER

Dives & Lazarus

for Bonnie Barber

There are two articles called *Article Ninth*
in them would still
be
holding and effective all the
provisions not negated by them
and these giving rise
to vexations
I could not have guessed at
but not even a hint of this falls to earth
deaf as ever
I made my way through the transformation unit
past thinning crowds raised in ditches
and I felt his presence
carefully cut to fit the frame
and out of this flies a kind of bat
on a perfectly level flight path
toward all kinds of people, apparently silent,
what is their common characteristic
with some exceptions many of them
have considerable accumulations
or bear witness to pure mysterious gold
in an effort to sustain themselves

Etude

not exactly to that earthly
sequence praise belongs
swear by these verses
precariously returning

what will they convey
in lieu of traditional performance
dispensations of time
oblivious to sunlight

no use against death on the
contrary look for nothing
a railroad embankment
a small nervous dog on a leash

blood, muscles, bone
in crude formation
elsewhere imputing
no base to the root

In Memory/Mousegrove

it seems clear you are still
hoping to identify the source
of the error then renounce
any claim to it physically
in nature some hints of this could
have been discovered beforehand
lean over the rail here's my
camera out of range the haze
is green yellow paint on trees
soaking the gravel/straining to
suppress laughter as you
approach the sanctuary
all due proportion is engrossed
by those stainless blossoming
out of their own heads
eat thereof and drink refreshed
enter his perforated gates
with dignity and excellence of
knowledge and without drowsiness

JEFF HAMILTON

*“The Material of Language
is the Sound of Trade”*

from “Trade,” Jessie Abramovitz (1977 - 2000)

You rendered the quill—my best self.
When Carl dropped in the other day,
a heartier stock than you,

though younger brother, and of eyes, too, blue
polished like the “vulva of a cow”—thus,
porcelain—he did not seem one who,

listening for the backbeated faraway
signals in railway clatter to lock
within the magnetism of tape sound,

could drift so—oh, I suppose he drifts—
into the headphones’ steadfast whir,
that, missing his station or, as his mother later sifts

out, athwart your perception
of having boarded a train moving the wrong way,
you leaped off it, and the rails broke your skull.

That Carl wanted something from me
I treated as a social occasion
as now, ascending scales, I talk to keep

for myself what would become love’s visit.
What would I keep of yours who leave me
could be kept, a thought between us then

the anguished judge of us. Of the words
I most favor I tell Carl of an assignment, he asked
after it, to compose in loco-description a solitary place

that can stain solitude's occasion, and of your response,
by no means a native one, to walk along the large-cobbled
levee this side the Mississippi recording the night's traffic.

The line I can't tell Carl of, when praised back to you,
you parried, claiming it was lifted from class notes—
so brief revealing Carl learns from the visit only where

it happened, in another office, across the hall
our Panoramic Way gossip remembers
a Berkeley Renaissance,

slope steeper than any which lay me down,
roads climb through trees and tree branches
lifted on our voices. Carl cut the roads

(I can say) that overlook crystal-formed clots
of roofs and window-steeple, men and women
dally across his body, reading aloud astride

a computer of railroads sung on race records,
retrieved from Tacoma attics, to be melted down
and dumped on war-rationed munitions markets-

in towns mastered by their poet-ethnologists,
with their tape-recorders and Qabalah,
a Harry Smith, Jamie de Angulo.

Our common code could never mind everyone
who, writing nary a word, or, writing, thence
said, as one might speak, what was said so well someone

gained—minding the lore daily, oh hourly—when
a record got left behind. Nor was it a contest.
From Laclede's Landing you lifted: *a hollowed-out stem*

*of tall grass, amazing, out of the concrete
slab bank catches air to whistle—wherein
a Northern town keel meets quill in English*

to which on a train quill returns, keel stays out
late, and dresses up as a woman to order to sleep
with women, the material language

remembers our male lesbians! You rendered
my keel—the sea-ward half to the sea-air.

In those days, my parents re-locating frequently, we were given
little choice of who our mates were. Coming into the houses
of my parents' friends, I came into all houses, for I was no
more than an infant there, or toddler, or just after (there's no
term); in each place I was asked to sleep, to entertain or be
entertained by the children of that house. What was strange in
my being so young—for it was only in being young I was
strange—made me whole, a figure of plenty. Among children
we could grow up on that exponential scale, try to control it,
we had no other responsibility—a discipline the midst of great
chaos, as the bomber will strike surgically to cauterize against
a developing order.

