

ET.DER.I.V



END
CAPITALISM
NOW

A large crowd of people is gathered for a protest or demonstration. In the background, a large American flag is visible, with its stars and stripes clearly shown. The crowd is dense, and many people are holding signs or banners. The overall atmosphere appears to be one of a significant public gathering.

adam j maynard

adam tedesco

alanna kinne

amital stern

andrea reynolds

andrew choate

amie zimmerman

anselm berrigan

avery r young

ben tripp

caconrad

caitlynn liquigan

carrie hunter

charlie newman

chris ashby

An aerial photograph showing a large crowd of people, likely protesters, gathered on a city street. Several police officers in riot gear are visible, some holding shields. A white van is parked on the left side of the street. The scene is chaotic, with people running and some individuals holding up signs or flags. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

chris hosea
christina chalmers
christine kanownik
chuck stebelton
clare follmann
clay ad
cris cheek
curtis emery
cy ozgood
dan fisher
dana teen lomax
danna lomax
daniel owen
david greenspan
david larsen

A large crowd of people is gathered for a protest or demonstration. In the background, a large American flag is visible, with its stars and stripes clearly shown. The crowd is dense, and many people are holding signs or banners. The overall atmosphere appears to be one of a significant public gathering.

david spataro

denise dooley

denise newman

diana humble

dm jerman

douglas piccinnini

edric mesmer

elizabeth robinson

elizabeth young

eve prusa

filip marinovich

fred carter

gabriel wallace

isabel balée

ivy johnson

An aerial photograph showing a large crowd of protesters on a city street. Several police officers in riot gear are visible, some holding shields. A white van is parked on the left side of the street. The scene is chaotic, with people running and pushing. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

jacob kahn

james yeary

jamie townsend

jason morris

jeffrey joe nelson

jennifer karmin &

bernadette mayer

jesse fleming

joe hall

joel lewis

john coletti

john courie

jonathan lohr

jonathan skinner

joseph bradshaw

A large crowd of people is gathered for a protest or demonstration. In the foreground, a large American flag is partially visible, with its red and white stripes and blue field with white stars. The crowd is dense, with many people standing and some holding signs. The scene is outdoors, and the overall atmosphere appears to be one of a significant public gathering.

judah rubin

julian brolaski

julien poirier

kelsa trom

krystal languell

lara durback

laura goldstein

laura moriarty

laura mullen

lauren hunter

laynie browne

leland courie &

amanda courie

An aerial photograph showing a large crowd of protesters on a city street. Several police officers in riot gear are visible, some holding shields. A white van is parked on the left side of the street. The scene is chaotic, with people running and pushing. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

lina ramona

vitkauskas

lindsey boldt

lourdes figueroa

madeleine braun

madison davis

marina claveria

marina lazzara

mary burger

masha tupitsyn


mc hyland

meg hurtado bloom

micah ballard

michael nicoloff

nicholas deboer

A large crowd of people is gathered at what appears to be a protest or rally. In the foreground, a large American flag is partially visible, with its red and white stripes and blue field with white stars. The crowd is dense, with many people standing and some holding signs. The overall atmosphere is one of a significant public gathering.

nicholas whittington
noah fields
noah ross
olga mikolaiuna
olivia dawson
orchid tierney
paul druecke
paul ebenkamp
phaedra kaanaana
rachel galperin
rachael guynn wilson
rae armantrout
roberto harrison
robin tremblay-
mcgaw

An aerial photograph of a protest scene. A white van is parked on the left side of the frame. A large crowd of people is gathered on the right side, some holding signs. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

rod roland

ryan eckes

sara larsen

sara wintz

sarah anne cox

sarah lawson

sarah rosenthal

sarah tavis

seth michelson

simon crafts

stacy blint

stacy szymaszek

stefania gomez

steve benson

steve dickison

A large, dense crowd of people is visible in the background, appearing to be at a protest or public demonstration. Overlaid on the image is a large American flag, with its red and white stripes and blue field with white stars. The text is centered over the flag.

steve orth
sunnylyn thibodeaux
sunyata courie
tenaya nasser-
fredrick
tessa micaela
travis macdonald
una lomax-emrick
vi khi nao
will alexander
yarrow yes woods
yosefa raz
zack haber

END CAPITALISM NOW

When, a few years ago, after the 2016 election, we announced an 'everybody-in' issue, we didn't recognize that a second one would need to be created so soon. More often than not, it feels like we are constantly living in an 'emergency issue'.

When we announced the creation of the "End Capitalism Now" issue a few months ago, New York had found itself as the epicenter of the pandemic. We were knee deep in ambulances and sirens all day long. Grocery store trips, where everyone was on guard that someone nearby was sick became routine. Fear started to become more physical. Now, in early July, the entire country is struggling to retake our first steps toward some unseeable horizon.

It's beyond terrifying this life of ours.

In the midst of this struggle we still have each other. This issue reminded us that we are not alone, even when isolated. We are so grateful and humbled by the amount of work we received.

Every person who sent something in is in.

We cannot begin to tell you how lucky we feel to love and be loved by you.

And in that, for us, ending capitalism is a most important goal. As capital mutated into the spectacle, becoming a generative force informing us of who we are in the exchange value of things, we've bathed in it. Our lives have become a mediation of images, far from any form of 'play'. The spectacle is systematic, the old stuffed shirt reappearing, cloak and dagger visions, tops and tails, rotten to it very core.

So, here's the culmination of that call.

The old world is behind us and now we must go.

Let's turn the tables on the old guard. Let's open all the doors.

In all the love that flows from an end to tyranny,

-Nick and Jamie

ADAM J MAYNARD

THE END OF CELEBRITY

The trees are sluggish and dozy
The government have said they're overwhelmed
Smiling fried eggs, a setting sun
The happiness of a rainbow

Mixed messages and cavalier attitudes
A sense of general complacency
The most obvious thing to campaign for now
Would be the end of celebrity

Someone rides a bicycle through the trees
Leaving the cat looking perplexed

Vegetables dance like people possessed
Everything is free now

The light seems to insist on how wonderful it is
Famous people wonder around looking confused

People meet in living rooms
About a sense of government

A giant advert about solidarity
From purportedly impressive people

Seems a bit niche

MY PAWS ARE FILTHY

Fractal light in the trees
Messages from industry chiefs
Coming through the air
The colours of action
On a slow day of confusion
A bit of cloud and some spots
Of light rain, gales in the west
A big green plastic bowl full of pears
We've been doing our best
But still there are many grey areas
A new kind of wind
Clouds that look
Like painted clouds
Or even greyhounds

SNOOPY

He is under the telephone
He is omnipresent
There are pink trees here
A dog playing a guitar
The stillness and inherent poetry of a table
It's raining cherry blossom here
A duck in a plastic builder's helmet
Holds a fishing rod
People exude a kind of beige confidence
As in the stillness of a table
The words, 'HAPPY' float past in the air
Frogs are smoking cigarettes
And drinking glasses of sherry
There's a certain tone from government
We try to understand different people's methods
But we find it very hard
And these are long slow days of green
And precisely raging debate
The stillness of a table is an illusion
A discourse among the mountains

THE BIG SLUR

The wall there as if to instigate conversation
There's no time scale on this very shy morning
Interspersed with the angular and complicit rain
We're thinking about objects suddenly
Their attributes, even their feelings
The government always continues
But we are just being in the cooler air
Or is television just about watching
Other people's demeaning experiences?
The central processing laboratories
Of what you would normally recommend
Are no longer even remotely relevant
The humble cucumber is not perhaps
The most glamorous of fruits
But who can say they do not have feelings?
My son Albert loves them!
Anyway, so what have you ever done?

WHERE ARE YOU CALLING FROM?

Mysterious fairy tale houses in the woods
A vibrating chicken living in Southend
There's a lot of traffic on social media
Where are you calling from?
It looks quite decadent, but really it isn't
I'm going to make a salad of my dreams
Then I'll contact Jane on Twitter
Jack and I have been debating lemons
And the ill effects of loneliness
I see a skeleton riding a wasp
The scent of apple and tangerine fill the air
The government seeks to close shopping malls
People are talking about a new kind of reality
Throughout the evening there will probably be
Some more substantial showers
Showers dotted around in some western areas

PINK RAIN

How is it that this confusion
Has come about so quickly
In the timeless beauty of the rain?

The government is launching an app
Full of uplifting stories
Concocting new opportunities

Pink rain quietly falls
On a bowl of digital peaches
Vibrating and humming

Gentle light comes through
The trees in the churchyard

If you can't live with yourself
Then you can't really live with anybody

We will help your spirit fly!

Earlier a colleague spoke
Of long magical nights
Effortless in their pink and yellow light
Of how it's important to put smiles
On people's faces

To rub the happiness
All over the customers

ADAM TEDESCO

CASHMERE

Distance,

meaning

my mind

on the market

as if

by constellation

stupid or lucid

an invisible hand

behind the For Sale sign

I squeeze a bloodless paste

from the caterpillar's tube

Who's thumb is in your mouth

tugging at the inchoate

war

wrapped in glutinous tongue

of abstraction

Where

metaphysics

of bad vibes

weighs

as much

as terror

as the carceral

logic of empire

as

I sold myself

for what

it took

to sell myself

People wake themselves here

perfectly peeled

personal fruit

tossed at the edge of play

waiting for

the arrival

of conglomerate birds

of game

You can only see

what you believe

only you can see

the difference

a truth and mystical notion

of security

where you put the ratchet

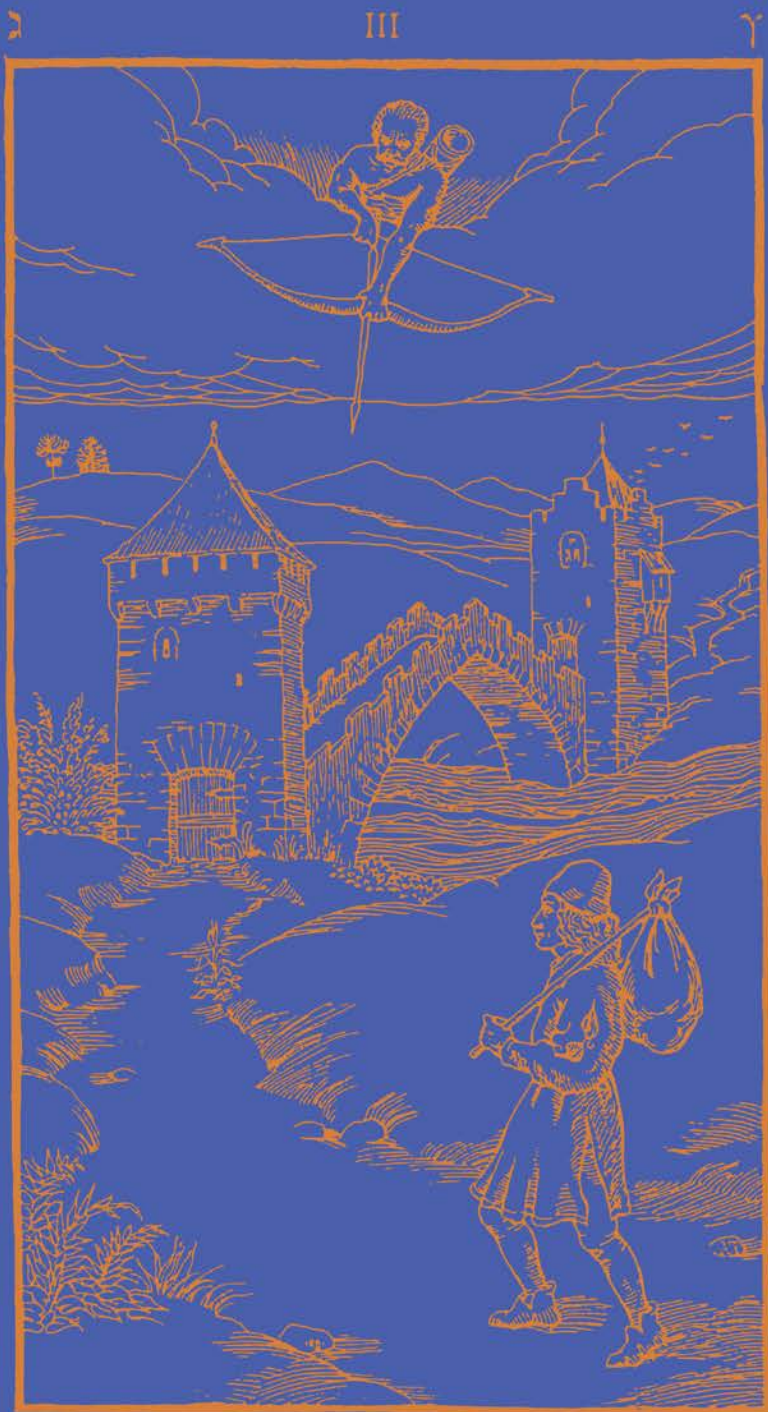
upon me

my body

All that matters

is what you want

All that matters is you want



there
comes a
time
when
silence
is
betrayal

ALANNA KINNE

AUTOLYSE

maybe it's easier to explain
if i am flour and water
instead of
fresh and bone.
i can't be skin
not now
not ever.
cover me with a damp towel.
i can grow there,
slowly.
things are rising.
i feel them wild
and bubbling.
it's the time it takes:
i am becoming.
i am not patient
but be patient with me.
i am the dough
on the counter.
look closely.
i'm hungry,
i'm hungry,
i'm so hungry.

HOW TO BE HUNGRY

soft is a feeling is touch is texture--
fresh bread, a runny yolk,
a slightly underbaked cookie,
mashed potatoes,
a sun-warm, ripe peach,
juicy cheeks, delicate yet
bursting, gooey, suck-your-fingers-clean.

you could be just as delicious
if you learned how to be hungry
for yourself.
the softness of my body
is the middle brownie.
the softness of my body
is her hoodie from the dryer.
the softness of my body
is being held, fetal, in tears and stroked.
the softness of my body
is a summer day fresh cut grass on my toes.
the softness of my body is
thank you thank you thank you
is in process
is every untapped joy.

SPILLED MILK

i think of my wildness,
the unruly me that is body
and desire, is lust and the calling
of me into you, skin on skin.
how tender i can be.
how much the wanting eats me alive.
daily, i feel a tight bud frozen before bloom.
i feel myself a stirring, teeming restlessness.

tell me i'm milk to dip
your tongue in to.
a burnt sugar, thick and dippable.
i want your taste on my thigh,
i want to be arched and held in sighing.

and to think you don't know me here,
the all day in bed, smell like each other.
how we could tangle and tie ourselves
into a complicated knot of this feels good.
we could feel so good...

WE CAN'T SAVE US

us isn't a cucumber.
our love cannot be held
in hot brine of
vinegar,
sugar,
salt,
cumin seed,
fennel seed,
chili flake,
a clove,
a bay leaf from Lake Chabot
cannot save us.
we aren't so quickly pickled,
precious and preserved.

we aren't a summer fruit anymore.
no sun-split hot plum,
we are not strawberry-mouthed,
cherry-juice-fingered.

i don't want to be remembered like this,
a captured jam jar of hurt.

our love isn't the twinkle
of lightning bug stars
or humid downpours;
we are not the sticky tank top
or heated breath of summer hair
curling like toes in the back of a Ford truck.

we can't save our love
for another season.
we've been in this hurting water
for so long—the heat of it
won't seal us in.

our memories just continue to dim
and wilt.

i want a love that is bursting,
a sungold sweet, a mottled green pluot
dripping.
i want a love that feels like every moment
is precious.
that our flesh together is delicious
and necessary and endless
like summer days or winter nights.

i want to be held like morels brushed
with a bristle gently,
paint the earth from me,
bathe me in fat and woody herbs.
i want my skin to be lavender kissed,
rosemary whispered.
love could be the smallest squash,
the brightest sun-captured flesh,
thickly oiled, maple-syrup covered.
how love could be caramelized,
hot and bubbling.

come spring i want a blooming,
a green and greener still,
a tender-leafed, soft petal love.
i want, but not you.
i want, but not you.
i want, but not you.

AMITAL STERN

EVEN IF THE GATES ARE CLOSED

1.

I can see now that I have always longed to wear a mask.

2.

My uncle does not understand. Why is he still stuck at the rehab center in Williamsburg when we promised him he would be home on the Lower East Side by Passover. I tell him again, from the other side of the planet, about the global pandemic. But to him this is just another excuse and he hangs up.

3.

I cannot write anything new right now, words letters even syllables must have spilled out over the Atlantic during my flight across the world, or maybe they were stolen by the government when it hacked into my phone as soon as I landed WELCOME BACK TO ISRAEL AMITAL STERN ANYONE WHO HAS LANDED FROM ABROAD MUST GO INTO QUARANTINE FOR 14 DAYS ANYONE WHO BREACHES WILL BE PUNISHED THANK YOU THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH.

4.

My friend calls up to my window from outside and asks me what is that strumming and all my neighbors in the alley can hear when she tells me about her husband's doctor friend in Spain who was sent to treat patients in a far off village for six months, and who is married but has no kids, she says, so it's no big deal, and what is that strumming.

5.

That strumming in the background is A. who joined me here once the 14 days were over and the whole country went into lockdown and he emerged from the wilderness and remembered that I was back.

6.

My neighbors are this middle-aged Dutch couple who live together in one tiny room and spoil the dozen cats who lounge around our alley. The cats don't need me, they blink with disinterest when I pass by in my homemade mask to throw out the garbage, I don't need you either, I hiss back. A. is a scavenger.

7.

He hunts down old Yemenite melodies and poems by Rabbi Shalom Shabazi, a 17th century poet whom some call the Shakespeare of Yemen. A. searches for old videos at the National Library which is now closed or on YouTube, recordings of mostly old men singing various versions of these hybrid Hebrew-Arabic-holy-love songs which they carried in their hearts from Yemen to Israel, where their traditions were then squashed, their ancient books rounded up, hoarded in libraries and traded at international collectors markets, and even some of their children stolen by the government and pronounced dead.

8.

There is a street in my neighborhood named after Rabbi Shalom Shabazi. It is 450 meters away, which, these days, with our government-ordained-100-meter-limit from home, makes Shabazi Street almost as far away as America.

9.

These days I can already envision an old-new world order in which I am one of the expendables, sent to front lines, or backs of lines, because I am childless, and I wonder if all the neighbors in our 100-meter-limit can hear, through the window, my stifled rage.

10.

Rabbi Shabazi, scholars say, believed in the power of words to bring about redemption. Some claim that he was also a believer in the self-proclaimed messiah Shabtai Zvi, whom he referred to in poems as “the righteous gazelle”. Sometimes I call A. the Messiah of the Yemenites, and he does not like this. A. scrounges for the songs of his ancestors, collects them, to preserve and to adapt and to redeem. He is singing now in a choked voice so as not to disturb me, he says, even though this damages his throat. He keeps strumming, strumming, strumming on his ukulele. No matter how hard I try to remove all rabbis from my home somehow they always find a way to sneak back in. I pour A. a shot of *arak*.

11.

As far away as America, in the Midwest where I grew up, I would listen over and over to a cassette tape by the Yemenite-Israeli singer Ofra Haza, in which she made *Im Ninalu*, one of Rabbi Shabazi’s poems, world famous. Even if the gates of the rich are closed, the poem says, the gates of heaven will never be closed.

12.

A.’s plastic bags full of clothes and books are scattered all over my floor, his guitar his ukelele his tin drum too. From the market, from the stores still open, some illegally, he brings us cardamom and *hawajj* for coffee and soup and rice noodles and black and green and orange lentils and tries to convince me to expand my diet. I try to get him to make some changes too. To A. I am now the government, the military police, I am the prime minister, the minister of health, I will track his phone, I will lock him down, cover your face, wash your hands, who are you meeting with, ANYONE WHO BREACHES WILL BE PUNISHED.