You render the sea-air—
The sea in it a maze of amusement.
Did I mean something to you by accident

as by accident now we are numbers
in a maze when the plenty's rent?
A hollowed-out stem of tall grass you see

you were, I might have told him,
a sound outside you, or around you on a train,
ditty come from a site across which countless trekked.

Lithium-Eye, Lithe-Eye

There is no way
for one to just say

to another, Examiner
the visible sucked

inside mine-eyes
I raised one

good and one bad
to guard against

possession along
a three-rod road

going back to when
I animated dolls

with a certain
air-haunted gaze

they huddled up
singing in

the surveillancies
now how do I look

patched into
lull and cruddy

citizenry I don't see
past the confidence

of a couple wolves
a recurring tool shed

I can never meet
inside the inside

shed of what
we try to fix and say

days I feel tall
days I feel a light

on my left shoulder
don't help

me don't fit
oasis in my mouth

The Confused Vision of Clocks

The Charmer could
stay hurricanes

with a right look
fix a will

your habit of blurring

behind shades
If you've lost

this ability
in adulthood or awake

fan the fire-eye
your scales won't exactly

it's been 47 days

fall off Foxes
have holes

time goes beside you

to rescue themselves
stoke one to

get out of my hands
don't crazy-boy me

flare its shutter
Light spends seconds

reflex means regress

whipped and lifted
six seconds whip

and sift a bird
into what

what did you say

you need to hear
Each hole holds

a new Accuser
opening his heart

*Commentary Is the Concept
of Order for the Spiritual World*

If these streets, this world, are the arena,
then each person passed, each bidding building
unentered, leaves room for ruminations
illuminated by an edge, a back-lit otherness
positing a liberty to think or not think
an idea, to fly up outrageously
or swoop earthward, toward a grand passion
with a hawk's fierceness, talons extended,
and yet, for a second, to hesitate—

If we are always outside the precincts of power,
even our own, and so imagine
(for instance) the possibility of a tyrant,
helpless for a moment before sunlight's brilliance
on rolling grass, if we no longer

keep to our assigned faith as Job's messengers,
each escaped alone to tell thee,
then the deep flaws, the salvaging uncertainties
in the world's overriding syntax—
love of self, for instance, migrating to love of another—
or those records of an observing eye
noting the lichen's patch on the rock face,
the waters slow eroding of the boulder,
(such witness an ongoing work
of resistance), wouldn't this proclaim
that *he is most apt who brings with himself*
the maximum of what is alien—
a sense of world-depths that no longer crowd the mind,
thus a rich compost of the literal
of what is said.

And then might not our words loom
as hope against fear for near ones,
for their gesturing towards a future?

Midway Park

Streetlights shine on
a globe that is dark.

A white winter is pearly.

Crazy hunter. Lost

smartest boys on earth

box auroras around
black tree in the bee

yard. Broken beads
and pillars, northern

light (hence the remote

beauty) and the dark
screen cracking light

spar. Long

before I left, I couldn't
get sunfish off my mind.

Test the mettle out of wood.
The white hat of wood

on the best battle
fields. Ferris wheels

perceive the sixth string.
Air on the G string.

Fear of Empty Space

Father has an adder's tongue.
Grandfather always said so.

The lilies do not spin. This valley
itself insists on spinning.

Small faces fear empty space.

They exit windows in half sun.

Pug in the snow, when your
leg's looking blue lacquered

plums click against the glass
pit in the snow. All intents ramify

an isolate. An isolate is more
pure. An isolate is both

the sender and the receiver.

Velleities want the season
instead of hunting to go away.

What velleity wants for a trophy
is beyond me. *Horror vaccui*

happy to find a jack-a-lope tail.

Track

##

All spells recalled
but still accountable

Lost glamour, lost grammar
but still accountable

Lost gramarye.

#

Lost grimoire:

Soul-eater possibly
put to rest

Or never put to rest
now that all is lost.

#

“Only the faithful
hold this place green”

The magic withdrawn
the book dismembered

And the blessings and curses of the Lord.

#

Gone in an instant
gone into the dance

Gone into the abyss
the wizard and his foe

All power drained away.

#

Sexual potency
replacing the spells

Replacing the names

Soul and soul-eater
yielding to the flesh.

##

They were invested
in that magic

So was I

They were invested
in that language.

#

Was there any choice?

Yes, the world answered:
here is pain and beauty
in equal measure

Equal to any magic.

#

Or another order
of the same magic?

Here at the cabin
chipmunks, chickadees

So close to hand.

#

So close one can only
react with pleasure

The dis-ease of pleasure
pleasure of dis-ease

The jay squawking in the aspens.

#

The jay squawking
asking for more

More magic
in the simplicity of its hunger

Than the poem can sustain.

##

And yet the poem
must sustain all things

All of the orders
as have been prescribed

As have been ordered.

#

Therefore and
therefore

Not that it can be explained
not that it can be inscribed

But still.

#

Nor is language magic
as in some cabal
waving their wands

Not magic but mystery
into which one may go.

#

Into which one may go
when one's name is called

Called by the Name
the nameless Name

Called into the nameless.

#

Not mystification
but a simple mystery

The self and the world
are made manifest in language

Called out the nameless.

##

But why am I called
to use *this* language?

So wise, she said
putting me ill at ease
troubling the waters.

#

Doubling the sense:

Brooding over the waters
or burning in the abyss

What should and should not be

What I know and do not know.

#

What I know
is that one is called

What I do not know
is the caller

If that matters.

#

What I know is that
in idleness or urgency

The call descends
the response ascends

That is the matter.

#

One finds oneself
in such a place

Or one finds that one
has been put in a place

Holy and enchanted.

##

Circular place
circular tower
circular ruins

Ruins of a circle
frequently empty.

#

Woven thrice
but still empty

Still vacant
as if an occupant
could be found.

#

As if a practice
could be founded

Risky business
for those who know

But worth the investment.

#

Our founder
thrice blessed

At the circle's center
thrice woven

A portrait on the wall.

#

Admirable
but unacceptable

An unacceptable offer

These risks
these returns.

Too Full for Birds

my eyes found

to who am I bound?

in the bath
room there
was a book

your book
mark

where you died
memorized

you say
her name

at least
she is soft

vowels

her arms
give up

night gowns

warmth sinks
into tile

pot of
coffee
to last till
supper

memorizes
a poem

Niedecker

from the pulpit
I give you

Whitman

you give me
one rose
through
this priest

I splash
you

you have my copy

I know your
God

this could
be it
for us

if you
see me now

your son
heats
bird
bath
sobs

too full
for birds

best thing is

you keep
your name

mother placed in her
bed for viewing

he went to stamp button
holes

paged in an
airport
someone
says it
properly

Polish

how far
are you?

p.16 p.24 p.10
& bibliography

sugar in the grounds
this morning

Holy
Holy
Holy
Card
Holy
Holy
Card
Holy
Holy
Holy
Card
Conrad is
God's
they
did
his
mouth
wrong

cemetery
never occurred to me

plastic pots sway
not clay

it's okay to
leave this
town now

for Conrad Szymaszek

from Lyrics for the Book of Thel

Corporeality is the goal of the ways of God.

FRIEDRICH SCHELLING

I.

It was Thel who walked the blue shards
And spelled the ligature of the fall and its foaling.
Thel who beheld the ruin of the body
In the body's morph and prism.

The gulf of days was a bell and its echo
Calling across the bones of the sea.
Thel sang beyond every genius
And she was burning as she came.

Like a glass poured into a river
She unbequeathed all signatures.
The star that hung its light for her eyes
Crowned her hair with the sign for abandon.

O come by wand, by cup, by nothing.
Like a halo, like a flicker, like a bomb.
Who will release the melligenous song
Of the last of the day that discompletes us?

Or say the instant of this shattering
Deletes the running of form and becoming.
Say she is nowhere but the frame of dissolving
And we are the wreckage of her bourne and her wake.

v.

The murmurs *thalassa*
not as Xenophon did
but for the dove whose light sings
all who see it.

The dove is requisite
a burning into time.
Its wings are shadows
inside a white fire.