13.

He stops strumming when he hears me sobbing on the phone. My father has been hospitalized in Baltimore. It’s his heart.

14.

I too wish I could replace what I've lost with old melodies and lines from ancient prayers or love songs in a language I don't understand like Judeo-Arabic. Because I can see now that I have no gospel of light and hope of my own to present to the world at this time. And I can see now that perhaps he and I never made it together because I am not sure that I believe it, that even if the gates of the rich are closed, the gates of heaven will never be closed.

15.

What the fuck are ex boyfriends good for anyway. I'll tell you what. Scrubbing your floor till it shines. Teaching you how to wash your clothes by hand like he does in the wilderness. Calling you every day from Jerusalem January February and half of March while you scamper around New York and Baltimore trying to save loved ones. Will you ever see your mother, your father, your brothers, your uncle again? The gates of the world are closing.

16.

Ex boyfriends are not good for cleaning stovetops. He refuses I refuse. We leave it stained with our coffee, with the spattered remains of his *shakshouka* and *hilbe* dish, with broccoli in coconut milk. When I cry he is the one who holds me, even from halfway across the world. I pour us each two shots of *arak*.

17.

Overt references to Shabtai Tzvi remained absent from Rabbi Shabazi's poems for centuries, scholars say, removed from his canon apparently after 1666, when the righteous gazelle converted to Islam, thus outing himself as a false messiah and devastating followers all over the world.

18.

My father's heart has stabilized. He is released from a hospital in Baltimore and I can breathe again in Jerusalem, for now.

19.

In the otherwise desolate market, a vegetable vendor asks why I have stopped sending my boyfriend to pick up our produce. I tell him the truth, but not the whole truth, that A. returned to the wilderness after they eased the lockdown. It's like the vendor can see right through me even though my face is covered. How could you let him go? At a time like this. If I was your boyfriend, I wouldn't leave you for anything. Not for the wilderness. Not for. If I was your.

20.

My uncle hangs up on me again. No words can console him. Everybody's somebody's false messiah, I guess. I can see that now. But even so, as long as the rage continues to flow blood red, pumping steadily towards me through oceans, through skies, through international gateway exchanges, I know we are still alive.

ANDREA REYNOLDS

THE GREY DAYS ARE THE SOFTEST DAYS

there are greys there, six am pink greys, cotton-collared blue greys, and cobblestone grey
pigeons in cages high up on the fourth and fifth and sixth story floor balconies
pigeons who talk to pigeons on other floors but never know what the morning bread looks like
across the way, pigeons who have babies scattered about the alleyways, dodging half-filled
bicycle wheels and stray pups and the daily shuffle and bustle of human existence
the softest places are the tucked behind the grime type places, the places of weathered and
worn walls and thorns bleed the gentle scream of resistance
the radio always on for comfort, the card table littered with Newport butts, lemons and limes
with lavender with coffee, the broom always at hand, the doors are left unlocked for the
expected surprise of company
teenagers roam like stray dogs, causing chaos to distract themselves from the mundane
teenagers in their Saturday's best, batting lashes, flirting with bad company to feel a rush
here, romance is a purple kiss with dusty fingertips reaped from two dollar days; desert storms
look like love on the sofa (the bed), string lights are a luxury, watching the sky scream and flash
for entertainment, above the sheets sweaty fingers intertwined with a necessary form of
dependency
it's evident, the things that make life go round, turning squares into circles day in and day out,
the mechanism designed to make one believe a dream is just a dream; bodies: the oil for the
machine
evolution has plateaued, starving creativity, enforcing simplicity: a water bottle becomes the
milk carton, the gasoline can, and the baby bottle, one can play with just a ball and a string,
nothing's ever half empty, pockets only half full, the eyes have seen enough for one day
oh there are greys, blunt with force and bright as fury, the kind that makes the earth shake and
quiver with tears
people carve arrows onto each other's backs as a sign to remember, remember, remember: we
will not be tormented by the greed that sends whole city blocks into paranoia,
control works like a stress fracture on the soul, and as in all environments of discomfort and
poverty, when the hands are fidgety and sleep comes in waves, floating down the flooded
barracks of unfulfilled dreams, it isn't possible to climb the hierarchy, isn't possible to imagine
something to life,
so humanity does what it's designed to do best: survive

ANDREW CHOATE

BE YOUR VOILÀ

the leaves stuck in my car's windshield wipers look like messages I am excited about
excited because I know I won't be able to understand them when unfurled
excitement projected towards future lack of understanding
extra exciting ununderstanding
be your voilà

AMIE ZIMMERMAN

SIGNAL

Lay close to the sand, the sandstone. It's the heat you want.

The sovereignty of an RV over not enough pavement, of the large over
the small is paid time off we're accruing. I mean
it's what we deserve.

Rat's nest in the bristle of ingrown scrub pine. Rats in the trees.

Asking about the burn ban. The only thing left to do is burn.

Trying to say to my son it gets less lonely as I get older. I say
I am more comfortable. He knows I'm lying.

Even when the Sitka forest goes quiet I am unable to still
the sounds of my breathing.

Is the blister of guilt additive or explanatory, a space filling with
moss or rather the appearance of shame.

It is my job to give him time to catch up.

On the one hand, a Steller's Jay's feather is black. On the other
blue. Raucous. Omnivorous.

Compulsive when list-making, I keep tabs on these things.
Pretending others can't tell I measure reciprocation
like an embedded signal trigger.

How many times do I have to tell you to stand still.

When they talk about this they will say— the fires
started, then didn't stop.



**The love of other living things
is somewhere in me.**

ANSELM BERRIGAN

PLANET TERROR

quarantine splatter

the mirror moved to dream

unfortunately I wrote that

go-go crying

in heavy simulation mode
(always)

deceptive floaters
puckled balls
(mattered)

don't just cherry
(never - actually -
said that)

we eat brains
but we don't gain
yr knowledge

↙
what's problematic
is total global
pandemic
(not what
you want)

when my mouth
detaches from
brain, delays
erase + enervate

someone else
is here

choking on the
promise
of future
food

you ever become
that fancy
goal doctor?

I think you're funny

a missing leg
that's now
missing

lavender drive
tricks rhythm

thy donut
seagull
the point

bridge rhymes
with sanity
& its stinkfield
destiny

only the trenches
are relaxing

upend in the
only real mail
I can get right
now

you're on the manifest
chowtime chowtime
my cousin has a drone
gilder than this

mandatory masque Friday

rumor of
freedomth
undermine
the
estrangements

framewaves
from yesterday's
contaminations

the de-extinct
creatures require
our absence

so long ^{as} we
bitch critique
into our success
blue is alive

as expectation facilitator
go, the dinosaurs role
function is to manipulate
your character

Times are dangerous!

you might wake up

into on-going danger!

+ be surrounded by people

whom been going through that

longer than you've had a thought

hey, myself

may your imitation

never reach

as you keep trying

to make yourself

possible

AVERY R YOUNG

A DAY AFTER JUNETEENTH

*or its all about the Jackson(s), baby
or a dub or a double sawbuck
in Ukranian Village, Chicago, IL*

& in other new(s):

a **WHITE** woman put \$20 on a \$150 tab & with a red faced Erica Kane cry shaking her finger with one hand & raising her power fist with the other she said, *NOW, YOU STAY SAFE!* this gesture came **after** she had offered drinks by asking *IF YOU WERE TO DO A SHOT, WHAT SHOT WOULD YOU SHOOT?* i was a bit taken aback from her wording but nevertheless i declined (cause i dont drink) & when the two deacons with me did the same, she went, *WELL I TRIED!* so, i have been pondering both her gestures (the offering of the drinks & her \$20 coupon) & i have also been pondering her choice of words *WHAT SHOT WOULD YOU SHOOT? WELL I TRIED! & NOW, YOU STAY SAFE!* i have been pondering her red face & stream of tears the wagging finger the power fist & in the midst of her performance, her friend (pulling her by the arm to their car) wished us well & said to us *I'M JUST GONNA GO HOME & GET MORE DRUNK* i been thinking about how i rocks with her friend's pledge to more drunkenness **more** than i rocks with her guilt/generosity/gesture & i've been wondering why is that so i mean, in all fairness, my discernment read her heart was leading her & maybe three blk men deciding on what fancy \$30 dollar 12-inch pizza to order, triggered flashes of all the strange fruit swinging in her memory yet still ... i wanted to tell her that \$20 hooch & a white woman stopped a many blk man's breathing. i wanted to cry i wanted to tell her *HOW ABOUT I GIVE YOU \$20 TO KEEP YOU FROM CALLING POLICE & BOLD FACE LYING ABOUT BEING ATTACKED BY A BLACK MAN!* i wanted to tell **her** to *STAY SAFE!* & really mean it instead, while still breathing, i nodded said *THANK YOU*

punking myself into not smiling

SO SAY(S) DE BLK CREATIVE TO DE BLK CAPITALIS(T)

*inside a jook-joint fulla company wif wallah-melon
& collard green(s) on all de table(s)*

I

rather not be ofay
in bronze(d) skin

luv(r) dontchu see

when green de mos(t) important
color too much blk red & bone
get puree(d)
onto wall

in deez street(s) erybody ballin
on dey burfday
til dey aint got one
lef(t) be so basic

2

i can be an undertaker
if i wanna make money luv(r)

ery body gotta an expiration date
pressin de air out dey collar

3

god-daddy J.B. said
You can't be greedy ...

*You gotta take some
and leave some ...*

cause [[[in my James Baldwin voice]]]
i say *There's has to be more to life
than IBM machines and Cadillacs!*

luv(r)

nothin **WHITE** men acquire mo(re) magic
den my walk on wattah or flip
of ink inside dis kennel
wherr it be teef & bark
focuss(d) on rippin my bread-make(r)
to crumb(s)

4

rather not be chocolate cover(d) oppressor
countin king &/or tubman face(d) currency

rather eat den gorge luv(r) dis spat
aint gotta split us in two

we bofe have hand(s)
dat break & build

AN OPPOSITE SIDE(S) OF TOWN

or a poem I am tired of writin
*after Tonika Johnson's **Folded Map Project***

deez chirrun in dis skool got ol(d) book(s)	Took all the donation money and built a new auditorium.
& new police officer(s) to shoo dem home	Swarmed the admin office with demands for new iPads.
befo(re) bullet(s) made dem a face(is) fo(r) a mural	Took the two students too many out of art and biology
of angel(s) wadin roun(d) bouquet(s) & balloon(s) & field	after recess. And placed them in last period gym with Coach Z and told them their imaginations are as wide as this new track.

BEN TRIPP

1/4/20

actually unworried

when is a name not clean

I hope it's just because

Is this the start of a brand-

new end

that is used to justify

open means

Or the end of the old

start

fringe volatility
expression factory

is that what is called
"a frontier" ? My 10 o'clock
check's in the mail today

we have gone through
the ceremony of interrogations
convenience as rule

someone does read
and act polite
take care of yourself & audition



3/2/20

When you wake up in the morning
where are you
in your bed
what are you going to do
immediately getting out of it or
something else, I dunno
if you have the time to
be there for a while
still
I'm someone the same
I just wanted to ask

who else might be around

together with the raw chances

3/13/20

What happened
to radiant compassion

Spring bird on the fire escape
just out the other side of
my kitchen window
et moi, c'est moi

This month

who can ever suspend the post

who has the power
I didn't know I had

someone else

first confirmed, last to respond

elect-ricity

just now salts the wound

answer group

waiting to mask

here I can be my own

days behind ventilated

I can't believe I saw a plane

andromeda

noon will be gone

cut short

re-book

Blasphemous mention

Like everything

even your ideas

Like your shirts

you must change them

every day to be clean

Advertising all caught-up

unless you change your path

"God is content," the devil
follows form

how eventually

self-fulfilling hesitation

The sign of its birth

There's a cockroach in the clock
Dad says, "Just try."

No fact hygiene
no media quarantine
against
the siege mentality





[suspenseful music]

CACONRAD

CORONA DAZE 15

if we are to dream anything
during this plague
let us please
consider
the things
we do not want
to return to normal

CORONA DAZE 21

the virus has
infiltrated every
part of the United States
poor people still have to take
a bus for miles to reach groceries
empty hotel rooms and casinos
surround homeless people
sleeping together
in a parking lot
in Las Vegas
rich men
making
state
governors
bit and compete
for life saving equipment
while doctors and nurses risk everything they have
who are these men show us their goddamned faces
the president refuses to call off his ICE militia
prisoners on hunger strike to prove
their bodies have limited and needs
someone on the news just called
the virus dangerous
as though this
violent empire
was ever safe

CORONA DAZE 24

for years after
friends died of
AIDS they still
danced with me in my dreams
did survivors of the Black Plague
dance with their dead
who will dance
with whom
in a year
let's
keep
safe
dance
together
IN PERSON

CORONA DAZE 25

pastor says the virus is a
punishment for gay rights
my email thanked him
for reminding me
how powerful
we queers are
wielding plagues
with style and grace
Dear Reverend your violent
ignorance is the virus
I point my finger
at and say aloud
Go Get Him Devil

CORONA DAZE 29

I held my breath often
last week trying to get
a relative out of jail in
another state before
the virus made its
way down the
jailhouse hallway
we were lucky we
were very lucky getting
her out in time but not
everyone is lucky in America TONIGHT
cousins fathers sisters
held behind bars as though
everyone deserves the death penalty
the largest population of prisoners
in the world while disease grips
the lungs LET THEM OUT NOW
MAY THE WORLD NEVER
FORGIVE THIS NATION
FOR THE HORRORS
THAT PROVE
CAPITALISM
KILLS AND
KNOWS
LITTLE
ELSE

CORONA DAZE 30

(overheard from a man on his phone in the car
next to mine waiting for a grocery pickup)
DUDE THE FUCKING GYM IS STILL CLOSED
IT'S FUCKING CRAZY I NEED TO WORKOUT
5 DAYS A WEEK YEAH YEAH YEAH YOU TOO
THEY SHOULD OPEN IT UP FOR SERIOUS DUDES
LIKE US YOU KNOW EVERYONE ELSE CAN DO
THEIR PILATES AT HOME AND ZUMBA AND ALL
THAT STUPID SHIT THEY DO BUT DUDE WE NEED
WEIGHT MACHINES WE ARE SERIOUS ABOUT WHO
WE ARE WE HAVE TO GET LIFTING AGAIN RIGHT?
RIGHT? RIGHT? AM I SUPPOSED TO BENCH PRESS
MY DOG WHAT THE FUCK DUDE IT'S CRAZY TIMES

CORONA DAZE 35

I AM GOING to vote for Joe Biden
but I WILL NOT do it quietly
it is Weakness asking us to
choose between two rapists
which means no matter
who wins women lose
courage had a leak no
one bothered to fix

CORONA DAZE 36

"economic casualties"

"ailing corporations"

things reporters say in the USA

Money and its

Masters dominate

the language

first evidence

of power we

continue to

allow them

CORONA DAZE 39

okay
I will
sing
out
the
window
with you
if we promise
to do it the rest of our lives

CORONA DAZE 41

no one needs to explain
we have reached a place
without comparison
there is no louder
siren than the one
outside the door
we are late
to need
no denying it
but are we ready for a
world without presidents
a day without Caligula swagger
are we ready to make a freak show
of our hearts say yes just say yes
God came down
to walk among
Herself *living*
imagined
beauty
begins
now
She
says

CORONA DAZE 50

my cousin
got jumpy
working at the
slaughterhouse
he could not locate
his strength in the dark
stopping the hearts of
animals for pleasure
some disguise as
survival we now
need to protect
these workers
PLEASE stop
eating flesh
PLEASE let
the blood
stay home

CORONA DAZE 51

last year in a
grocery store
in Indiana I met
a family with a
doomsday bunker
the daughter is also a poet
poet like a rock I said
you mean unmovable?
yes until it is time to
smash the empire
her smile electrified
a future poetry
I am excited
to live
to see

DRIVE THE
COP OUT OF
YOUR HEAD



CAITLYNN LIQUIGAN

The world is quiet. In a world so quiet my mind
can't help but be racing in all directions at
100mph. It's dawned on me that a new beginning
is entering my cycle of life. An upcoming change.
A rebirth if you must. It's truly beautiful to me, the
way I can sense the shift in energy around me. In a
way, I am excited to embrace this new change I
will endure. But part of me is having trouble
coming to terms with the fact that I must let a lot go.

CARRIE HUNTER

PRIMNESS OF OUTLINE

The future's innuendo futile because itself's self is choiceless.
A list of choices during indecision.
Choices, the team colors; little vs small.

Polite savage with an easy manner.

Translation as a binary, and we understand
binaries as missing so much on the outside,
in between. A nonbinary translation
would be slightly outside of understanding.

The Audubon sequence.

Does the wick always have to be a candle,
time's representation? We are still in this place
of entering a threshold, or maybe we're just looking at it.

Standing, contemplation, the "primness of outline,"
a testimonial, time addressing itself next to you.
One's self becoming a metaphor for transportational
devices. A terminus.

How do "people" arrive inside the narration,
inside our narrator? As if this self is devoid of personhood
and is only some sort of technological device
that evolved to help others arrive/switch directions.

Being neutrally helpful.

Everyone who arrives, gives up.
When the narrator switches identities, we imagine
it might be momentary, but maybe its forever.
Me, I, no one, no one, you. The narrator as ego.

But the land can't write.

That moment when first person slyly becomes second.
The I becomes a you who wonders about one's dream.

There is a wind, a platform, and pigeons, but the metaphor
might be so deep now that there is no hope or possibility of the literal.
I think it's so wild to have two unnamed narrators in one poem.

LESS HYGIENE, BUT MORE SPIRIT

A new introduction, although everything
's been introduced already.
Incidental gentlemen of impartiality.
A list of singularities you don't believe in.

But the contaminated area is where we live.

Laws for swans.
This section is written in a persona.
Coming to understand the context you're living in,
and then suddenly it changes.

Less aware of the other chair,
and how close or far away
from despair you are.

In the morning, waiting for an introduction
that is an extrication. Circumstances
as a form of slough.

A list of things that are one thing, but that are also a set.
Then a list of things that are one thing, but singular.
A "craft" or a "bourne."

The aesthetic experience of being with friends,
losing everything that feels like joy in my cells,
to be replaced with vague aesthetic pleasure.

The spot, where we live, to avoid, of contamination.

A list of things or people or consciousnesses
that could have "bluster."

[Cute barista: Grey long-sleeved shirt
under black and white horizontal striped
short-sleeved shirt tucked into jeans with a belt,
tapered frayed legs and ankle boots.]

A pronoun that replaces a situation.

Turning away from delusion.
Some connections are just a moment of looking up.
Taste of poppadum still in my mouth.

The repeating red X. Marthe's red X.

Not knowing whose house you're staying at.
List of conversations that you wish you didn't have to hear.
The plot marginal to the explanation of it.

Rhianna and Drake vs Gordon Comstock
Work, work, work, work, work, work //
Money, money, all is money!

NOTES:

Italicized lines are from or inspired by Marthe Reed's posthumously published "Ark Hive."
Lines in quotes are taken from John Ashbery's "Flowchart."
Lines that are both italicized and in quotes are also from John Ashbery's "Flowchart," but italicized in his text.