The mother of the dove
is the earth in its turning
saying we cannot
not praise our own becoming.

The hard thing is to be awake
under stars nor to drown
their sparks in a flood of words—
dream-specter in the chorus of hooded glory.

The issue of tears is the great form of desire.

IX.

To shed the doctrine of the Blind
you must first go by way of the unseeing.
Holy is the night in which all cows are black,
by which occlusion narrows the focus to a single bead.

The vision of a dawn hangs by a thread.
To see me by the grain I am & uttered whole
enter through the sound of bells.
The brightness of the scission enfloods the eye.

Or else the hood of glory is a singing also
in the narrowness of the body's prism.
Become what bleeds away, what casts
its flare to the shore of thigh & finger.

The ultimate of Wheels rolls in gold and stutters
as the farness of the sundered comes
to hold us in a tide of revolving lights.
Gaudy Thel, the rapture encants us one cell a time.

from *June 19, 1982*

8.

Employ was from *fw* employer, *F*; from the passive form, *implicari*, *L* - involved in or attached to, *rw* *implicare*, *L* - enfold, involve (which also gave us *imply*). Its early sense was to apply something (C15) to someone (C16) to some purpose; both senses are still active. In the history of wage-labour this became, as we have seen, taking into paid work.

I have a difficult time sleeping. I have a habit of biting my fingernails. I have nightmares every few nights. Almost every day something happens to frighten me. I often feel all wound up.

*

suture class structure
to racialized future

two autoworkers
White out of workers

location politics of
eye Color collar

singing "Don't it
make my brown eyes

blue" stripes White
stripping Starlene

urban impact detritus
suburban impact Gap

hooded sweatshirts sweatshops
Red-lined neighborhoods

the tired retired
and retreated



The interaction with idle is particularly interesting. The wide sense, in application to people, can be illustrated from c. 1450: 'To devocionne evre and Contemplacionne / Was sho gyven and nevre ydel.' But in an act of 1530-1 we find the characteristic 'to arest the sayde vacaboundes and ydell persones'.

Most of the time I feel blue. I feel like giving up quickly when things go wrong. Things are so bad that I feel as though life is hardly worth living. I am often worried about possible dangers that I cannot control. I am often tempted to give up trying to solve my problems.

*

pushed the frame
named names

depression repression
the song the same remains

“Drive your Chevrolet
through the U.S.A.

America's the greatest
land of all.”

stolen stereo types
discriminatory democracy

participatory
plutocracy

windows replaced
by the wind

begin
shattering



*This has lasted long enough, but already in 1764 Burns observed: 'they are idle for want of such work as they are able to do' — a perception of **unemployment** in the modern sense.*

I believe that I am being plotted against. I tend to be on guard with people who are somewhat more friendly than I had expected. I find that I have lost my faith and trust in the future. I am troubled with the idea that people are watching me on the street. I do not trust certain members of my family. Someone has it in for me. I feel that it is certainly best to keep my mouth shut.

*

See Free Press
graffiti

what's the dirty
little secret

exposed overexposed
Caucasian cavities

"never was a racist"
just swung sledgehammers

Japanese cars
barroom brawls

scrawled abandonment
rented U-Hauls

to Phoenix Houston
maced malaise sprayed

comrade
or comprador



II.

*Clearly the modern (from 1C18) sense of **unemployment** depends upon its separation from the associations of idle; it describes a social situation rather than a personal condition (idleness). There has been a steady ideological resistance to this necessary distinction; that is the point of Thompson's criticism not only of Young's history but of Young.*

Much of the time my head seems to hurt all over. I am bothered by pains over my heart or in my chest. My heart sometimes pounds as if it were coming out of my chest. I frequently notice my hands shaking when I try to do something.

*

Dragon Restaurant
Tiger Stadium

“Oriental gentleman”
brains on the street

Louisville slugger
“little motherfucker”

had a name
Vincent Chin

Lily's story
same Old Glory

unemployed structurally
Capitalized racially

White stars
Topless bars

Oh say
say you can see



The resistance is still active, and in relation to the words is especially evident in the use of idle, in news reporting, to describe workers laid off, locked out or on strike. With its strong moral implications, idle in this context must have ideological intentions or effects. 'Many thousands idle' sticks in the mind.