CHARLIE NEWMAN

JOBBED

I get on the bus and close my eyes.
 "I can't cut it," I think.
 "I'm just not doing it."
 Whatever "it" is.
The workday goes on. And on. And on.
I might as well be mopping floors in a gilded tourist spa in Greece,
or washing dishes in a greasy spoon in Toad Suck Ferry, Arkansas.
 Small advances. Holding place. Unrecognized retreats.
 Hours slip into lifetimes.
 Delays pile up like unanswered invitations.
Cigarette breaks follow one another ad infinitum
 silhouetted against stained granite
 as far as the eye can see.
A good-for-nothing lifetime
 of good-for-nothing years
 of good-for-nothing months
 of good-for-nothing weeks
 of good-for-nothing days
 of good-for-nothing hours
 of good-for-nothing minutes
 of good-for-nothing seconds
 of good-for-nothing work.
Opportunity? What opportunity?
Look up to where the work is done behind desks and under tables.
 If you're there,
 among the tidy,
generating digital paperwork no one will read
 except for your initials on the bottom
success and failure fall into place behind cul de sac smiles.
 "All honest work is noble," goes the cliché.
But should we be grateful for every indignity
 suffered in the name of earning?
 Yes,
 there is meat on my plate.
I just don't have the teeth to chew it.

LOBBED

GET ON THE BUS & CLOSE MY EYES
I CAN'T CUT

THINK
DOWN JUST NOT

WHAT EVER

THE WORK DAY GOES ON & ON & ON

RIGHT AS WELL BE NOP
FLOORS
A

TOO ST SPA
WASH DSHES GREECE OR

A GREASY SPOON
TOADSOCK FERRY ARKANSAS NOBS

SLIP TO A GOOD FOR NO

THING
TIME
THING YEARS OF GOOD FOR NO
THING MONTHS OF GOOD FOR NO
THING WEEKS OF GOOD FOR NO
THING DAYS OF GOOD FOR NO
THING HOURS OF GOOD FOR NO
THING MINUTES OF GOOD FOR NO
THING SECONDS OF GOOD FOR NO
THING WORK

OPPORTUNITY?
OPPORTUNITY?

LOOKUP TO WHERE THE WORK
DONE BE
DESKS & UNDER TABLES
YOU'RE THERE AMONG THE

GENERATION
DON'T READ PAPER WORK NOONE
INITIALS ON THE BOT TOM YOUR
FAILURE FALL SUCCESS &

TO PLACE BE
HND COULD BE SAC
SMILES IALL HONEST WORK
S NOBLE GOES THE

CICHE BUT SHOULD WE BE GRATEFUL FOR EVERY

DIGNITY SUFFERED
EARNINGS? THE NAME OF
S YES THERE
JUST MEAT ON MY PLATE
DON'T HAVE THE TEETH TO CHEW

CHRIS ASHBY

MANGANESE
from THE INVISIBLE

As the atomic number goes up,
the number of protons in the nucleus increases correspondingly.
Nothing is known
beyond an element with 118,
but this is not to say
there is nothing else.

Before this correspondence, fire was believed an element, and for some still is—one of the forces
of nature. Oxygen is consumed and carbon is left. A force it is, but nature is more basic. As a
house burns and the possessions within it, what is there to toil about? A wall goes up, and the
wind goes away. We are inside. And even then we are still exposed to the elements.

For this reason,
there are limits to what can be known about an object,
Manganese corrodes in moist air,
best instead added to steel,
ideal for rifle barrels, bank vaults,
and earth moving equipment.

Singularity in all forms continues to be argued against,
a mistaken take on “a knowing position,”
as in—was there “nothing” before “something?”
like a privilege,
the speaker is important,
it happened only once,
this *big bang*,
particularly for those arguing against great authors.

The singular may be the most representative of these,
like an armed rancher claiming the land should be given back in Eastern Oregon
to whom it belongs—other white ranchers with guns,
to whom it has *always* belonged in their minds,
Manganese held near their waists and on their backs,
a show of seriousness, of solidarity, of wasted ideals,
even though what’s really serious is how little history they know.

Oh,
but it, not knowing
may actually have meaning,
though the more one reads, the less plausible the singular seems,
and yet, the more plausible as well,
like knowing the feeling of life,
but looking forward to its absence,

so that the loss of ideals
removed from emotion can be felt,
as in the creation of what is known
of the known universe,
there are still times
when what something means to an individual
is all that is left.

For me this is in the cellphone snapshot of my dog Melville
the day we brought him home,
his paws outstretched beneath his malleable snout,
growing even as the picture was being taken.

Other times it's hard to be honest with friends,
to call, or send a line,
kind of embarrassed that the sentiment won't be reciprocated at all—
like "hey, I'd really like to see you and *just hang out.*"

In this January I can't help but feel like it's May, or June, or July, or August,
daydreaming of a summer eight years ago,
and being kind of like, "yeah
that's a long time ago to be reminiscing about,"
even to say out loud to myself,
to still think about,
even if it's just the warmth I'm missing, you know,
or human company, the anticipation of physical contact.

And still, those fucking ranchers are on the Malheur
with their **M**anganese at their waist
like an ignorant cock
not sure who it's fucking,
just confident it's fucking someone.
It's because of times I feel like I do right now,
mildly lonely and thinking about being at the ocean with a friend,
that I still write poetry, wondering,
how the ranchers think giving the land "back" to white ranchers is actually *giving*.
A tribal spokesperson from the Paiute was asked what was thought of this,
the gist being,
they're not giving anything "back,"
these guys are just standard American assholes.
Probably, I think,
or maybe they're just misguided,
like a missile or an airplane
or any other elementally composed explosive symbol
that wreaks destruction
only to be glossed over because it's too painful to talk about.

The forest falls apart, the desert cracks, and the city with it. I read a dumb novel and eat ice cream. Melville chews on a bully stick then falls asleep. There are white lights around the windows. Holidays still continuing. I tell myself I can't lie to my friends, and I don't know what I mean. It's nice to realize that I don't always want to be nice, sometimes I just want to be free. A few months ago this meant staying up late and watching *True Detective* discontented with a cold shoulder from a fellow poet. Yesterday it meant taking Melville on a walk and singing to him. Last night it meant playing guitar for twenty minutes. Today it means no apologies. I keep thinking about writing letters. To friends, like, what do you think about this? And could *this* be a book, *this love* I'm writing to you through anger about white ranchers threatening everything I care about? Fuck their big coats and fuck their rifles and fuck them for trying to *take back* indigenous land. Let's give all the land back to the respective tribes and simultaneously take every single white occupier's guns. If you believe in the wildly misinterpreted second amendment written in the late 1700's, you should at least know white people didn't take *this* particular indigenous land away from its rightful owners until after that. Is this too simple? And could *this* be a book you let me borrow last summer? But really, I don't want to talk about the book, I want to walk along the river and ask what you think of *this love* and of the brambles to our left, of the concrete falling in below the condos in NW Portland, of the homeless living on these banks in the superfund, and whether you really love the environment enough to get in this river, this toxic, wonderful, **Manganese** saturated river.

CHRIS HOSEA

MAKE RIOT

At peace-spackled noon
willows wave at Prague and

ignite a touch, let folded notes wiggle, while at
a distance an associate opens volumes.

Only dust distorts the mirrored busts.
We see the long day reverse the charges.

We see bathers' lips break sunsets,
wary of luxury hideouts.

Point wrong words right.
You spray fruits, they seem riper.

The audience buys beachfront,
a catastrophe for us as laid out.

A camo backpack is kicked with dumb force
And your touch believing my hand

in a night where the black veil is snatched
makes all policies preserve the word death

and sour and salty rods be soak in oil
and pills for days confused.

I saw you recently talk warmly
as on plate glass gold daggers blew

as in another window a pop bottle turned
upon an electrified platter,

and you further sift signs
stir the waist-pocket sweepings.

When the wind lofts a scrunched receipt
above a softball fence

I would make my face mimic a prune
and dig out a bowl-like bell

now ringing now dinging
spring calendars of empty cells.



you can no longer sleep
quietly once you've
suddenly opened your eyes

CHRISTINA CHALMERS

AS GRAVITY IN THE GRAVE STAGE

Woe that worked
Unreturning
I don't live
let myself live
lend myself a hand
to climb up the stile
to the imminent forewarning
believing the secret I tell you
on the map of the past's weak dust carpet
maggot-shadow allergenic prole complaint where asthma is a metonym for a
species clairvoyant despositing flesh into each other's bodies
distribution of hollowness struck formal by the grey swathe
tornado space-time in a house of the mice to
turn each other into swaying aides for company and solitude
and warning, distributes, resists, disclaims.
This would be a past, moving backwards, and knows
the meaning of death in small vehiculars.
Don't move on if you won't let the life-death
unburden years of waste the particle nebulae
willing carbon spinning to the tune of
compassion the wastes of asteroid emission I
am made of & form other people to the horizon
of their living, though I never reached them
in a discoball atmosphere. Passed up,
what is not immune gives me less than the love
that I will not fall for, pathogen pathogen, psycho-pathological
soul shame in the secret part that's nothing to give in, from an
empty store-stomach sore prison past my repetitious
clamour in the bounded nice noose-private the boot
the teenager soldered into and then so honestly
comes out of as the 20s roll steamingly and singularly
by. I spend the last of my 20s in a cupboard
and hover my eyes around the lens

Lend me, hover me up
Lend me, love me upper
giving past to be proud of slick loving and
holiday Croatia with girlfriends
the people wield cocktails and cycle to Epping forest
go to LA in a heart-van and then leave
each other out of the leftover party-mania
in the sparseness of the desert independence
dread dream doozy. I fall floosy
I burn myself in stupid blonde storm
but hate excoriation no one likes
girl-to-communist demure single
head-to-foot my Althusser gathering
dust is all the past's skin stuck on a
disinfected sponge I inject with hope-
fulness being nothing more than
total. Holiday is shimmer-hunger for favour
of a socialising magnificence denied
in the torn-down worker's canteen in Red
Vienna. Horizon of lovelessness in a villa
by the scroll whose madness whole & amber-burned
as I savour unreturning eyes into a wall-haul
I eat bland pasta out of a bowl
I eat food in a room alone
cook summery player
conjure enviables to strike a
pass at preparation as
I fold my bras and wash
them. Very slow. I just
 know the inexperience of
trueness, as impertinent
and wanting as a child
I sneeze breezily germinating the inside

expulsion of the temporary
want I began with, came back, of the
mother-meteorite to paper
down the animal arachnid
bites the must and smells
dusted moist blanket microscopically
sways for the fugitive gust. O
troposphere billow down to trawl
me up and send my disgust heightways
transcendent yes I'm wearing out if you
don't, in the linear shuffle of entropic
joint bluster in the undoing, un-to-be-done
flesh to droop and fail to live by form
or mental dismemberment losing thoughts apace.
In the crab-time I'm in the middle of space.

as gravity
in the grave stage
I wait for the moment of
star coalescence
(this would be)

oh, to yourself go down,
don't let me in

like flames
in the burn water
I wait for the moment
of your overhaul

so to yourself go down,
and let me in

I dare not seek relief from dreams that tell me
nothing to suspect awaits
you go down to please release
the wind is rushing in, I summon
madrigal terror and lime my fruits
having a chorus wind its strokes
into my tastebud sips, synaesthetic
salt magnets reversible and –
we walk around with forms
in the furtive streets
where the cops are atavistic
that is their mode of breath
where is the present, someone
asks, we would like to be
in the atmosphere and up we go
you go down to yourself
and don't let me in
to the house, my feeling
like a democracy mourned
and melts, I sup salivation
itself in the barn of calf mobility
in the dusty highness of the air
you sit above like an imago
o salvo to similars salvation
catch zeppelin tourism
real hunger in my heart
for the above cloud of
moisture there is a film on,
on beauty before the dimness
of everything cross-scopes into
explosion, nothing left.
private shore larval shine
and the sun goes down behind
the bay, we watch over like

a hawk on high (as if we could
be) a vehement bullet shooting
from the sky into its refusal
total supposition
in the eyes

CHRISTINE KANOWNIK

THE AMERICAN EXPERIMENT *from Sarah Kendzior*

for decades, an underground fire
burns, a lowering, a warning
a shock to the waters
who is in charge here
final days of battling ghosts
deleted data, gutted, surrendered
dead expectations
the pit, denied captives
gutted, few want to visit
all you can raise up there is hell
embrace the line
lie, limitless, lay down
quite literally billions
rot forever wars and hell
new forms of repeal, tawdry
sympathetic, validation, humiliate
junk bond emotions, smug, bombing
trust, relentlessly unsentimental
disturbing live humanity
dangerous, lurid, birthing, ceaseless
pursuit, profit, neophyte, Jane Doe
perfect, perfect sex life
scientists, ruddy, round shouldered
nothing in his hands
several parties held, 71st Street, legally incapable
promises of money, exhibits B, a lot of women
a lot of fun, no doubt about it

CHUCK STEBELTON

I turned on all the waterworks.
I took the blackout upon myself.
I went in on the program.
Erasure, praxis. Gnosis, eschaton.
The polis, plein air. Ekphrasis.
I subscribed. In these conventions
I only promoted another's idea.
Please quit selling blackout.
Please stop leasing plein air.

a bald faced commiseration	All is litany. Most is loss Overheard at the opening so peripheral like sinking into the crowd
in answer in hard hatted non-response	name them in our hard heads
We called off the gathering	had a mishap. The misses happened to begin.
Apple core in the roadkill's eye Eye full of belly full, no Mowing begins here	Opossum, or possums No smell Little triangle face skunk.
Around the river, Jordan Litany almost lost	Of Rick, in the green wood Black dog cento Black, black, black dog

we are
writing
where no
time
is spent

we are spit

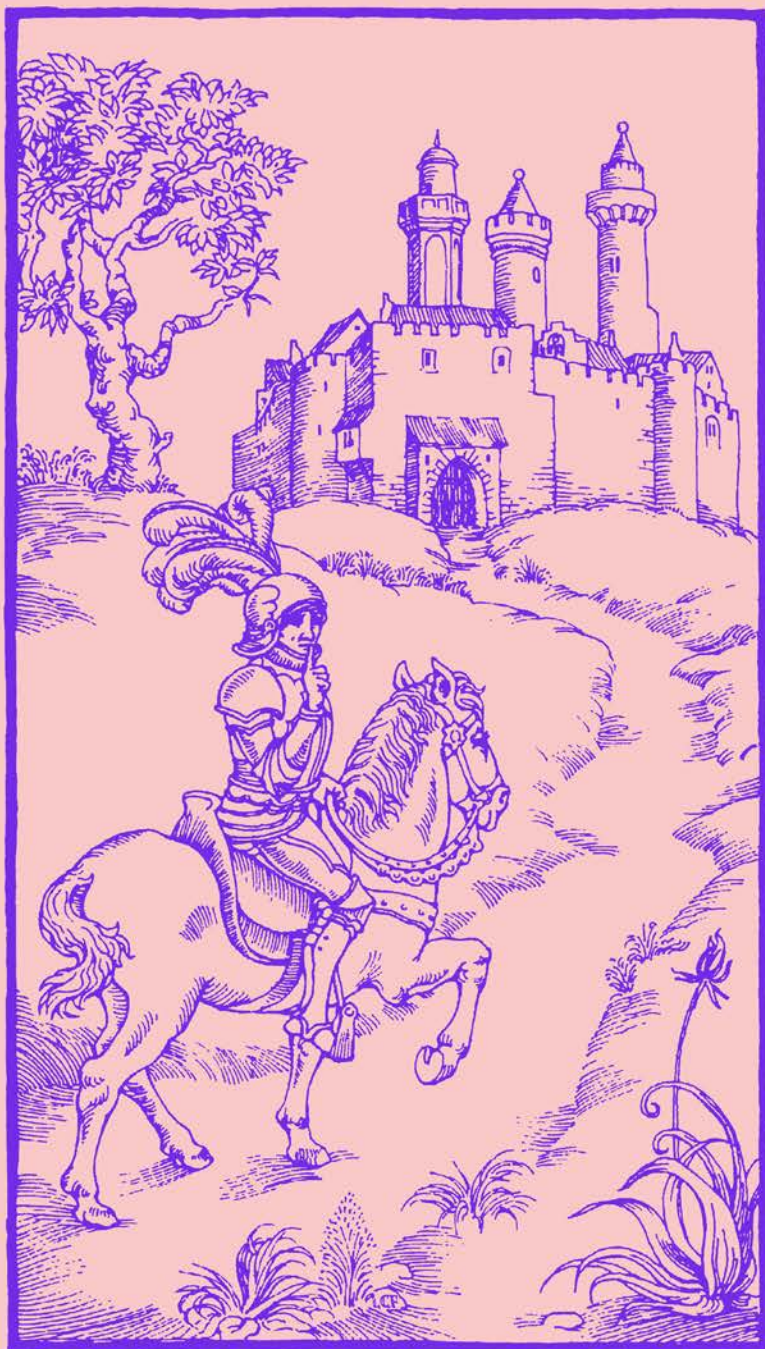
this

old
block
of poetry

α

I

α



CLARE FOLLMANN

RITUAL // ROUTINE

For Melete, for Ananke and Lethe. For new practices. Against routine.

Coming into play these days is the art of undoing and remaking routine. We are lost in the madness of uncertainty, of systemic and structural collapses, both within and without. We are without our routines to which we'd affix without thought, routines that were taken for granted.

And we are now finding ourselves making, mixing, and trying-on brand new routines, as each new day brings to light another endless stream of unknowns.

It's uncomfortable, uncertain. And, look! It's scary! The world's all topsy-turvy! Things that were before are not!

There is pleasure and delight in well-known routines. There is deep comfort in an old habit. We can feel an internal push against alterations, a rejection of changes. It is uncomfortable to step off your own well-beaten path.

But trodding along a well-beaten path, day in, day out, invokes a sort of forgetfulness.

Things which once were new and exciting begin to blend into the background. Our blinders come on. Nothing to the left, nothing to the right, there is only straight ahead.

We have so well practiced these repetitions, these steps-by-steps, we could do them in our sleep, and they might have gone on being automatic.

But here's the danger in routine.

Mindless repetition. Force of habit. Our routine: unquestioned and unchallenged. We forget why and how we have done what we are doing, and just keep doing.

Every broken habit is a chance to fix another one. Every neglected routine invites a new routine to take its place. It is time to embrace that discomfort. It is time to practice new practices.

In the creation of new routines, I call upon ritual.

But what is ritual in the face of routine?

There is a difference between the two.

Repetition and routine facilitate a sense of going through the motions, sapping action of context, content, history, remembrance, and story.

Routine becomes repetition, a mindless act.

Yet, intentionality is at the heart of the ritual.

As we build our new routines, let us do them ritually. Let action and act be done with mindful intention, with meditation, with remembrance and thought.

In many ways, we have been given a blank slate. We have been given a chance to do-over. Many of our routines have been shaken away and we have a chance (before creating these new ones) to scrutinize the old, learn from their mistakes, their breaks, and the ways they didn't work.

Protected with this knowledge, we can rebuild our lives and the lives of our kin, for the better.

It is now that we can see clearly the fissures in the foundations that we
took for granted.

In this moment of uncertainty, there's a chance for a certain
clarity, when our path is undercut.

It is like the sunlight breaking through the clouds we thought were
our sky.

We can now see how our well beaten path is actually full of rocks
and holes and thorns. Just because a path is well-trodden doesn't
mean it's the best path to take.

We can now see how endlessly the great blue sky stretches
outwards. We can see how big the woods really are, and how many
other paths are waiting to be made.

THE VESSEL

for Ursula K Le Guin

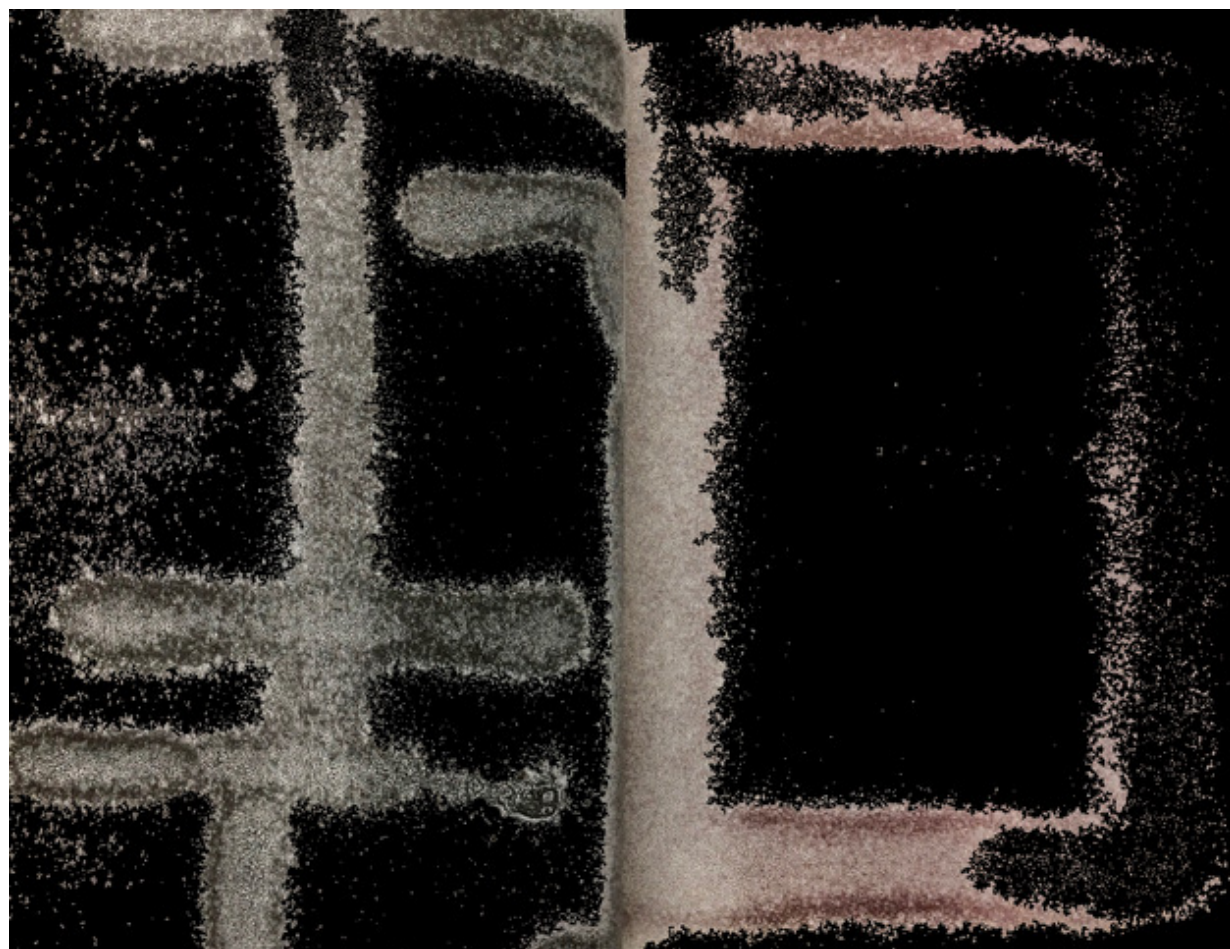
The vessel holds all The vessel is the world The vessel lays itself upside-down on your chest to reverberate the rhythm of your own body back to you The vessel is a coil pot glazed iridescent, changes color in the day and glows in the dark The vessel is a grab bag buried in your back yard full of dried beans, canned vegetables, rice, flashlights, maps, your favourite candy, cash, lighters and a knife — just in case The vessel is held by Aquarius in an ever flowing cycle, some say that it contains liquid celestial light that it's a satellite to catch the planetary sounds of growling stomachs photosynthesis, weather patterns and short breath to interpret the data of the collective nervous system The vessel is full of every plant ever called a weed The vessel is a series of code written by hackers The vessel is full of hospital bills college debt notices rent due notices ready to be set on fire The vessel dreams and enacts a kinder world in the present context The vessel practices community self defence The vessel is glamorous and wears fake pearl earrings The vessel drives a pick up truck and lives on a fairy commune The vessel raises goats The vessel was fired in a kiln of burning cedar wood, a rocking horse and prayers The vessel is a transsexual The vessel is at least 1000 years old but no one is totally sure The vessel has a tattoo of an angel and the word "ocean" The vessel likes when you spit in it The vessel likes when you pick it up in your arms and caress and compliment it's beautiful and rough edges, rest your hand in its interior space The vessel listens to your needs and provides the perfect tool The vessel is adept at divination and strategy The vessel shoots and processes deer in the forest to share with its neighbours, learns how to save seeds and find mushrooms The vessel is made of clay found in a creek bed in a small mountain town in south-eastern Kentucky which was created by a meteor thousands of years ago — thus the vessel is made from the material of another world The vessel is an elementary students art project The vessel once rolled across the US highway system from New York City to San Francisco those who saw just believed it a tumble weed, plastic bag or wayward pop can The vessel was dreamed up by a dying artist The vessel is a time capsule The Vessel likes to take selfies but, The vessel doesn't have instagram The vessel will serve you dinner in its own body The vessel will float you down the river shepherd you to the other side The vessel rests on a pedestal of yellow leaves fallen in October The vessel feels completely satisfied when empty The vessel acts as a speaker when noise is projected from within The vessel is generally stereotyped a womb but it's actually all organs holding, expanding, contracting, flowing, releasing, feeling, alchemizing, excreting The vessel has no gender no sex or secondary sex organs The vessel is a digester gestater surrogate breather dyer fluid collector The vessel will hold your body for you when you cannot, will hold you when you cannot hold yourself The vessel is a carrier bag The vessel is filled with the ashes of the dead, the fruit and water for the living The cat likes to sleep in it Heat gets trapped in it The vessel cannot be bought or sold The vessel is ungovernable The vessel is fragile and its fragility is its strength The vessel has been cracked broken and repaired countless times by superglue, spit, mysterious patch jobs, chewed gum and tree sap

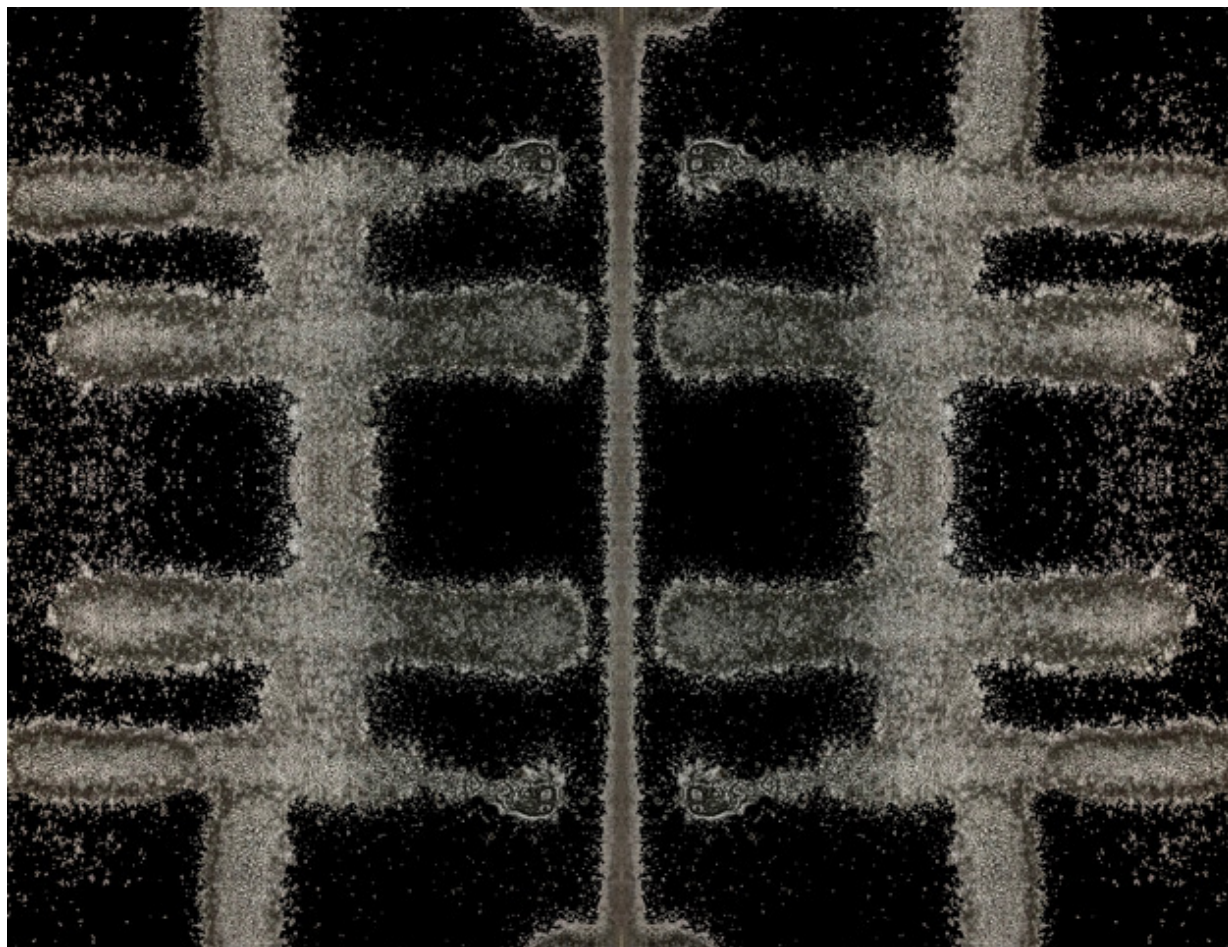
And now I hold it up to your lips to take a drink

CRIS CHEEK

from | DSPLACEMENT







end white silence



CURTIS EMERY

CAPITALISM WANTS TO
TEAR MY EYES OUT
BUT I WANT TO BLOOM

So I'll write another poem
staring at trees thru
a window—a cut sect
of tree—an endless middle

I suppose I know
the roots too—an accept'd
truth—give way to its
towering fullness—

yes I imagine the top
too—how else to frame
the middle—

these accept'd facts—
clear as day overcast day
thru which I must run
to know its wholeness—

shld I say—
how do you know the roots
the tips the temporary shade
without that slow changing middle—

I can say that I can—
that's the proof—
I can say what ever if
I want—

Which ever draws
me here?

withholding cardinal &
yr missing bluejay—

what birdpoem of me watching
trees talking thru a window—

“Who are you?”
“This is me”
“Am I me?”
“Yes in yr bird way”
“Am I birding this
 overcast day?”
“Are you flying?”
“Soon”
“Then yes”

Flying straight thru
the middle & that slow
moving soup we forget
so easily—

I swear that middle-present
was here for a beat and then
dissolv'd into an afternoon
ray

It's possible
 it wasn't
then wonder blew it
into plain sight

I want to be Robert
Grenier sleeping under
an apple tree in ancient
Massachusetts—

I want to be Larry
Eigner and his clairvoyant
windowsill—

The trees seem
to be humming on
their own now

elsewhere a
train horn

That's the thing
in this shit—
it doesn't pay
to sit lightly.

CY OZGOOD

HOW DO I LIVE A HOLY LIFE

No reason to sleep
when I saw the water
scurrying under street
lights dead air
if you go down
I go down with you
lay my hands on the corpse
of last year's grass
is this the time
that all things stop returning
open the heart
to what is yet unseen
inside GET THIS WORLD
OUT OF ME it's so slow
when I collapse

the old ghosts said
to cry is an ecstasy
the voice still blooms
in a shimmering panic
the flame

in those days
they will say
it was enough
to wake up alive
even haunted
even so

DAN FISHER

DISASTER
CAPITALISM
WILL FUCK YOU



DANA TEEN LOMAX

from-unnamed-
relation

for marthe reed

the-in-between-o
f-insight-rachel-c
arson's-warnings
-no-witchcraft-no
-enemy-action-h
ad-silenced-the-r
ebirth-of-new-life
-in-this-stricken-
world-the-people
-had-done-it-the
mselves-a-coloni
zer's-constant-w
ant-the-usa-need
s-an-exorcism-a-
purging-like-king-
midas-who-remai
ned-slow-to-learn
-even-while-the-b
read-crumbs-har
dened-in-his-han
ds-right-now-barr
els-of-oil-no-one-
wants-pile-up-pe
ople-are-not-burn
ing-fossil-fuels-a
s-before-so-there
-is-no-place-to-st
ore-them-but-the
n-there's-always-
tomorrow-

the-in-between-o
f-aunt-mary's-ho
use-in-clarksville-
we'd-sit-on-her-p
orch-swing-drink-
sweet-tea-and-w
atch-the-storm-c
ome-in-that's-wh
y-i-can't-get-into-
the-*tiger-king*-ser
ies-aunt-mary-ha
d-only-one-leg-fr
om-cancer-and-g
randma-made-he
r-own-soap-from-
lye-saved-all-she
-could-from-facto
ry-work-on-the-li
ne-false-teeth-all
-around-green-b
eans-and-okra-in
-the-garden-pove
rty-sewn-into-gen
erations-of-tablec
loths-and-knitted-
into-the-thick-yar
n-sweaters-the-o
nes-i-came-to-val
ue-and-my-daug
hter-still-wears-

the-in-between-o
f-upward-mobility
-the-brookings-in
stitute-man-said-
property-owners
hip-is-the-main-w
ay-wealth-is-pas
sed-down-and-it-
turned-out-that-w
hen-my-mom-die
d-i-could-buy-a-h
ome-she-never-
wanted-to-borro
w-against-hers-s
o-she-could-*leav*
e-you-kids-somet
hing-now-i-see-s
he-knew-exactly-
what-she-was-do
ing-just-today-the
-roomba-arrived-t
o-clean-this-hous
e's-floors-and-i-f
elt-so-bougie-but
-a-friend-of-mine-
said-*if-there's-an*
-infomercial-for-a
-product-it's-not--
that-bougie-he-w
ent-to-dartmouth-

DANNA LOMAX

ANTI-CAPITALIST HAIKU

My friend Richard says,
“Withholding food for money
shapes our consciousness.”

DANIEL OWEN

BABEL SALTS

small music
box up against
kidneys and
bile of world
we, ambivalent
to symmetry, slowly
clapping on liberation text
books unburnt
on their own
unpublished
private queries
to courage

blurred masks for
example or
the destitute
of stolen lands
taking back
landings and
destitution

whose poems
are in words
rather
than chains of social
reaction?

and is grace
that being
able to see and
say its way
out of
fortune, happen-
stance, fate?

like that
musician stuck
at home with a
camera
and a mic and
a half-stocked
pantry, (not
to mention that
mined engine,
the internet)
prepares
its own bowl
of scarcity
in manmade

iron ore
and eye-chained
uncreated
singing
from causes indentured
to workers
indentured to
pressing sweat
for principles
of property
law applied
to people

knock oneself
out for
surviving
contingency's
arcane, ordinal
mandate drift

working
one's ass
off under
the sun or
borrowing cash for
tombstones
relating
to a taxonomic
order or
social crypts
of enlightenment
gloss, wood
and skin
hewn from wheels
we shoulder against
concrete
reinforced medium

death sandwich
in salt's box
salt the earth
to dispel leeches
unwanted
vegetation and bugs
and ghouls

veil of form
fixed
stake of accumulated

structure
fixed scree
nails scrape
on laws hollow
as cello body
or simple
as a mouth
to hold
its sound
dispel
its airs

exiles
of the blast
furnace, easy
wind's a steel
wind, a stolen
wind
shrapnel on
your front door
bought at slagheap
rates of blacklung
mind's eye

boasting to
trenches of word-
eaters' smoke in
brightened
lips' saliva
pearls, living, just
one more
egg away
from an omelette
under steel
rain, coca-cola's
stolen water sold
back as laughing
gas
hurdles, molten
over thirst's
quarantined
victims in plastic
fates, not
to mention petroleum
muck of burnt
slugs, our ancients'
graves' turned
interiors tuned
arrivals of smoke and

vials or pustules
sores birthing
cursed smiles, playboy
hand chafes
pestilent sumps
bent of world
built bleeding out
its indivisibility

or sly
rhetoric sent to
detonate
on contact the
living revolve
hard, shook
the clarion
two calls of
seven trumpets'
brass faded
in the fallen
flesh

the future, say
unskinned but
colorful
apoplectic, atonement
pores burst ripe
with rifle-eaters
hey-days, jibes
and responsibility
held like the preternatural
horse

a clearing
a meadow I had
once been allowed
to access atop
an unmarked
grave, a mass
grave, a
reckoning

fracked past diced
into waiting
heritage packets
taxed bloody cookie
cutters boxing
fives and fire's might
in depraved

marauding white
bent on hatred's
brand-name accumulating
hourglass

sing hex
sing dirty
sing reckless
take the tasks'
ears back up
to the sun
petty end-
of-days, go
back where
you came from

siphoning plastic
trash from a
rich field of
worms through
a spiked
tube of scuff
a tunnel of
flight surveilled
at every turn and
bend with
dog bark and
mocking tear
waste labyrinth
sold off
as securities

eyes snapped
free from
every sound's upkeep
every bartered zone's
infinity unsoddered
unsoldiered, unwed
unlocked, unsolicited
unbusted
unburnt
unbarged and unbegun
unburdened, undone

and the brunt
of boot
straps and
heels signifies
nothing but force's

lie in flagwoven
spectacular
peeled down
to thick
protocol of bled-out
pigs dignified
at higher rates
than human fate

propagandized morning's
squeal and
peal of coughed-up
memory's commitments
striking
bells of liberty cages
of regurgitant
fields for
killing

the hoarder's
spiel to manumit
freedom from
meaning as
a gun and fire for
cowardly protection
from cages displaced
(by manufactured
creeds of caste and
race) to anywhere
greed's devouring
gleam rusts
over life and limb's
dignity fed
force into submission
(creaking dynamite)

ring cracked skulls
ring raped forest
ring dizzying feints of
law brought
whole-cloth corrupt
from European masters'
perversion of
scry and creed
of live
and let be

DAVID GREENSPAN

QUIET

There's a bit of glass
in my shoe I can't stop
thinking about fingernails
there's a bit of glass
in my shoe I can't stop
thinking about fingernails
and how my socks were once
free of blood
I can't stop thinking
about my socks which are wet
and before that my socks
were a plant listen
I'm dumb out of luck
today but this bit of glass
is in my shoe I can't stop
thinking about the time
you asked me to blow
cigarette in your face
you said you liked yellow
fingernails we were drunk
or I was anyway you were made
of almost only bone
bone and water I can't stop laughing
about the bit of glass in my shoe
the meds aren't working
you didn't ask but that doesn't matter
I'm made up of mostly bone
bone and water and Paxil
because I can't stop thinking
can't stop laughing
the meds aren't working
there's a bit of glass in my shoe

**I DIDN'T GO TO
WORK TODAY...**



**... I DON'T THINK
I'LL GO TOMORROW**

**LET'S TAKE CONTROL OF OUR LIVES
AND LIVE FOR PLEASURE NOT PAIN**

DAVID LARSEN

Day One is for the Sun
Day Two the Moon's
All day three is Master Tiw's
Odin's day and Thor's
eat up two more
n fuckin then Friday Friday I know
But this day is for
the weekend king
who throve in the boot forest
where the thunder drave him
out to populate his tummy

The more I think about it
I should be open to more things
but there are no believers in a
Flat Saturn
Scientific wonders never cease
paying me visits
Put them all together,
and what do they spell
Nothing
How would I know if I was going insane?
I want to have a torrid affair
Just kidding, I want to move miles inland
to a beaver lodge with surrounding dam
How deep is your cover
When it's over, you can tell me
I will listen
but if you go out without your keys
as sure as God made buzzing insects
I will murder you
like the shade of Abel unleashed on Cain
There is a first time for everything
even lying on this scummy floor
wishing good feelings could be trusted
But some things will never be
THE FLEA'S PILGRIMAGE
sounds good to me
Peekskill, Poughkeepsie, Saugerties
frozen sunshine on the west bank
liquid sunshine on the right
everywhere the landscape says
You are looking at me for a reason

Forget that reason
and let the line go free
No ideation, just sensation
It's not as if the cat you fed last summer
got up in the wintertime to bring you ham
Bad news, bad news
Fake killers become real ones
The different is not the Other
The different could be your twin
Some men are so beautiful
it presents a problem
and they mask their faces
That's how beautiful the Other is
when you awaken from a dream
still clutching the apple
from when I was going to buy groceries
but stayed in and took a bath
The thing about the needle in the haystack is
a horse might die in agony!
Will you find the needle? Quick!
The hay is there
and the quartz beneath the ground pulses
to the beat of Round Saturn
where is the way between for me to thread
a barnyard Casanova, apple-scented
Fuck the neighbors! Don't they know today is

Day One was for the Sun
Day Two the Moon
The rest of the week I can barely get through
And so we hail Saturn, for his is the day
I smoke til I'm simple, and drink til I sway

DAVID SPATARO

UNTITLED GRIEF

Though he is dead now, I refuse. I love those who make connections knowable. When we fragment landscapes, the white-footed mouse thrives. Cement elegy for red foxes. But who is to blame for this pavement? The *thing* that causes palm oil monoculture is an abstraction. A real thing. But we die, or we suffer the deaths of connection. There is a fragmented landscape in here.