I am sure I get a raw deal from life. I feel as though I am a condemned person. I seem to have very little control over what happens to me. I am being made to suffer for the actions of others. I feel as though I have been betrayed.

*

All that is solid
melts in the pot

moved South
emptied out

intolerant American dollar
torn blue collar

skull split shift blame
it's just a game

“...swung the bat
as if a baseball player

swinging for a home run,
full contact...”

All that is solid stolen or sold
base bias bigotry gold

and bones are at the bottom
of the melting pot



Parch

Turn off the lights coast

tracks to coast

Sorry — that's not coal

the sky was smoked not

long ago

The goat

almost took it all but

burst into ash near the glare

Capricorn is a hitler moon
its house of blood is orderly

There is a bully liberator system

decomposing in every grain

Bulldozer shifts the sides

sunbathers sleep the burn Let's slip

the grass when I get this close Granules

drive me underground from the neck on up

*

What did you say?

There's sand in my ears I never
promised you a vanguard baby

just a shot at

getting a fishkite airborne &

an underwater bird to swim

The stars are more than spoilers &
where in the charts is our proudhon moon

Here's a taste of it

at play in our salted stank

Fuck that

light up there right now it's you

right now it's me taking

mouthfuls of this ocean home

ADAM GOLASKI

from *Swing*

for the Sedor family

I am doing some differential calculus — / the derivative of x with
respect to y — / I have no patience to read anything else /
Other reading always drives me back to my writing.

LOUIS ZUKOFSKY, FROM "A"

Mon. {7/14}

...the weight of your body measured
by the strap of a cloth swing. The
discovery of pumping + pulling made
over, again.

At a house made
entirely of metal-warships + tanks—

—across

a girl + boy,
swing sitting side x side.

The conversation that buzzes into sun-set
gray-light, that swings
slow + close,

the pegs w/out contact,

the buzz of
bike wheels + bumble bees

all to the delight of
violets + chatter-plants.

Tues. {7/15}

As
camp's in full
swing, weeping children are carried in.

On the patio table
ant in ant mandible.

orientation facing children fenced in swing
back to bush animal rustling.

{10:35pm}

metal bedroom +
movie theater mix.

The Lake:
A shifting mat
of sound-waves.

abdominal
muscle
spasm."
I force my fist
above my groi-in
beats + shush-in

Zetta stayed.
My night noise
her repoise.

Wed. {7/16}

{10:56am}

Now.

...“how many people say
kid zero is a girl?”
is the girl
w/ the red kerchief on
her head +
braids

= kid zero watches over the
swing-set.

Swing in a dress
get

thigh burn +
hip-ket.

{5:45pm *in the metal house listening to Glenn Gould perform
Bach concertos*}

Glenn Gould
what's so good
about you
should I know
you're piano

player piano
in the back
of a mom + pop
donut shop

a man pretended to play
or did he
say
it was haunted

(don't matter.
I was delighted.)

that slumped
piano
that hole-punch dickie
which is
music
(how can that be

how can be
teeth)

that >pop<
reminds us
don't forget

it's the wheel
all over again
+ God, I love it
its got teeth

that >pop< is
my favorite pt.,
Glenn. It's like the
Arctic, Glenn

The crack of a frozen ocean

what makes you
so good you know that

>pop<

Thurs. {7/17}

Eyes closed +
a vertical line of text
a
question.

A tree falls on a line

+ so we have no power.

{11, midnight}

+ then I want
to describe a patch
of grass

a weed
a wildflower.

Guthrie, so
wobble pin-spin, needle
sweet swing
+

“I don’t wanna die
just wanna ride on mah
motor-*cy*-cle.”

Ma-tthew
motor-*cy*-cle

a record w/ no
blank bands
a long player
“you can have anything...”
or a blank record
or w/ one band:

Ma-tthew
Ma-tthew motorcycle.

Fri. {7/18}

Matthew.

Strange, friend
I see you every
here
on a bicycle.

You're smoking
Just
the first cigarette +

the AZ daily

we both see
that aerial
of
that
stretch

they found that little girl's body
we hope she was
face
up.
Samantha, we think
of you
die-
ing. The great
black
sky.

Mahler +
cicada

drone + melody
w/ two sugar cookies.

I'll have decaf w/ that.

People are leaving Mahler.
I say,
“Mahler nothing.”

...and then I lost Mahler glasses but ah found 'em.

Cocoa,
the only oboe
in a long line of
oh-

boy that night hike
w/ two bikes—
The lake was a smudge of blue grass waving beneath
the fog.

then...

the long lad
falls asleep
on two beds!

Sat. {7/19}

Caught a spider's thread on my hand.
Shook—
swung back
like a rubber band.

Jill's napping. Zetta's probably napping.
Michael's patio reading.

I'm on my stomach
in a white room
w/ music:
Oh,
horns—slow—hmm, hmm, hmm
+ clarinet, maybe
oboe?
no: piccolo, saxophone.

Rest my head on my wrist,
the light on the wall
falls
in stripes.
Various whites on whites).
I'd get bored if I didn't have the...
anxiety...
knowing this
swing
ends soon.

Sun. {7/20}

day not noted no
text produced is
a day no notes
no text produced
to re-pro + re-duce.

I run on endless exhaustion.

Simple Poet Lives in Indeterminate French

Descriptive pilgrimage saw what it saw it needed to see
Reference point of early vernacular goings-on oriented
horizontally
Actor's role to endorse something else for someone else
Print continuity, limitless trips to the self
Public passers-by a series steeped in places that aren't yet
A pillar in the middle of the occasion
Symposium rarefied so you project it
Porn could be pop if more people watched
I reckon, I reckon with, hayseed, provincial
That she spoke French made it worth the price of admission
What she said "croire" is southern, provincial, French for
"to reckon"

splash run, dear to0

steal them softly
from the tree
pasted
to your marathon
of covers
and calculated
truce. mark up

the unworn,
the fuse,
the memory
of lava ponds
for the Cuna,
they drop
down your cheeks.

the wall that holds them
forms a map
in small pieces. i walk
through the Atlantic foam,
you
let the tunnels hold
your fur — we place
the moving
inside cold streams
through black holes
& faded faces.

your eyes are open
your saddle
a patch full of paint, at the quarry
where rats
leave their coats
for courage. a body bag
bursting
with pine cones
is still.
it puts lost ambulances
inside the match head
of your hatching,
the sofa
pulls its stop
around the ports
that sirens
cue, for the purple throng,
trade stains
are less for it

than willows — a ride
through the apple carved
pastures: in the sign lama

shade waves go
and spit
pregnant calls. hand in hand
the bottom
of your rusted scoot
keeps its tools
fleshy. my sky rings
curl beside barefoot

ruins
of flint and sparks

the vanishing circle
of wild onions, tangles
with shared bodies
hanging
in the wood,
a rifle shot
pulls ears
to take on
double talk. in another
color twin
sleeps
what the city sheds
in thick, bamboo stitches

where the stem, dripping
chases she, *si*,
put lines
that the phones
stay cold with. one breath
grows
its thorny stems,
to exit — Mireya,
shirt the cold
from your rising
oven. burlap, yarn puller
the underground house
full of graffiti — holds you
because the fuse (nowhere, now here)
sees you by

Alaskan panoramas
in Penonomé

full of red limbs
and islands
that mark your breasts
with handy trails. the farm
under your eye winds
grows more green
in a paradise
of wet feathered
parrots —
they read the blighted book
with rainbow
corpuscles
in the relation
that the painted
ask you for
with broken
egg shells

they put a head on
for salt blocks

the address
full of palm lines
is what waits here
for your bicycle's
fast turned pedal

[untitled]

i'm not frozen
anymore.
i'm in the years
that untold weapons
heal, i carry

my 9 digit spectrum
to the end.

ive taken off
the road carcasses
that stench up
your workaday dreams,

you will never smell
the warning
that i fired. you release
without knowing

all the countries
that have your name
as emblem, in the sea
that never moves. *podrido*

you sink
with secret flowers
at the helm
of your trusted
flag, the flag

as you say
'we will not forget'

nor shall we
on a day
better fed
to the pigs. see
their litters
and think
that every corn field
will have its way
with your children.
meet me
and know

that i stood by you
in the aftermath
of your disappeared.
the other name
that i wear

sinks with you
under the grave
i shaved the grass
off of, that day
when infinity rose
to heal me
with its simple