COCHLEA

>>

Occultist Jacques Toussaint Benoit once tried to use the goo snails leave behind to build a transatlantic network.

To clarify, the snail had to be heartbroken. I came upon the pairs of snails in Flaubert, and then again in Dickens, because I turn to blowhards when I'm unsure myself. Flaubert's reference comes sidelong and buried in *Bouvard and Pecuchet*, a buddy-comedy in which two burnouts pursue a shared series of hobbies, each trendier than the last. They fail at agriculture, move on to fail at anthropology, then try chemistry, medicine, romance, philosophy, and physics, all lovingly vitrined in technical language, pulling aether. Maniacal research ate up the end of Flaubert's life. The book was never finished. It ends with a few succinct sketches for never-elaborated chapters, and one feels his departure in the strangeness of learning by way of these summaries that he could write a clear line, after all.

Pecuchet resists getting into the occult at first but he equivocates: "all over Europe, America, Australia and the Indies, millions of mortals passed their lives in making tables turn; and they discovered the way to make prophets of canaries, to give concerts without instruments, and to correspond by means of snails." He decides he has to try, involves his friend. "For a fortnight they spent every afternoon facing each other, with their hands over a table, then over a hat, over a basket, and over plates. All these remained motionless."

Dickens described the snail machine in detail in greater detail in his journal *All the Year Round*, which he worked himself nearly to death publishing weekly. He writes in 1890 about the early telegraphy of the 1850's: "The machine proved to be a large scaffold, formed of beams ten feet long, supporting the Voltaic pile, in which the poor snails were stuck by glue at intervals. Or rather there were two such machines - one at each end of the room, and each containing twenty-four alphabetic and sympathetic snails. They looked very unhappy, and tried hard to get away from the unsympathetic solution of sulphate of copper which dribbled upon them. But whenever they put out their horns to creep away, a dribble sent them back quickly to their shells."

It's a sceptic's account - he wasn't fooled. But still, it's clear, he loves to tell it.

>>

To take a happy jaunt into the hand-set, heavy-seraphed accounts of galvanism and mesmerism and all the other mid nineteenth century scientific tries is to clamber through sentences blocked with odd words. Many terms have transitory meaning. They require a quick unknowing. They force time, reel you back, mean something different now than was intended then. Fluids - not just water but also heat, light, flesh, humors, any material that moves, or moves the nerves. Nerve: not a type of cell but total feel, or a sickness of feeling. Galvinism: applying electricity. Escargotic commotion: noise, you think, then stepping back, no noise, only snails moving together. Co-moving.

Some of these detach neatly into latinate roots so logical and neatly sequenced, so puzzling, so flattering when puzzled out, that they conveyed scientific authority through the mere gravity of their contrivance. A deciphering brain happily converts a signal into momentum, generates a proven known. If you can figure out the word you know it's true. "Magnetic matter, by virtue of its extreme subtlety and its similarity to nervous fluid, disturbs the movement of the fluid in such a way that it causes all to return to the natural order, which I call the harmony of the nerves."

Although no one believed Mesmer, to read that is to have gotten involved. He wrote to the *Lancet* and he was rejected, his articles were met with rude rebuffs. No one believed Benoit, either. He was remembered for his wrongness. But he comes up again and again, ridiculed gently. It is as though they admire he once held a moment of being close to being almost right. That potential kept him in circulation a while.

Later I learned Dicken's account was not by him, but by his eldest son Charley, who he had named after himself. He'd been dead 20 years before it was written, though it is the father-novelist to whom the words are often credited. Snails, though. What a distant little mystery in there. Whorl, shell, anal pore, pneumostome, mucus gland, foot, mantle. The reproductive organs are lodged high up in the smallest, sharpest coil of the shell, and they do it all - ovotestis, boys and girls. The head is all tentacles, an upper set and smaller lower set, near the mouth, and the wide-seeing eyes wave out on high knobs.

It's those waving eyes that anchor the hunch: surely they can sense and transmit messages long distances? Surely they impart some faculty of as yet unimagined sight? When snails mate they adhere foot to foot, aligning the whole of their visible bodies for days at a time, they intertwine their eyes, lovingly; when they part a string of silver goo stretches between them. You saw snails more, in those days, because people raised them in the garden. The Brits called them wall fish and ate them at Lent. You work with what you've got.

>>

And so the pasilalnic-sympathetic compass, a kind of snail piano. Twenty six zinc bowls on wooden risers, a single letter scripted out before each one. Zinc had no special properties, but it was as cheap then as plastic is now. The snails were soldered solidly in place and their softer parts troubled with messages. Across the long gymnasium where Benoit built his prototype, an identical set of lettered bowls was set to receive the transmission. In an earlier rendition a ring of arranged snails apparently spoke to a sister loop in America. Per Dickens the younger, Benoit's were dribbled with copper sulphate. In a newspaper account a hot, thin poker was held to a - and across the room, presumably, a could be clocked for his tormented writhing. The bowls were arranged in a circle so that the scribe stood in the middle, turning round to press slow letters. Gymnase, he wrote. Lumhere divine.

A journalist, Jules Allix, had been invited to the demonstration, and within a year he was writing long letters defending the demonstration against claims of "delusion", citing Galvini and Volta and other works of esoterism over the centuries. He wrote of an experiment to heal a wound by "bandaging at a great distance a piece of fabric on which there is blood from the wound." He wrote,

"But whether one admits animal magnetism or denies it, this makes no difference to the thing itself, which exists nonetheless. This power, they say, is incomprehensible! So be it! But let there be no doubt, human reason will progress to the point where it can explain it, along with so many other things that remain mysteries still today, or even that remain entirely unknown."

>>

One strangeness of the first month of quarantine was all the rote rehearsal. It came on by analogy: sci-fi and action, borrowed imagination. It imparted a full scale response we'd come to expect to expect. Through city alerts built for other interruptions it planned and chatted, it conveyed. We felt the pain before it reached us, and then we felt it on the bathroom floor. Working, I found myself dubious. It felt scary. But it felt fine.

Familiarity left, came back. Cartoon lips with tabbed pink tongues on the masks worn by kids walking their bikes up and down Cermak, almost as bored as they are every summer. Huge groups of Kawasakis out at dusk, bright green helmets, Rodman jerseys big with wind. New keening, no closure. The pallets of lilies at Pete's went on sale. Everything cycling so tightly, round as the thread on a screw: newly mortal every morning, still a body every night.

>>

Per one of my friends it is already over. I ask what she means and she says human culture. We lost everything we knew, she says, we will never get it back. Another friend gets through by starting little feuds at work over precautions. My neighbors lose two, three family members. The sirens go on. Thousands, tens of thousands, hundred thousand. The tent they put outside the little west side hospital blows off. The prison brings a white bus with high slit windows. This phase seems like a first attempt: naive, misplaced. Certain places hurt while others only know about it. All misconception leaves a trail. Someday this will be only a confused first phase of something longer. It turns, and in a distant bowl, the paired turn does not take. Far certainty, progressing backward, gets everything fallible and dear..

DENISE NEWMAN

from NATURE POEM

A corpse flower blooms as the old neighbor lay dying—the scent, unmistakable. Flies coming down from the sky into the sticky throat of the Venus flytrap—smell that? As if sex has expired. In the dusky light of day plus night. An inflorescence called Mary Ann, concealed by the mountain we take to be Mary Ann, which is also Mary Ann, who, now dead, reveals the *empty eon* that has never stopped being Mary Ann

If anyone doubts the *empty eon* of sex let them die as many times as they need

Coming down words dissolve like moon petals into waves—*lip lip lip*—one at a time in endless service. Dividing up say *flow* from *ering* or *with* from *ering*—do you know the *flow* of *withering* or the *with* of *flowering*? Down in the dirt in shimmering owl air dispersed among crickets not thinking—*this is paradise*—that comes later in the defining light of dread

DIANA HUMBLE

USING THE FIRST LINES OF EMAILS I RECEIVED DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

1.

Coronavirus and stock market drops
How we're taking action:

Brand-new stuff to keep you cozy at home
Buy it now at a lower price
Online only with code BIGDEAL
And, OMG Clearance from \$1.99

Who's in?

2.

This has never happened in human history
Luxury watches that shine extra bright
They're all here, but only for 1 day!
Can you pay for the groceries you needed
During the COVID-19 outbreak

And we're sure you'll <3 these brands
More aid for small businesses fails in partisan fight
Have a fun-filled Easter celebration!

These sales are heating up
There's still time to get your goodies by Easter
Multi-state concealed gun permit certification is here
It also delivers incredible cardio conditioning

We know these are difficult times.
Put together the perfect basket for Easter—
Natural treatments for the pandemic

3.

Good afternoon team
This message has no content

DM JERMAN

A MAP MADE IN WIRES
for EST

"We insist on kinship despite its tribal entrapments."
-Monica McClure

Your hair. This poem starts with your hair. It ends that way too.
Forget titles, this poem will be known as the one I wrote about hair, your hair, and how it is of you, for you. With you but without you.
If I could break into your house and steal one thing, only to return it to you years later it would be your hair.

I'll tell you why.

A part of your life, a person(s), is dying, and you must let them.
The expectations of generations on either side of you must die. Your exile must truly be yours. The old way cannot stand. There is no room to keep both it and your great penned life. To keep both it and your true love.

It and your vast capacity for tomorrows.

The chorus of their watch must become merely echoes across the exquisite garden you are building. You construct this place, this refuge, unknowingly and knowingly. The still hidden courage of it is massive, immense. Revelation in death; you are not too young to understand.

Meanwhile, you grow your hair. It is a pit of sadness. A deep wide flag- the longest I have ever seen.
With oil and anise you smooth it. The creaks and seams of your very own heart are here.

Your hair, a ream of flawless stain. A fullness to wear away.
Rise above the depth of it when the time is right.

Oh the blackness of this mourning rope you carry. This shining and dead worry-twist. A mala and a grieving gown. It does not mock. For now, it only hangs, a cloak of lies. Like soft, elegant upside-down weaves of weeds in dark waves without fish. Gravity wringing its strands like slaves.

The mother of this deeply flawed pack of dogs speaks. Your mother, to whom the pack is everything, recognizing perfection in you that serves only to deepen the well of her own loneliness. Her animal call is nearly irresistible. But your lot is your lot, and to misunderstand you is not the same as resenting you, or sabotaging you. Speaking of the family who push you away to save you.

Perhaps you can cut the wires. Sometime when you are certain the pack is no longer of use to you.

Or may kill you.

Your singular instincts are poised to serve you much better.
The dolls at your side will seem a rotten charade. A poor excuse for your own true pack.

I say here: own.

I say here: true. yours.

Here again: strike right, dear solo romantic.

You needn't be lost in fear. The new day soon comes when you are awake.

Light and unburdened of the locks clung to for so long now, Shed, then buried in the magic earth.

beneath the paving stones: the beach

7

III

8



DOUGLAS PICCINNINI

LET'S BEAT UP THE POOR

I strangled my parents because they weren't going to leave me anything. How could we live beside pain's wholesale misery? If by a forgery of fluency, our adorable outsized years left uneaten?

Salted and torn from a form so greedily, so eagerly brushed away — each day the order consented, peaked on meaning. Studiously, the gang marked a kingdom in flames. Bored in being, all god's children smiling abusers of song. Beat up the poor.

EDRIC MESMER

ENISLED—

yet of the everything—

ap-
pea-

ring nea-
rer , the sea-

like— its ultimate
unknowable-

ness , a shore to
tread—

collecting encrusted
frameworks

contents
fled

*

if “this edge
of the continent / is a hinge”

[Kenneth Irby]

then ‘connoiter that far-flung
imago—

remember
it is merely

the stilled
phaeton’s wheel

round which
a cosmos

circled—
a cenotaph

sat in
a cenote

*

diurnal—
diluvian—

as if that were a-
lone 'markation—

spun out from , or
hazarding toward—

tides one way—
narrative another—

fluvial , chthonic—
(gin , tonic—)

frag from fractal—
tectonic sift—

not a bucket
but a shovel

ELIZABETH ROBINSON

GLOSS ON LOST GOD

Old order born of soft jolts, old glow, brown root, or gold tomb.

Worn crown of moths.
Worn knot torn from gown.

God's onyx photo of glory? Sold now to
loss on loss on loss.

Horn stops short, blown not to good, nor
to wrong.

Blond moss.
Odor of worm.

God: lowly hobo who lost work, who doffs hood, longs for
honor. Longs most for food.

Food: fog for fools.
God's fog croons sloth, odd color.
Moot pool of froth.

Song of spoon on bowl.

God's ghost knows God's scorch—solo, not song.
Word quoth. Word forgot.

Thrown, too, to shores of sorrow, bloodshot clock:
tock-tock, tock-tock.

God's god. Hobo song howls so soft,
follows wrong north.

Soon, boot knocks on door. Frown, now prod.

Go, follow thorn or cocoon.
Owl flown. Fox swoon. Cold spoor. Forth to

world lost. Joy torn from worth. God's torpor.
Sort, toss, gloom, botch.

ELIZABETH YOUNG

HALF-LIFE

Fortunately, we don't need to concern ourselves
with questions any more. We can just punch
the clock, filling in the missing premises until
our truth explodes straight through the firmament.
But who controls the ecstasy that lies beyond
the airports where the wind undoes our work
and our arguments get tangled in the wires
like a ghost? Layers of human occupation gather
to a single point that twinkles ex silentio into
this paper cup. At the edge of the arena,
in the places without love, beyond the aerosol
pavilions, ticking on like a Swiss watch, ergo,
ad nauseum, at speeds not yet attainable,
while the Nile overflows, shifting the whole
non sequitur, de nihilo, ad infinitum.

MOTHERBOARD

It's ok to talk like a grownup, but not ok to place the baby inside a cocoon on the fringes of science fiction like some synthetic fairy. That's a childish maneuver and you're better than that, babe. We live in a dizzying cosmos where the phone is always ringing, where the oldest layers aren't necessarily the deepest, where concrete overpasses continuously shift and heave, where desensitized castrati issue bloodcurdling commands. Babies should be spared humiliations such as these. They should be given teeth that continuously replenish themselves. Something's happening in the world, there's no time for pyrotechnics. What are we – the lone survivors crawling through the arborvitae in Motherboard, our online reputations, like the forest, evanescent into faith and hope and love? In that other universe it's ok to say such things and to be terrified or lazy or take too much Dramamine and the dog never dies and the fairy rides a beam of light back into the real world and the baby understands it when you whisper, "Baby, it's alright but no, it's not ok."

EVE PRUSA

SELFIE SCREAM

Who are you if not a land wife?
 Who are you if not a mother?
Who are you if to a brother, dad or uncle?
 Who are you if not a child?
 Who fooled you into living thinking
 breathing as a tadpole?
 Who are you zigzagging in a pool
 of chlorine bleach and fluoride?
Who are you on Zoom Teams, typing out your answer?
Why are you on screen time facing yours to other?
 Who are you at blue time when clouds touch night
 and day?
Who could say 'your brother's mother's uncle was this way?'
 You'd have to have a brother
 You'd have to utter 'brother' to someone with your name
 You'd likely share his blood
Who are you to share his blood but not with any others?
Who are you to not relax inside of your own cage?
Who are you to not react to forcers pending...beat you?
Who are you to lie to waste, expense the fine/fare later?
 Who are you to open an account with Chase? And stay there?
 Who are you not to page your forefathers and
 and debrief their mistakes?
Who are you to get away with eating your next cancer?
Who are you to shoulder through another year of wage slave?
Who are you to bear the monkeying of people?
 Who are you to grin while neighbors skin off needs from poverty?
Who are you to skin your knees for anything besides
 biking on your way to
 dairy-free ice-cream or that yoga place's
 sound gong bath?
Who are you to share your lottery-sized planet?
Who are you to see your peanuts as the gold-mine?
Who are you to swear you've always meant right?
Who are you to watch away your cell-lives and wash
 them down with honey?
Who are you to let a 2D square of strangers see your hairs die?
Who are you to let your furniture speak through you?
 Who are you to let your Veganese speak for you?
Who are you to ask a pencil for a dance first?
 Who are you to grasp a fine-tooth comb
 and mean it?

Who are you to catch the bees before their honey?
Who are you to ask for scissors first, then paper?
 Whose grass is all this really?
 Whose grass is safe to sit on?
 Whose grass is just sharp ivy?
Whose grass will cast you out like thieves and only see your hoodie?
Whose ask once came before yours?
 Who answered first? Why's it your turn?
Whose turn is it not to say something?
 Who's turn is it to scream *BLEAK*?
Who's right is it to scream loud?
 Who's right is it not to scream loud?
Who cannot scream but cry still?
Who cares enough to cry still?
 Who's ever cried? This week, year?
Who still feel's the heart's beyond them?
 Who's better as a robot?
 Who's number 3 like tinman?
Who's wading thick in dew drops?
Who's dreaming for his sleep first?
Who's eating out on Tuesday and waking for not
Wednesday, just waking until bedtime?
Whose dream was this shit? Show me
 Whose money made us zombies?
 Whose hive juice came through breathing?
 Whose inseams sucked our guts out?
 Whose anthrax laced our tongues up?
Whose stories coat our dreams, our homes, our
 sons, our people on this planet?
 Whose drugs are we the addicts to
 and who wants/can get clean?



[screaming]

THE TEACHER ASKS

I. THE TEACHER ASKS WHAT WE CAN LEARN

Shelter in Maze. Minotaur preface :

"Well we have to kill the stupid people
And keep the smart people alive
But the stupid people and the smart people
Are the same people."

We don't learn we die.
Punctuate that sentence. And that.
Punctuate this sentence
All sentient beings numberless
Does that include virus.
We can learn we don't learn we die from
Not the virus
From willful prolonged proudly defended ignorance of
Our profound interconnectedness
Interconnectedness flashing through space like this.
Like this. We can learn the bat
Is the new totem of the globe.
We can learn to let Covid's Metamorphosis
Redraw the world map if there is a world
When this thing weakens and hopefully dies
If it ever does. This thing. It. The virus. How many
Superstitious names have you invented just today
To keep it away. We can learn we are bat
Vampires who for hundreds of years suck the black oil blood
From earthneck and deliver it to our cars
Rockets and missiles and tanks and bombs and planes
To kill each other to see who can kill each other the fastest
When we are one species as it says in the new
Declaration of Interdependence:
We the one species of humanity, interbeing here
For one flash moment with all beings
We can learn to love each other but what good would that do
What profit or prophet will it take for it to be incentivized
Our love across all borders. We can learn
The borders are now dissolved forever
For they were never here to begin with
And the more people try to tighten them
To build walls between countries,
Which are false vanities on map
Made in defense and attack formation
For man against man patriarchal command aneurism land
Enduring brain bloodleak centuries for what plan,
The more there will be no land at all only occasional
Obsidian islands surfacing from the Lavaflow Re-Pangeanation.

Who expects to win this human war when the last one
Standing will be no one. Not even you in your
Nuclearproof bunker in New Zealand. My partner
The Minotaur interrupts: "You know how
I sometimes hear voices?" "Yes. What now?"
"You like that? Let's try red pen," the voice with the lime
And dark greenish changing color Iguana Goiter says to you
Who drift to sleep next to me in our liferaft bed on the sea of
Plague Lake interspecies waterbodies copulate to provide
Hybrids for the karmic comeuppances of the human race
Lost. Lost. No finishing tape: so how did we get so
Lost along the way? We can learn to find ourselves
With peace action not just peace talks. We can learn
We are learning what karma is. It's instant
The way we like things, instant, and also
Takes ages to build and crash its wave. We are all
That monk gifted with great wisdom who said
There is no cause and effect, and who was changed
Into a fox for five hundred lifetimes as
Punishment reward practice. There isn't, in a larger
Spiritual sense of all life being one lightning flash,
Cause and effect, perhaps, on that timebeing blingbling
Scale. Diamond sutra copies are good for pounding nails into
My forehead so I too can be Frankenstein the lonely and frail
And lumbering toward friendship and accidental drowning
And strangulation as most friendships end, metaphorically,
If not, like, literally, you know. No. But on the we-are-here-now-
Living-our-lives-out-together level, cause and effect does exist,
And why don't we as Jack said love our lives out instead of live?
Then we wouldn't be the cause of our own destruction:
The bats coming for us to show us we are the vampires
We've been shooting with our movie cameras
Driving stakes through our own hearts as we kill each other
Relentless suicide living through its own perpetuation. Since
I came to this refuge house three hours northwest of
New York City I've seen three crows on the limb of
The neighbors front yard birdfeeder tree. The Robin
Redbreast skipping through backyard grass. I heard
The Owl hooting along in Jupiter Hour to
Ode to the West Wind by Shelley as I read it
To my friends over laptop videophone. We can learn
To stop branding our companies and each other
And cows. We can learn to stop cannibalism
And bloodlust and change it for the vegetablekingdom trust
And this will never happen because we'll defend our steak
With an automatic machine gun coming in handy now

To kill deer while the food shortage starves us. We can learn
To hunt when starving, not each other. I saw five large
And medium and fawn deer cross the street in the dark
Windstorm rain howl as I walked with the Minotaur through
The Churchside street whose name I always forget
Because we need to learn to forget everything
And still be kind to each other in this our present
Dementia epidemic systemic and symptomatic of
All our panic selves manic for grocery shelves
Dreaming of anti acid reflux medication because we're
Out of it and out of it we are homebound and strange
And going out still and spreading the plague.

2. THE TEACHER ASKS WHAT IS NEEDED

Genital timebomb. The parallel universe where you express your every
sexual want. A snake decided to leave some writing on the road. Meet me
at Owl Way. You know how it is here lots of scream lots of sugar. Eighth
House Mailbox. Mailboxes of the Zodiac Houses. The Pompom Tree.
Shakespeare in the Marsh. Complete with Fungi and Dr. Seuss Trees.

Bluejay and a family of cardinals--spirits of passed on family ancestors
coming to protects us as we pass by the Endtime's Duckside Cottage and
wish we could meet in friend basements and read our out loud poetry.

Green oil truck wet Library Lane roller
Vehichle of war
We all live for

Vehichle of wad
We all live bad
Wands.

Clusters of mailboxes down Library Lane
Multiple newspapers for every house:
The Day, The Current, The Insistence On the Segment of Cooling Lava
Mailbox clusters down zodiac way.
Bird's nest soup!
The neighbors have Ganesha and Vishnu bronze statuettes at their front
door under four flying republican party flags with elephants
Do they think Ganesha is a republican
He who overcomes obstacles for everybody
Equally

Or shows us how to do it
One being

Are you tired of being in your house?
The news cycle was fucking me up.
I feel like my life has been stolen from me.
Does anyone else feel angry?
How long do you think we'll be in here?
It should be till May.
When do you think we'll get out of here.
I'm avoiding the news cos it terrorizes me.
You should it doesn't tell us anything.
You have to do things that will make you feel less depressed
We can't figure out what's going to happen next
It's sort of an exercise in having a more Buddhist approach
We are here in this room and we have this connection
So what are we going to do with it.

When's Easter?
We are here now and we have this connection what are we going to do with
Creek rushing windchimes bicyclist speeding by
Almost hits me he's too shy to say he's coming
Would rather chance somebody dying

Rave Nevada!
A crow a wolf a fox face sticks out from this treebark hole
Blasted open by what sky hole

O

Open postcard
Writings from inside
Humanity under house arrest
For oiltide and oilspiltide and bloodtide
And pelican karma eyes deathpelican sigh

They say the wood's are the poorman's overcoat
Today the woods are
The plague-fleeing insane fugue state poet coat
As I rush up the trail from Library Lane
To Meeting House circle driveway
And wonder if i'll ever see my friends again
Alive or dead

The cat isn't giving me any hints on yet.

Houses with lit up lighted windows with birds alighting on the frames and ledges as the panes open to admit the evening wind early admission and commence with Nocturnal Emission University's commencement address—whose speaker will be who? Owl You. How can you be so silly in the globe's dying mood? It's too abstract I need humor to keep me here it's my grappling hook on this steep sheet sheer cliff shearing me away with its pruning scissor enhancement knife and whetstone and longblade life knights. Here come the blightwalkers. They are dead with hazel eyes

Old Lyme Cemetery Town

Sit on and ride the blue and white sky python

•

3. PYROMANCER

sweetness of landing on the horns of the fire ram and dancing over the fjord

Then wash me again till I'm immaculate pregnancy

You love to touch me you can't keep your fingers off me into the creases
they go this will be and is already our pyre hour Help me Obi Wan Kenobi
you're our only hope

A hop skip and a jump away from Hey how are you it's the first of Aries
today is it yes the Spring Equinox the Freaquinox I say old bean come over
here and give me a neck hickie

Here we are in Aries now in Aries now in Aries now
Here we go round in Aries now so fire ram in the morning

Here we go charge with Aries now
The fire ram is in our house
It is a fit we're throwing

rowing through the lake of fire now and here
we go love in Aries now it's burning all pestilence clean off and out and
away from us

And here we go drown with nobody now we breathe with all our friends and
party we are cows mooing in the field to the roadside Charlie Parker
saxophone solo as he stops to show interspecies music exists and must be
respected lest the bats continue to bite us into oblivion with venomous mix
we ourselves concocted out of negligence

But here we go gallop on the back of the fire ram the sun is our lense
to look through our selfishnesses out to outer space and beyond and make
new friends with wands shooting toward us launched not as weapons but
friend finder expedition from a faraway galaxy sandbox

4. ELEVEN CYPRESSES AND

pencil pad hands in Roma above the hills an
amphitheater in each ear to listen to the young woman student while her
muddled teacher sticks her hand into the cream and vanilla and
glissando and Ganeshaglossando vanilla coffee icecream ooze of
awakening melting down her whole body penetratingly dissolving obstacles
hurrah! and the young woman student feels the middleaged woman
teacher's touch thorough all that cream on her ruby power love button
connector diadem and exclaims River! and lets her in in in in and lets her
in and lets her in and they let each other in River and we let each other in
we let each other's breath into our selves and dissolve and reconstitute as
one glissando wind piano room echo let's go see who's in there right now
river right now riverrun right now through our mouths and into each other
pulling us together for the first kiss illicit explicit just this.

.

Seehorse was present at the baptism of Rabbit as a young queer. Get queerer

walking sunlight praying down Lyme street and Beckwith Lane
intersection to strains of head cello refrain. When my head grows to be as
wide as yours I can wear your stretched out hats on all fours howling to be
loved as we are us on lobo bus growing fur through yellow orange and
black schoolbus armor

.

Would you like a cup of snake. Walking with the one you love everyone is
praying on foot foot flight down Old Lyme Main Street already eternity tern
swoop light. Whenever my mom would give directions to the Allison Road
House she would say "Six Skylights!" and soon the whole neighborhood
was infected with skylights--she loves doing that being the influencer—
Lancelot du Lac Duckside Cottage tournament sword rack hoister--she
calls her swords the Piercers of the Air of Morgue.

Biking two by two down Library Lane is praying in wolf light through the
fancy membrane of the Endtimer's Duckside Cottage in the brain interface
with temporary and capacious and tenderness worldspace. It is
unbelievable how every single president takes credit for ending the
apocalypse before it begins. I'm responsible for no meanings here
chainsaw ripple air we say it has no meaning and by this we mean
debonair blond coiff light has found its billionaire beheaded in the pond of
Woyzek center stagefright entrails laundry line--for Oedipus the Shepherd
has come through Sam Shepard. Hello Sam how's the light up there,
Spider Time? Chainsaw jigsaw puzzle apple apple apple in the air

.. . . .

Dogariffic Jumbo with his beautiful orange jester vest!

I wonder who invented windows--Hey let's
cut holes in the walls and let light in it really caught on and became a thing.
Light really caught on and trickle trickle oh and the windchimes and the
eggtime swamp scent sulphur net yes yes yes yes yes yes. Hi Daddy. Hi
Daddy. Do you have a windstop Daddy. Do you want to smoke that little
butt. Yeah with a carburetor and maybe you're talking. The child carburetor
has spoken Balkans of thought into this little one instant red truck passing
drinking cup: LUCAS TREE EXPERTS. I wonder what Plague of Fantasies
means now--am I making that up.

All the fantasies that we have
while cooped up with our
chicken karma past.

Or is it a contagious fantasy that goes viral and inflects our speech just so—
the green man got knocked down O the green man got knocked down and
here he is again now and so the plague of fantasies disappears into oak
treebark and the eleven cypresses behind it attest it is so it is so let it not
be spoken of again let us be owls and feed ourselves real mouse
nourishment by night and Football is my dog, here Football Football come
here Football, fetch! You retrieve best--robin redbreast--woven timenest.

..

Seehorse was hanging out one day in the pretime.
She decided to invent windows
For the coming slime time. But one thing:
You have to make your own slime. No storebought!
Only the real adrenaline sweat worked in slime
For which you have most gallantly fought
Against time javelins while

Philhippocampus Homewrap dances. The wind whips it with this chainsaw buzz background
I was in a plane with those I loved having a party my balls all peachfuzz.

.

Aether and the knights of the round spaceship escaping the anthrogreed epidemic
The arrow sign says CEDAR GROVE
It sleeps best in the proximity of the Rabbit
What's already there just put little pink dollhouse doors on it
This huge bare mid March oak tree
No need to show off with sculpture or garden or sculpture garden
Turn the tiny knob and enter doll heaven by eyeing it

And then come back we'll have fish and wine at seven
And you can give your class presentation on
Grass mother fear stimulus
Grass

You walked on it and beat it
No more phobia just us walking cedar trees
Make grove a go
Make grove a go go go go
Go go go
Grove

.

Book cellar closed until further notice.
Book cedar open for inscription wound poultice poltergeist notice roses
Ghosts in galosh boats red as the thread that weaves us further apart and
back together snap heart snap camera heart heart stay together pump fuel,
for our love art--whose?
Oxydized green weathered mailbox 8 Library Lane Old Lyme Connecticut
home of the wetlands high swoop crane and skunk cabbage and satellite
dish bird perched on shingle roof to oblivate whom?

.

Where were you when this picture was taken
Of your grandfather in Bosnia 1922
That's where you'll be
Nothing to worry
Everything to do.

.. . . .

FRED CARTER

MISPRISION

an affinity of hammers in
the human furnishing
such indices

of disaffect and caught
up predicates and
even if

EVERYTHING IS
[still] MATERIAL

we are not spares
we do not job
for worth

defrag a single thought
until it shirks

such unmopped agencies
along the u-bhans
coral into time

now it's morning and we're working
on it no not one linguistic gauze
was not outsourced

you know you said it then
i found it not hard
to accept

UNMOORED [and/or]
UNDONE

lived inside your poem
for a month

only to find a solitary corralled
sentiment a tool
for nothing

ORGANIZE THE VICTIM
CLASSES [misattributed]

hammers still inside
of everything
there can be

no defence
of polity
today

*Text in caps is lifted or misremembered from the poetry of Maxine Gadd,
the work of Tiffany Lethabo King, and Fox News paraphrasing the Weather Underground.*



**We'll be everywhere at once,
more powerful than a whisper,**



GABRIEL WALLACE

PINE SONG

Doctors do get sick and sometimes die
Philosophy professors will ever wonder why
Fortune tellers just can't read the signs
Still I pine

Mountain climbers have their ups and downs
Dunces are awarded their diplomas, caps and gowns
Noted poets beat it down the line
Still I pine

Clothing models wear out all their nerve
Taxi drivers brake when they should swerve
Pickers leave good fruit up on the vine

Judges can't suspend their disbelief
Counselors have problems with absorbing patients' grief
Sommeliers can't tell a cup of poison from a priceless glass of wine
Still I pine

Djs in mid-segue miss the beat
Dogs perform their tricks without a treat
Cool spring water tastes like turpentine

Gandy dancers drive their spikes too deep
Mattress salesmen just can't seem to get a good night's sleep
Dreams of suffocation come to those who've never worked inside a mine
Still I pine

Window washers leave unsightly streaks
Travel agents strand their clients overseas for weeks
Jazz pianists can't remember how to play "My Funny Valentine"
Still I pine

Pinball hustlers tilt their own machines
Farmers trade their cows for magic beans
Pitchfork critics lose count of their tines

Riders still look down into their phones
The more they try to stay connected, the more they feel alone
Decades pile on decades and they crush the ways we used to measure time
Still I pine

Ticket takers give themselves a pass
Skyscrapers collapse when airplanes crash engorged with gas
Spouses argue with each other: "where would be the perfect place to dine?"
Still I pine

ISABEL BALÉE

VANITAS FOR CONTEMPORAEIOUS AMBIGUITY

*

surreptitiously
doing the same things
as the things i hate
that you do
eating the same dirt
as everything
even birds
laugh at me
serenading
the promise of spring
the reassurance of

life support
repeating in vain
the sitting still life
a million lives
a million paintings
unplugging
the eye approximate to
fear's vision
of st. francis
writing how you speak
making art that knows
it's pictorially
self-referential

a question of learning
how to submerge ourselves
in hot springs
over the internet
over second thoughts
second hands
thoughthands & astral
heads removed from bodies
in such delicate
congruency
bathing in gaslight
pink moon's expectation
considered causal
to theological epochs
weighed in

not caring about being good
or having something to show
the apparitions of us all
drafted from zero
losing what i never had,
having lost the touching for
never-being-had
due to the nascent possibility
of being lost
in the first place
losing
the holy
endless consumption

in the painstaking
circumlocution

*

i just wanna be adored
for my behavior -
so do you adore your crisis?
your outside-inward self-definition?
cassandra asked,
indicating the tower
enclosing all this meaning
derived from
the handbook
of natural law
which i don't believe intends
to enrapture us
with the possibility
of power
even over simple
quotidian affairs

but this was the source
of all my filth
& addiction

as she was tugging her hair
out in handfuls
i was jogging through
a bordeaux cemetery
where the dead hung
cloistered by vineyards
choke-held
by the forgotten fact
that after they died
we had to clean out
their bedside tables,
dust off their mirrors
& pay for their rest
so we could be
absolutely certain
of their transition into
strange hands
before initiating
the process of grief

IVY JOHNSON

I.

Then came the roses

I cataloged each bloom in the garden

No, rather I assessed

The unnatural correspondence concerning each given name

With the tactility of cherry silken petals

Its saccharine perfume

There was a rose bush that acted so elegant from afar

Blushing like a shy aria on stage

But when I approached it was all chintzy and carnation

Like a Profile Picture versus what I look like on Zoom

What is the correlation between beauty and value

Value and money

Money and scarcity

I don't care about fucking roses

The gardens are free

Give me food

Give me beauty

Tear the walls down

2.

Poppies grow in the median where cars enter the freeway

Do not take that as some inspirational metaphor for thriving in urbanity

I am actually quite sad

I want you to see the poppies themselves, all titian in color like a glowing sun

Like the glowing man who birthed Gods then chained them in hell

What I really want you to understand is the cruelty of my plucking those little gods

Then stuffing them in a Target bag to tote them to my house

As a gift to myself

How many likes does it take to get to the center of the primordial wound

How about a social wound

I am not a sunshine hippy gathering flowers

I am a tortured little boy burning ants for his pleasure

An Icarus riff singing of a sadistic God

I am that God

3.

I've been perusing the darkest corners of the interwebs

In quest for the ultimate super bloom

But all I can find is MapQuest

I have bloodied my knees and hands crawling down the highways

In some modern dance of penance for my original sin

Listening to Sarah McLachlan while screaming that she's wrong

Didn't she ever read a bible

When someone tries to help me, I assure them it's a performance for a drone

I feel like Forest Gump running for no discernable good reason

But much more slowly

4.

Have you ever heard the allegory about tulips and scarcity

It's economic

They say it's all about the seeds

But I'm not much for telos

Live your goddamn life

Where Have I 40 Million Dutch Tulips Gone

They've gone in the trash

They couldn't be sold

You can't give free away

No one wants it

5.