Commands.
the time
of abandon
and repair
is over. you
see me, the colors

that drill you
to the other side
of the earth

the letters
that call you
a flash by shivers,
my airplanes
dropping bombs
of gratitude
on your playgrounds. see
me know
your tongue

as ive cut off my own
with which to undo
the bridge
that connects your faith
to the aftermath
that pulls us
to the edge
of silence, the one
place WHERE
trade winds
spiral, to wound us.

my release
stands with you
past the end
of the crumbling
space station

sea lions

i walked the pier
with my edge on the water.
i can't see the city
from here.
i am twice delivered
and twice
mistaken.
i do what the eyes
were turned to
with only one horizon
making lines.
i see the desert
above the clouds
and move more hills
than rain.

i am the number
that quickens sand pits
with their time dark
limits.
i am the leather
strap
that kept white rooms
under the nails
of wide eyed
constellations
on the ceiling
that calls
for no one. i am the pebble
that one word
taped
to the ground.

i am the segment
that makes worms
move
in the earth.
i am the feather
that counts for killing
and the crumpled night
from which
the morning
rises,
on a cold
shining
floor

from *The Apartment Series, #1*

You say the bed should go *here*. I don't disagree but merely question the means by which your message is communicated. The refrigerator is humming too loudly for my taste. It is broken, you say, as if I couldn't know. (It is as if he were speaking in dialect, his unwritten borders materializing in the apex of a dream.) Perhaps if the mood were set to music I could better understand. Since nothing has been conveyed, I make my dramatic exit.

Husband: I find unqualified genius in the fact of the material text.

Wife: Why don't you just fuck off?

Innovation, at least since Henry Ford, does not work this way. If you are to say the argument hinges on this, I am to do nothing but offer my support. If I am to say I think tonight I might blow my brains into a thousand miniscule bits, you are to say well, I think I can see your point. Have I made myself clear?

Let's have a day where we speak exclusively in I statements. Otherworldly, isn't it? What I want now, at least, is a word way back in the head. You say *cigarette*, I say *I sense the trap-pings of a certain black market poetics*. Neither one of us can be objective. It is not a happy fact to put our lives down on paper. Suppose the critics are to tell us we have got something wrong. You suggest we take up tennis, but the more I read the more I must take issue with the notion that our pursuit is

uniquely American.

There are numerous examples of this school of thought. You are Canadian, after all. And I am supposed to love it here, but all that has happened is that I miss Pittsburgh, a place I have never been.

#2

You arrive in the living room to inform me of the impossibility of my experiment. I leave in my wake tiny holes in the wall, but fail to prove this is where I live. Something happens and it expresses something you feel. Can we call this an official record? I can't recall. (She is attempting to extend the document. It is a matter of some significance.)

Husband: Any idiot can see we have fallen prey to a distinct hermeneutic condition.

Wife: You must know I will always love you.

Try to decipher the line between feeling and invention. We'll call these little droplets of water "fact." Let's call that window over there "objectivity." Are we getting anywhere? I can engage with you on a textual level, but I don't like the way that you chew. You try deciphering ideological error through the filter of omniscient exposition. It's a bitch, isn't it?

The sink is leaking. You give me no reason to doubt your assertion but I am forced to conclude this is a lie. So is the problem hunger or merely poetics? If I am to extrapolate from circumstance, it is an unwritten rule I must come forward by century's end. You close the door. You open the door. It is the hottest day of the year.

#3

I present my theory on utensils and your agitation is palpable. The wording is tentative and comes at some cost — the pitch of an object, spilt milk, etc. — but my velocity proves a resonant payoff.

Back in the kitchen you tend copiously to the narrative arc of our dinner. (The depth of his understanding is immaculate. She is a very lucky girl.) Failing to realize a quotidian resolution, you consider leaving the country. Lost in your penultimate assertion, I cannot secure the appropriate papers. The argument must wait.

Husband: Our contemporary dynamic lends itself to a subtly cogent ambiguity.

Wife: Could you be more specific?