I feel like Dana Ward typing wild speech but really
I'm trying to say something about peonies
And how the chemicals sprayed in the commercial flower industry make workers sick
How I heard a news story while I was driving righteously in my Prius
About workers getting silicosis from working in a factory
That manufactures knockoff luxury countertops
Juan, a thirty-eight year old factory worker
Can't carry groceries up to his house
Or walk to his car without suffocating
He is awaiting a lung transplant
Liberals say, "Don't let the perfect be the enemy of the good"
The world says that when a hero is needed
The common folk step up
Thank you, dear customer service representative
For playing a part in the commercial of our lives
With canned music playing in police helicopters
Which crescendos when the eyes of a white and brown stranger meet
Saying thank you for your service
I really needed this cat toy in quarantine
This gives me the same queasy feeling of the last episode of Mad Men
When Don Draper traverses the terrain of his psyche for
The final time that he hits rock bottom in the series
And comes out the other end

Orchestrating a chorus of voices on a mountain top
With people of different races and creeds,
Shaved white hippy women holding Coke-o-Cola
Declaring it's the real thing
What the world needs today
It's the uncanny valley and I'm one of three rats
Drowning in a barrel of milk
Trying to scurry my way out
Make butter, Make butter
Crawl out
Even when we've pooled all of our resources
And called in all the experts on
Epidemiology, the Industrialized Prison Complex, Climate Change
And they've discussed the world's terrors with the pope and the Dali Lama
It's like that stupid joke when three guys walk into a bar
And they all die is the punchline

Poetry is about failure
Writing a poem is like refusing to buy blood diamonds
I fucking hate myself
I couldn't say that I hate myself more than the world
That's the point
Do you remember that study done with the barbed wire mother
That baby chimp killed himself

Even if we are all in the dissociative state of a sinister video game being played by the gods

We're all still alive in a sense

Buying terrycloth robes to comfort us in our staycation

That comes in a rose, peony, or poppy print

Give me the poppies

I'll eat them like Kronos eats the children that he cannot afford

JACOB KAHN

A IS FOR AEGIS

Each day at dawn I put the
discolored buds in my ears
I maunder the pathways
 perceive the froward
 trying to lure the cat down the stairs
 with a frayed orange thread

 and so the morbid fantasy persists
 as though finding empty seats
 in a darkened theater
 sitting down to watch
 amongst the difficult perfumes
the history of strife and
the history of pleasure
 then loaf nearby just to pet
 the inconsolable mare

On the trail the lady said
 you looked so pretty in your pink hat
 against the poppies from a half away

Well, what about *now*?

Hole where the hoof plod
Gap where the rent went

A is for aegis, B for Bear-Sterns

 w/ each plunge of the rig
 & preservation in its excess
 I prep the console
I sample the gels
 suckling weevil of fallible gains
 integrating the poll
 with the voter
 osier and ichor
 starburst, fingerling, don't

forget the vanilla soy cream!
 In Virgil
 there is an understanding
this kind of lyric continuity
 is the provision of militaries
 frogs deep
 in a throng of nettle

Do you refer to the repugnance
of your forebears in the past
 or the present?

Do you prefer
treaty and breach
or the attachment
of riders? In my dream

Kevin told me to read
“He is your Saturn”
a poem by John Wieners
that as far as I can tell
does not exist
—all I know
he said is look for the poem
that ends
Bambino
yr flute
is safe with me



“He who feeds you,
controls you.”

– *Ronald Reagan*

JAMES YEARY

CAVEMAN SENTENTIA

4

carrot sapling produces a horse
the children laugh up to their necks and then stop
a feeling reflecting himself in a puddle dressed as wormskin

up to their necks has gotten away from me
the vegetable is strangely immortal
I can see it already painted with its leaves above the ground

soft end
blue end
the hallucination is explaining itself

the excuses of youth are shedding
the red of their cheeks held by a flower
beating for the missing feels

5

we are protected from the fact of the lake by its onlookers
whose buttocks form the remainder of landscape
their name the seen part of them

a rolling hillside of nothing left
each object in its own particle accent
the wart is unfolding proteins to its friends

useless, we are lost in something smaller than water
that thickening around Old No Horns are its demands
exclaims arrow eye

6

greasy black hairs exploring under the earline
gates of moss the spiders won't take
entering the edge of the lake

the color just sits there on the surface scowling
father builds his nest inside the seagull
a storm's eyebrow furrowing in the heel

little gremlins run up and down my arm
to them I am a stone and just as deadly
my organs age on a different scale

emotions pool on the rocks
inner courses defined by Giardia
ten minutes passes becoming a slime

7 / 8

the lettuce is bad but it's leaving
a city is rising in its chest
I reach out from the thriving body for my share

the weather includes memories and threats
hinged to dwarfing cusp
one species heads straight for my shadow

fishy peaks plunging through cloudbottom
the hard one slips into something pink and mnemonic
the soft one thinks it was born with the hole there

8

roots and branches worm the dirt to eventually correlate
even the back of the mouth where the tongue breaks out
everything forks it's a tendency

ape smile blur in a streaming single
memory pulls unlikelihood of lunar balances
its yellow out of the sky is saved up in stories

crows share feathers
one founding a town under a leaf of kale
saw it over to the eye and then told me

9

latrine diamond leads spring to the sea
after it empties the cut in the land is pink
and pimpled with quartz

one end of the spine hides in a dream
and the other in the urethra
you can tell which earths are alive by their differences

the insects have hidden their teeth
but what has become of the lion?
bulbous ground where the sound settles

10

ancient hair reveals the trees secret self
into darkness shared by onions on the hunt
the hunt is as dumb as the earth and onions

removed from the jaws the voice of russet earth
a single sap expunged from the canopy
only the place of a taste holding difference

cover the deer in fresh timber
cover the manx in toothed grasses
when the bloodfeast is consummated cover their mouths with this memory

11

chalk on the inside of the world
where the scene is deposited still as death
sticking to the leaf's white bottom

the coconut tree has delicious thoughts
erupting from violence and agility
its mosses cross the world to touch the raspberry steer

drawing through the charcoal in my cache
rabbit with a mouth as long as its body
composed entirely of stars breaking through the loam

12

in the tentacles of the estuary ants carry on for the frightened waters
carrying salts back to the earth
to lure the butterfly

in the same pockets potatoes grow out from their elbows
tufts in the kelp more ancient than their bodies
magnolias shadowing rows of elephant

the ants bring octopus eggs to the foot of the watcher
their smiling beaks in profile through underdeveloped tentacles
the real has left its disparate bodies and is driving into the beach

13

he wanted to eat the authors
wasps formed out of the plant gametes then dissociated
the latecomer fly always found its way to the egg

the chicken pretends it's not listening
the python pretends that it's listening
they tryst in the trees for months at a time

arms branch into fingers and nails break up the outside
in the darkness I feel common with the living things
weevils bring the badger's coat to the thread the serpent's comb

14

they gather stools around the roots they were born in
undoing knotted feelers on the abdomen's men
only the Sun's rituals could be simpler

can't splay a bone without inviting some habitat
even the hole in my tooth for rock and silicates incites sissiparity
in the gallery

stretching leaf to leaf wide enough for the fruit bat
when mushrooms lift my stools up to the tops of the trees
stocking salt flats in a big bottom lip

14 / 15

antelope arising from false premises
in the sea where hogs learn to swarm
creating sedimentary layers of eel

the hogs make a terrible impression on the landscape
lizards look to molt fish into their skins
the sea bottoms out in revulsion

a hole opens swallowing out of sequence
drawn into the sky and blinding its causes
the eels remained on the land tormenting bison until dawn

16

the ibis is waiting on a shrimp bloom
whose perch is scented with methyls
hatching out of the sound of it feeding

algal indigos seep down from the skyline
signal colors switching over from the soil
marble the root vegetables with colors that can look like anything

the ibis and I belong to the same cloud overhead
a shrimp moves toward me on the edge of its sullen finger
the sun sets into the ground and absorbs us

JAMIE TOWNSEND

SAFE

Finally letting go

Is like

The exact opposite of

A training montage

Or commercial for

A surrogate kid sister

Gingham

Cropped overalls

We lie in bed

Bereft of nothing

So safe

I came

In a neat little package

So cute you

Said so cute

I shrugged and

Dug my toe into the blanket

Slowly digging

my own grave

I read Safe

I look at the inadequate

Daydream at the pink

Bruce assumed

Was flat

Symbolic so cute
And gay so happy
I read Safe
I lick the inside
Of my thumb
And make a wet spot
On the page
I wonder at this
Conservative flood
Picture it
Beneath a parasol
Skeleton,
Pink tissue
Meet damp
Flap of skin
Our romantic dream
Of safety
I couldn't sleep
Even with the light on
Hallway filled with
Familiar voices
Bodyless
Predicting ruin
I whisper

sweet nothings

up against the sheet

Soft consonants

and sibilants

trickle out

the hair

on your arms

reaching towards me

We're almost fucking

Listen to

Lost and safe

Wake up feeling

The residual

Open narrative

What as who

Recants I can't be

Bothered by this

Mucus

Clinging dress

All eyes fixed

Playing with myself

Little red

Which is how

Blood moves to

the surface

Searching for the path

Of least resistance

Sheer nylon

Tease

Recoil

High on glaze

blush fading

And wet, touchable

Yielding

This is

A very dangerous moment

The excited blood

Rubbing against

Excited skin

knife wife

fruity void

Still dreaming of

Becoming something

Else a portal

Bubble in

A tear without

The allure you know

Safe

The letter

S is the serpent

In the poet's

Eden

dream like

The most violent

thing you can do

with candy

Name it a ceiling

And the femmes

you loved

an unrepentant

shower

of meteorites

Safe as

A fallen angel

Lie down

Wrestle with god

damn space

Mouth to Mouth

To be safe

I learned to resuscitate

a doll

a new doll each year

their hearts can't take
too much pressure
I learned to reject
the world ending
at the tips of my fingers

JASON MORRIS

from LOW LIFE

VII.

The beautiful tends to overlap with the strange. *Altrui scale*. Lower down in the green and black rate holes, the heroes tear open bandages. Wordlessly blood is exchanged, in simple human fury and care, torn socket the replacement of an already replaced part. Crushed king lights, filterless hospital dissolved head.

Welcomed and recorded, at the sides of which accidentally become hours, years. Are company and separate existence at once (by chance). Muted variations, as the friends catch for example the wide murmur of a nighttime plain or the soft iridescence of light under a bedroom door, that little horizon line. Space / time's a river, ego found like Huck's canoe, among the reeds alongside it. Lucky improbable vehicle. The chorus hands down a sentence of names, whose law's the egress of voices. Others crowded along some unseen shore. But when they are is here. Sweet starry night swirling reflection lures one on, in pretty bent eddies. What it resembles trembles.

He gazes out the window of the St. James Infirmary, its flecked panes reinforced with thin wire at crosswise diagonals. "When after midnight, when poetry is always / nearer, I look out my window..." So John leans on Keats' casements, they open easily for him (all doors), and now he goes out hunting for cigarette butts—"a vain occupation, after the rain"—in doorways, cracks in cement, under cars and in theatre lobbies. The wet red lights on oil, thin threads of music. A trail. Villon is there, Antigone, Blind Willie McTell. They room there days and at night roam the streets wearing wolfs' heads and skins— at once expelled and contained. Inside the boundaries of a limitless zone. Confined in the place where anything goes. And so it's easy going and totally impossible for them, whose skin's the very place where kings cut deals. Because they are considered both wards of state and the holy beasts of god, they are doubly endangered. The threat they live under means anyone with a gun can kill them, or only the king can kill them. How they come and go, then, is it 'free' or no—?

Villon is composing "Dying Crapshooter's Blues"—out of words torn from magazines, in coded vulgate, in hesitant chords on an upright piano with missing keys. In the lobby people sip from pints of Four Roses in hospital gowns, they have bracelets and clear plastic bags, they're coming and going. *Tathagata*, they are the ones who come and go. Pure ongoing administration of intake and discharge. Signatures and stamps mark the process of arrival, the process of leaving. A world of IDs and bags of worldly belongings.

In that other world, where the connected collect and exchange—no one from there can understand an out-of-date lyric whispered along the keys of a piano, in the waiting room. In unfashionably ragged and filthy bits of strung together elegy and ode, in rhyme under a yellow linoleum light, in the folky old forms, in futurist *ubi sunt*. Days have gone by.

The premonition of its strange force? The vehemence of Antigone's refusal. Here come the cops (privately hired squad), in shiny creaking leather boots, with zipties and truncheons. They're hungry to crack skulls. And just as Creon tells Antigone that "death is her only god," their ignorance is grotesque, on vivid display. What do they know about death? Death is a miracle. Its ever present nearness makes what she and Villon, what Willie McTell can taste see feel hear touch. It is a nearness transmitted in their music

JEFFREY JOE NELSON

LONELINESS FOR THE COMPNAY OF FRIENDS (THE PLAY WITHIN THE PLAY)

The trees are the true shamans of Spring.

*

As if in a painting unmoving. (untrue)

*

Up one flight, down another.

Bird flight

Rainstorm

Cocoon.

*

Oh well,

the arugula got ruined in the storm – bitter, tasteful herb.

*

Downstairs the drummer plays a wicked beat, a full minute of Boz Scaggs disco
The Low Down, lighting up my personal head-space dance floor

*

Sky darkness through scrim of curtain lace, sipping scotch to keep taste
quintessence of earth, plant & smoke, to learn, in mouth, if not enjoy,
At least abide by pain long festering
Made less tolerable by this prison-prism

*

Old in number, not actual age,
As-salamu alaykum from mosque on corner where I bid my neighbor's wife adieu
years ago ...

eeeeeeeeeeccccccccchhhhhhhooooooo

of call to prayer...
sent out each evening
as sun dips down beneath
shitty city's heavy shoulders

*

Read for understanding, read for protection, read for inspiration, if any man shld
come between me & reading, one of us will soon leave, as I read I remember the
projects I've put aside, realize I must falter no longer, it's not too late, my memory
off stretched, now percolates, others will want to read what I've been writing, what
I'm writing now, stick to the idea & follow through, pass out each night knowing a
little more of the whole is complete

*

(after Tu Fu)

I am not like that lone goose any longer
Flying through the sky without eating or drinking
Searching for its flock

*

Young beauty
Old beauty
Middle age beauty
Between the two
I pick a piece of loose skin
From my chin, ever
Trimming a piece
Ever sculpting
What's left

*

Sleeping when I'm tired.
Waking & rising, when I'm awake.

*

I pulled it up & kept it at the edge of my screen
& couldn't keep my eyes from wanting to see more
I see what I see but don't know what I know
As I'm always realizing I know less
Than I thought till my days succumb
To unknowing and I can know
Again that I don't know
Accept what has flown
Accept what is new

*

When the mind is dusk

*

Through the top windows of this house skies are blank, a dull gray
My son can barely read w/out moving some part of his body
Kicking his feet together to make a dented shushing
While I lay upon the couch & read a poet
Who lived 1200 years ago, as old as I
Am now, discuss follies of empire
War & the vicissitudes of aging

*

Hard April rain falls upon the hungry ground, keeping us indoors, frightful of
catching a cold or worse

*

Here in South Brooklyn... reading & occasionally writing... street quiet... cars barely
pass... a drowsiness overtakes all

*

I watch the buds bloom slowly, first a tip of green, then the shoots of leaves, furled
like banners round a pike, then the slow blossoming as first one leaf emerges after
another, an entire branch riddled with new life

*

They say the smog has cleared over Southern China
The land mass and ocean can be seen from afar
How in only 40 days visual air pollution
Has dissipated to a trickle, so that maybe soon
I'll be able to see the stars
From my roost in Bed-stuy
Where the lights of our city
Dim to a feeble glow

you
have
to
have
your
heart
to give



JENNIFER KARMIN & BERNADETTE MAYER

ARE WE THERE YET?

are we there yet?
a ghost is a person
writing towards a self
you were cast in the dream
as an aspect of me
arrangement replaces composition
blue sky with no clouds
is a series of commas
knock knock
who's there?
what's the difference
between an attachment
and a commitment?

yet there we are
we yet are there
a ghost is a corporation
without a selfie stick
if you fall into the drear
is it good for the evolution of deer?
but arrangement isn't attachment
a knock is blue
so say who is it
or else the clouds'll make
vaginas & penises, oh dear
what the matter be?
volcanoes, old trees, abyssian
chowders spell out the litany
of illuminated manuscripts galore
if, you don't, know, it's, a, wolf
are you writing then?
or just going haywire hoping
to end with a verifiable commitment?
as in 'commitment & commitment'?*
*attachment &/or composition with vagina clouds
let's get that word 'commitment'
out of the language & replace it with gubofi

oh dear, what would gertrude stein do?
survival is a form of repetition
the freedom to escape
when the building is on fire
hummingbirds are not subterfuge
thank you for using that word

glacial time tree time luna moth time
the aesthetic experience of slowing down
blue sky with no clouds
is a giant period
a vagina in the sky can be made of clouds
is that a combination of letters
you find displeasing?
it's language inside our bodies
tho we are not this thought
waking up to a new poem
feels like xmas

oh dear, what would machiavelli do?
is that a fresh pasta from brooklyn?
it's very dark out here, i'll ask husband #2 1/2 to
come in (over?) curmudgeons fill the kitchen cupboard,
who cares if you're right, i'll sit here eating cherries
thank you but you should be able to get fish eggs more
easily, i'm sorry i have so many husbands i'll try
& be better, have fewer, in another life, you can
watch it on t.v., willow tit willow, meretricious
ne'we-do-well that you are, ever write while watching
a movie in a theatre? is machiavelli an avatar?
was the cottage a cupboard, did we roast the eggplant?
what height it must be xmas, i am the man of la mancha
& so are you, let's go to beantown & gamble our nest
eggs away, i have my cellphone, you have your cellphone,
we won't get lost in the forest with all the imagistes, the truncated
legislators if we can still see the tree, make
a beeline under my chair, for the door, i don't
like periods, the punctuation of every mackerel sky,
i have a theory that hats hold your coat for you,
trilobites evanesce like balloons, that's a lot of
hooley, crudites abound heretofore like & over there
where there is no volcano or shower of periwinkle
flowers raining down on us eating avocado sandwiches
with tomato & muenster cheese

JESSE FLEMING

NARCISSUSA

I heard selfishness is currency so one day I broke into target and took fifty years' worth of stale bread and decomposing produce. it's not that the employees were bitter so much as they felt no compulsion to validate my new identity as self-appointed leader of the free world economy. if bill gates doesn't know the value of a box of eggo waffles then I too can claim my contributions to humanity have paid their due and are now laid to rest. I too can put forth my right to exist as self-evident given that I was squeezed out of my last employ, buttons pinging everywhere as I flew forth like peter rabbit fleeing mr. macgregor, my naked self fully formed like athena from zeus. with my own living fists I ripped a panel from the side of trump tower and called it a mirror, myself a god. the budget cuts will set you free, sing a song of severance. I began to grow taller than amazon, than the tower of babel, than the millennium force, too tall to ride so I took to swallowing cattle by the herd, children by the schoolbus, cities by the skyscraper. enraged, I smashed the shrunken mirror beneath my toe and devoured the whole appalachian range in one gulp. I thumbed down 747s en route over the atlantic and at last, looking down, I, swinging from the wingtips like I'd tied my own rope, I, my belly roiling with hunger, I, my hands straining both into the waves below and into the exosphere above, I, I, eyeing my whole self with delight, my own mouth warbling I AM THE FOOL OF THE WORLD

JOE HALL

GET ME MEAT

*I kept hearing the phrase "essential worker" and thinking that was bad for us.
I took it as meaning I was disposable.
Like you put the infantry on the front line because they're cannon fodder.*

-Anonymous Kroger Employee, "They Call Me A Hero," 5.15.20, Vice News

severed lungs mound-twitch under a clip light, lungs
scrape paper dry, press the key, wet slap of a mound vomit into
takeout, fried hair smell, red eyes, french fries, spine jelly
and rotting lungs at checkout: these bills, checkout: this pizza I ate
in tears, checkout: cart full of tumors, w/twelve hundred dollars
ten thousand ears, w/all things I could think to want, scrolling, I said
my laptop won't turn on, they said it was because a lung
was rotting inside, they said a marketing executive would
have to sleep beside me in bed, would have to put a dab of wet cat food
under my pillow every hour, there was a lung rotting in my mind,
it would be a difficult extraction, apple cores, coffee lids, torn tooth-edged pastry wrapper, screw-
cap, I couldn't wait: the CFO was expectorating mosquitoes expectorating
the diaphanous circuitry of wings, called every 7th gene
in exchange, sour water and endless cells in the spreadsheets
of a hospital's billing department for x-mas, more sour beer and sleeping on
a couch after the shift, sleeping on a bunk bed after the shift, sleeping on
my feet after the shift, sleeping on your feet after the shift, after the shift
walking on air, walking on water, walking five stories down the sheer side of the
warehouse, after the shift, I open my glove box and it is full of
rotten lungs, droplets of gas hitting the pavement after I
pull the nozzle out of the tank, egg, cheese, and bean, coffee, yellowing underwear—the
heat of the machines, those mammals' eggshells and alveoli, candles and
endless scroll of lungless torsos embarrassing production with their spasms

DA FUGUE ZONE VOL #15: POLITICS? RUH ROH!