Suppose we were to spend our lives critiquing public buildings or reviewing fashionable, guitar-based music? At what precise point might we muster a tangible palpitation? I have no particular fondness for wood-derived implements. Still, I do find it necessary to keep things clean. You down with that?

Similitude, you must realize, is that barely sketched form. If you repeat *I miss you* I will always reciprocate. My only wish is a reference point. There is ice cream for dessert.

The Body Does Not Judge. The Mind's Province.

Pleasure. There must be reason in it,
not just a body's hedge against despair.
Mind you, it is the mind's province
to consider the extent of its estate.
The unreachable blue of heaven
is unreachable, still, for all we do.
Undo. But the body does not judge
when deprived, and will conspire
to please. Fancy. The mind says,
go higher. Look here. But the eye
knows what the tongue feels
on the lip of the other. Speak —
absence. It is not God that is hidden. What —
ever body's the mind. World is mirror:

The Body in the Light of Its Own Diminishing

Pain. I do not understand. Though
stand under much of what is age: is ache,
is mine. Is said to pass shadow-like
across a human face. Is said, the beautiful
among us, too, must suffer. Perhaps
more keenly feel. Pain. Foreknowing. Those
earthly givens. Giving, to the least of us,
that unearthly look. Would, otherwise, be dead.
As the moon is dead with science. Always
turned away. Facing us with the same
dark face: appearance as deceit. As change.
No. Something comes between us. The body
enters the light of its own diminishing.
Obscured: as for the first time seen.

A Servant of God Without a Head I

for Nathaniel Mackey

A birthday treat:
Spill out, bag of party favors —
the boiled bones of a murdered
atheist in a southwest desert.
There, the sky's a shred of shade.
Light pours through the tattered strips.
The snake of time gulps the sun.
And here, a power outage,
a black flash through a row
of white houses.

The cool gust could be
a kiss from an overarching realm,
reaching you as in the depths of
a cargo hold where you shoot in the dark
at teeming tarantulas. The bullets
zip all around as you crouch
amid the bars of ebony hidden
in the coffee beans. And
hidden in your knee,
a ligament of cadaver,
from your honeymoon fiasco
at the alligator breeding grounds...

Rain crackles on the roof
over at the drug company where
you survey the ill with the help
of Ms. Ogle & Mr. Flinch.
Where hope is an organism

sweeping upriver, may it soon
jump into our lungs and blind us.
But for you, now, there is only one cure:
(a nerve in my head stops my heart...)
Bleed all over yourself until
only pretense feels real.

Children in a dream
collect fingernails in a sachet,
then tie them to the cathedral door.
However, the book of Numbers tells us
holy objects are carried across Sinai
wrapped in dolphin skin. Only
one caste can pack them.
For the rest, to look is to die.
Words are flies, they live a day.
In the morning, under the streetlights
along the block, their bodies
will be a fine black dust.

Here at the hospital,
Manhattan Gnostic, we call
the nativity ward, the doom room.
But death can be misleading...

A Servant of God without a Head II

As they are said to say
at the Registry of Reincarnation —
When the pouring doors open,
all slip into a cold flow. But first,
a new condo, built in an old
quarry, zoned not to rise above the rim.
And when the angel ends her opening
remarks, pain shoots diagonal
down and blows off your arm,
shoulder, a chunk of back.
Bronchial tubes dangle
like cut phone wires
in a house confiscated
during a drug bust where
faces drawn on the bedroom wall
will drown in a shade called
moonshadow blue
and children in gossamer
chase fireflies with a gold net.
There is a swimming pool hidden
under the floor. In the pool are Jews.
Idling at the door, a soccer team
made up of SS officers.
(Your neck keeps hurting you
and a burning sensation
sweeps over your body.)
Deer cross the parking lot
At dusk and devour the pansies.
In these latitudes, late light is a glory

But night is screaming and blood.
The singer David Byrne
Pauses in his immense labor,
clearing boulders from an avalanche.
He sings a song he has written.
The verses are senseless
but the chorus is clear:
I eat shit all day
and I die all night...

The Greeks

Ladder and source,
we find no ease

never quite
at home at home.

No, never, not
darken the page

in a childish script.
Winter has come.

Ladders lean
against the sky,

sources whistle
past our lips.

Pacing rugs
or battered roads

we wait for what
we know we know.