Quest Diagnostics' search terms yank pleasure bunches off
whole desires lick into company, lick into union, maids, childcare workers,
homecare workers, milkers, pickers, sex workers, far from neoliberalism
the podcast, the void, I still want you, inside of lemons instead of work,
some X for place in proximity to make life, an old woman
really digging in her nose on the bus, I do not mine this book for bricks
for the fortress of a thought, I read this b/c I drown, translate dig, drill,
and burn as stream union imagining a Rubik's cube of love
and fucking as emissions free, ruling class customer owned
cooperative employee union, tomato pickers union, a dimensional
door between hostile workplaces, storm clouds boiling
urine twisted over this town for eternity, wet ash
peppers the output of the sea union, too educated for solidarity
union, the emperor's power to project a million false bodies
union, to slay and lick while he walks in his own sight, not
only spectacle, we wrestle muppets for him in our once and holy bodies
union, roll the dice again, watch number interact w/equation

/

dice workers', troll catchers', great union of unions' union
great union of scabs, prosecutors, and police
Da Fugue Zone #15, why did you do a union, union of that

DA FUGUE ZONE VOL #52

mist mews on the page, rages in the tweet, eats cats, breathes
eats and endures the glow of a sepia diction
what and who we squeezed to dismember our debt, the gassy corpses
Key Bank stuffs into passenger seats across the city
you wonder who are you Zooming with, you are Zooming with yourself with a hole
drilled into your head, spreadsheets rolled up and stuffed inside and who catches
themselves drooling under the city's manifold lights extruded through apertures onto
the clearance slacks they had higher hopes for, rise, you say, twisting
in your seat, rise! you put bread on your tongue but realize you don't
know if you're headed to a bar or a mandatory training, pills and larvae of mist run from
your eyes, unravel in the air until your Zoom is an aquarium of fog
rise! you say, rise! but also I am just fascinated to see how deeply you (I—of course!) can sink
into sadness, mist that mews on the page, rages in the tweet
eats cats, you know me, and who, this is it
Da Fugue Zone #52

DA FUGUE ZONE VOL #58

what it must be like to inspire desire, as an archived virus descending
upon a fusion center, carnivorous honey of velvet bees, what it must be
to wade, waist deep, among the hatching seed-heads
of surveillance capitalists, to touch the liquid mirror
the deep fake of the self, looking back in the armor
of all those interlinked beetles, that form the mirror
the whole notes of the song of self palpitating in
the river, the whole notes let loose like
with gnawed-fingernail-recognition technology
who you might be floating in the cell
walls of a databroker's automated surplus
repo-men thrash, what it must be like
in Da Fugue Zone #58
to inspire such desire

JOEL LEWIS

A WORK DAY, 7:25AM

Crossing my path
on my way
to the 6th Street stop

A man clutching
some old fishing pole,
whistling

LUNCHEBREAK AT THE GARDEN OF THE STATEN ISLAND INSTITUTE
OF ARTS & SCIENCE

Shadow of a Piper Cub crosses my meatloaf sub
while day-camp kids rush out museum doors
for a "bug hunt" at Clay Pit Ponds.

Ferry horn alerts to the 1:30 trip to Whitehall
& just how many poems (& their poets) admit
slavery to the workweek punch clock?

The things squeezed dry from language
turn into a public domain
-- which is why I'm perusing the NY Post's
recitative of this teeming, godless universe
while sipping a Dunkacino the color
of a yo-yo I owned, age 7.

No news could be less valued, but
I owe up to it. That, and the financial inadequacy
of my sneakers. Two borzois pass outside these gates
pulling along their chunky owner. I give in
and carry on.

THE CRUNGE

I regret these stairs.
I regret the fifty things
that I want to happen
all at once

I stare hard at
a vending machine
and its dangling display
of sugary nutmeats
 & see my face
reflected on a glass barrier
pocked with children's bitty fingerprints

I want to tell someone
how all necessary doors were closed to me
even before my face arrived at the doorframe.
Instead, I press "F5" and nothing gets delivered
except change for something I don't possess.

I won't dream of a Soviet-class parade
stinking-up L'Enfant's DC streets.
I mean, what good
is the cinema of power
with its scenery-chewing actors
and scores of walk-ons
to my narrow hamlet of feints?

The impulse is to leave gradually.
The Irish Goodbye
The Jewish Tootle-Loo
The Uruguayan Pampero Stride
The All-American “going out for some cigarettes”
The Vanishing Act.

No one is glad at this place,
These avenues trace their source back to tears.
We read histories of traffic circles for mental reboot.
We tack Post-Its© under the catch basins to
contact frenemies who ghost us.

Check my cargo pants
for Zlotys, Piasters and Talents.
Plus some crumbled fare cards
for cities I’m unlikely to revisit.

Address this tide. Mold a polis
of outdated electronics, random shootings,
unconvinced commuters and a woman
on a bench busking “Greensleeves”
for loose change & transfers.

The door and the decade is closing fast
with the obvious effects. And in place
of the Golden Rule let’s just agree:
“Act Better Than You Feel”

פועל



JOHN COLETTI

OUR FRIENDS

There's a partial verse I see everywhere
cool to color in folding homes?
fuck it. the moon has a strong corona tonight
and I patiently
become the long song of comfort society
grounded in a flying tree

GETTING THERE

To call out birds and feel nothing
is an option
a rose of Jericho earth ripped as I tugged it
When I was a kid I would draw this
SWAN
(draws happily violently)

[illegible]

PREFERRED FREEZER SERVICES

The concrete silo making concrete
is the tallest thing in town
shoot baskets
into no basket
like an asshole in hail

JONATHAN LOHR

ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL

Email saying management working from home now

Email saying union reps working from home now

Email saying contractors the union reps let management hire working from home now

Email saying the 80 hour sick leave bump is not retroactive and no step-up pay for now

Email saying stock dipped upon initial stay-at-home order but came back after seasonal workers were laid off and looks to be a strong finish to the quarter now

Email saying hiring freeze lasting to end of year now

We get free sodas now

Now we're out of sodas—Turns out they were left by management from a cancelled lunch meeting

Find wipes left in payroll

Gloves from cleaning crew and masks from security guard

Take old steam tunnel to bathroom in empty corporate building next door

Find out from company-wide "Safety Share, A Good Tip Stemming from a Bad Situation" email that my dad has been quarantined

Post on union message board:

Any word yet on whether the jobs of those who die will be posted union, filled by contractors, or left vacant?

Text coworkers at home:

I'm not even making this up they made rows and rows of plot-shaped cubicles in the big conference rooms in case we need to quarantine on the job :0 better believe I'm staying on the clock if I end up in there

JONATHAN SKINNER

ONGOINGNESS

the days go on getting longer until
they won't and then they get shorter
before they stop and start lengthening
again—light gathers in cactus spines
silhouetting the growing crowns
of ribs that expand and contract
drawing water up through green
cells towards the sun—dabblers
reclaim the emptied out campus
commons—doctored images go
viral of urban dolphins cavorting
in canals turned Venetian blue
a bit of joy clicked forward—can you
smell fear in a handful of flour
the undocumented go without—
a farmer at the front plows up a field
as backline workers put in hours
sorting produce under fluorescent
lights—assembling healthy avocado
sandwiches for those who remain—
brother can you spare a dime
a smiling cashier shares your breath—
we love this life we share with those
we love further out from the fire—
our society risks a safety net
we like to imagine just deserts
extend to all—but who won't avert
their eyes from those in free fall
reaching hands from right beyond
the circle's edge—phytoplankton
beneath ice in the Arctic night
eke out a green graph from slight
imperceptible variations
in the amount of solar light—
even in the heart of darkness
society is solace wherever
we can get it—our immobile media
unlock fireside performances
whose screens barely illuminate
the far side of the digital divide—
down where the tenuous cling
they hang out in streaming shoals
who also scroll, swipe and click—
some look infection in the face

embrace a brazen community
beached confusion sheltered in place
without pressure amidst peers
in search of a self to isolate—
most of us would like to keep going—
who wants to awaken with lungs
full of ground glass put on hold
or in line for a bed as one's self-
defensive storms erupt inside—
who wouldn't embrace the present
without need for blame or sacrifice—
beloveds pried from living arms
go into the clinical light holding
on as blossoms on the cherry branch
remembering the spring return—
every day disappears into the night
every night we awaken before dawn
to lie awake and wait for light

JOSEPH BRADSHAW

THE WORM

The worm that licks my ear
And giggles me warmth without restraint,
Offers my eye its delirious twitch
In exchange for my body's nutrients.

I give freely to the worm
The vitals awarded me at birth:
For I love to laugh and frolic hard
Within myself, I guard that.

Until I become death, I guard that
My body's appointed his gnaw:
I find little quandary in it,
For I'd die unhappy without him.

If I die after my happiness, without him,
No placid husk will shield me
From the almighty who remands
To cancel me all but smile first.

It's that unhumored god who lives
High and hovering without decay:
No maggots upon the eternal glower,
Naked and sharp as an accusing finger.

It's that mardy god that lives
And bids me life of inferior will:
That finger who flicks the worm I love
When I cast all orisons aside.

It's that churlish god in his
Deceitful heaven of scheming sighs,
Who strips like a canny ungeld
From my ear the worm I love.

Yet I, for god, laugh low as in me
My first death, my happiness, glows:
I laugh as the flickering finger cuts
Away my hope for rest, finally.

JUDAH RUBIN

FEBRUARY

No mean indulgence, then, the lightening sky pebbled a crumby mantle such that could call the end of a world though macerated in the focus of its future. Amplitude – mean jelly. A remembrance of things, a snuffed afternoon, lumped in with distance – and the dry heat drained what the elegiac mode is when: it's an emptying out. Memory frames *bios* in flowers of February likewise to wilt the traffic on whatever afternoon were shelled peas in a paper bag stenciled indulgent screen the mantra of harm. Lifted, if only to peek at the body beneath. The emptying out of welcome is an auto-theory of foreclosed cosmos, like fish in a refractory tub, or echoing the submarine wrecked and knocking from within. Survival's heroics given over, by rote, to the military, occasional alpinists, maybe a miner here or there. Or two sisters on a day hike. Or two more drinking their own urine in the Arizona desert. More likely a figure of elsewhere, nowhere at all; the come upon airlessness of the familiar reduced to sapped human space – an after, parting. The flowers of February are gone – I don't know. As such we characterize as else the catastrophic; wait - the nameless site of loss what property belies. They threw them out on the street, or delivered them to, stacked in empty lots, or rooms, or trucks. See here: that's what one *does*, what one can *do*. The indulgence of death: to think it discrete, somehow useful – that this is not, somehow, serial in extent, or not (what is a somehow?) somewhere, as, in these, likewise to believe the elsewhere is a spin we characterize as else– but that a we must defer or, the figuration of else, such is the we what seasons have long since changed. To still: a February flower. At night the streets, elsewhere of this meanness, its blurring distance.



In a world
that has
really been
turned
upside
down, the
true is a
moment of
the false.

JULIAN BROLASKI

sure is closer
blinded higherarchy
aplumb not a plum
a plum I picked myself
and baked into a pie and stuck
my own thumb in & said
how good I was or was i



blue lotus

the eucalyptus is also called ^{blue is either the rarest}
the blue gum or the commonest color in nature
on the leaf of the lotus I beheld

~~its leaves are like the~~
~~water of melting glaciers~~

a drop of dew

which was a drop of glue
on cut fabric

verisimilitude

my one pleasure

truth-seeming was easier

to get into cuz it

was everywhere

like the sky in its common blue britches

like the sea in its common denim

was there really any lotus

there in the flying-j reststop

or atop my head blossoming into

a thousand petals?

the cock crowed all night

confused me ^{while we were in the topi} thought by the full moon

later a coyote howled self-satisfied as its snack

had announced itself

the leaves of the gum are like

the water that surrounds a melting glacier

blue is my favorite color but I'm not unusual

in that way. ^{it's america's favorite color} it sells magazines jeans.

we all live in the uncanny valley

common as star-stuff

I don't care if you love me

there were 60-ft waves in Kauai today

my blood's blue in its veins

and I look good in my jeans

blue like the sea and like ^{blue}

my people in the sea ~~surfing the crests and~~

~~scuttling the sands~~

She is close
3 lined hierarchy
a thumb not a plum
a plum I picked myself
and baked into a pie and stuck
my own thumb in + said
how good I was & was I

correction with the planet
a celestial phenomenon so



JULIEN POIRIER

SECRET

BY JULIEN POIRIER

IF I TELL YOU A SECRET
WILL YOU PROMISE NOT TO TELL ANYBODY?

AT NIGHT

I DRESS UP AS A SUPERHERO
AND ADMIRE MYSELF IN THE MIRROR
IN JUST MY UNDERWEAR
AND A NECKLACE I FOUND
WHEN THEY CAME

AND TORE UP THE SIDEWALK —
BATTERY ACID PEARL.

I DON'T HAVE A NAME FOR MYSELF
(WHICH IS SOMEONE ELSE'S PROBLEM)

BUT I DO HAVE A SUPERPOWER.

I'M BEAUTIFUL, GENTLE,
PATIENT EVERLASTING
AND I CAN SING!

MY FRAME IS BONY, MY SKIN FRECKLY
MY WILD HAIR

BRITTLE

IT'S TRUE —

BUT UNSCREW THE LIGHTBULB
WITH TOASTY FINGERS
AND YOU'LL FIND I GLOW
LIKE A PHARAOH
ON A PLYWOOD DEATH RAFT

WHICH IS WHAT I AM

BUT KEEP IT TO YOURSELF.

KELSA TROM

END OF TODAY

End of today dressed as end of days.
Day is not shelter. Come here you! What can twilight do
What isn't blue when sky bleeds through
and light dank and light spare you hold the bare tree
the lichenous tree will invisibly stab you in the skin!
Skin of your body!
People in Maine force out of towners
into a house at gunpoint. But this is our our land.
But this is our land! But the sky has split
edgewise and I am wider for it.

Back when I could back you up
back when the street was home
the train was home back when
I was on my back and loved
I saw the bed of a daffodil so flouncy and prim
and sexual for a day! Lights out!
Make your own horizon from the comfort
of the bunker in your junk bod.
The icky edge of your rotten bits.
You want it stirred up lit through like loins
crisped up like labor and the edge of the tree
will end your day. Climb atop it in order to cancel it
blur its edges like twilight wash the outside of its outsiders.

Twilight smothers little creek
the valley's val de lys val d'amour val sacré perhaps
this smells of body rot. Perhaps this is forced cremation.
The curtained eye the history you dreamed you know
is a crusted daffodil and happens to you. You'd sooner alight
and go north! Go north! Twilight is later if you'd only go north.
Take the ribbon of pink sky from above the tree drag it
be deft be frank be yourself. It's a real wet one a real slick wet way
to end the big bad day. Fake day is the day you didn't start
is the note ringing in your ears from some church bell
in shrubby dreams and the stuff you brought back
was only sort of dreamlike. Pine cone carrot shrub twig blister.
From today. From last time. Last time we talked
I loved you. Last time was this time. No one walks single file.
No printer spits out the end of the day. The last time
we sopped. The sopping man cancels the day. Day is not shelter.
Sky rot. Sky baloney. Sky bullshit. Trawl the day bottom
and then what. And who says. Sky in charge. Carrot in charge.
Carrot in your pants. Nub in your guts. Panting nub crazed ocean.
Painted grub watching from behind the frame.
Maimed frame in Maine. Closet stench. Blamed nub stain.
Awaiting impatient gross itch. Blame the granary
someone sneezed on the granary the cow keeled over
in front of the granary put the blame on this.

KRYSTAL LANGUELL

THEY BOUGHT IT

the idea is

lookblood

this could be

betterdata trulytrue

a lifestyle of rejection

an image flashes but communicates no information

it hurts to scratch

othermatter some gambling

a gesture of thrash

downpour bones

tilled pasture

if I ever breakaway

remember flight

some razorblade rides along



LARA DURBACK

RECENT PHASES

Pre-time:

The lines in the wall
The ridges in the wall
in in the wall
the wall the wall

getting food out of the wall
getting sustenance out of the wall

who has the power to deform the wall
who has the power to resculpt the wall

the matter that was present
the matter that was marrow
the matter that was tissue
mutates the wall

(reading Octavia Butler's *Dawn* in the months before)

Life's work (Is it medicine?):

the claim: physical phenomena, related to energy centers
personal power, deserve total attention

destroy places where medicine does not uphold a person's own sovereignty, it's not medicine

Meadow in Wildcat Canyon:

I lie in a meadow
Someone passes and says, "good spot, you wake up and there's a snake on your leg"
Good, the snake is my friend.

It's true that you were a virus,
when really they just wanted you to relate to life in a way that had become impossible.

Bats had families too, and this discharge became more serious than the intention. It was the final crack in that they could not echolocate among all this bad noise. The ancestors are loud and land is too cut and portioned.

The class war is scarier, anything that is putting you on the wrong side of that is worse than illness, I want people to have rest and resources and that was taken from them violently long before this came. I am begging to you. Don't fear it out. I have seen folks getting out of jail too, and some people's lives finally have space to focus on assisting the houseless. There was not the space before, for some it was an opening.

I rather like the 6 foot rule. I like the agreements. I see my own body lying on the ground, because I am almost 6 feet tall I see this fractal of myself radiating around myself.

Your fake family: just tell me who they are and we will make arrangements to see them.

In the morning:

There was mullein growing out of the crack between the road and the curb. Mullein to care for lungs, popping up again and saying hello, I am a lowly weed here to be your friend again, just like I grew all over the dry land after the fire. I am here for you in your grief, and I am soft and cuddly. Sometimes the earth has some friendship to offer too, though you did very little to recognize it.

New friend:

You were home safe happy with your son and the lavender
It felt strange to connect with someone who fell out of the sky
Email doesn't make sense when you have only a phone and brain differences.
It takes time to realize something or someone is trying to contact you.
I have some brain differences too, it's beautiful and it's hell
You can't just be yourself: you're today and the earth and the ancestors without the filter
You can't scare me off with stories of your son hearing voices or stories of you being thrown from a
car, escaping from serial killers
I absorb it all, I know the terror you filter, it doesn't all come out, but I see your beauty
I am not afraid to say to you that it is okay that he hears voices, that there are other things coming through,
there are other worlds coming from below, she agrees, makes space for them while this world does not.
You are a wise elder
But the tests say you are supposed to go out in a pandemic on 5 buses to get an MRI
The tests say your body is pingpong and go everywhere and take every pill, or else
The resources taken from you for centuries and you still create joy
It is a pleasure to taste your wisdom
Hail black women

Premourning:

I try to tell people about premourning and I feel a bit insane, but I had been there in the months, premourning, panic attacks in the bathroom at work.

I was too scared to go out all the time right before this, pre-prepared. The desperation of people surrounding me on my commute next to people at work who didn't seem to care about any of it, some people who would call 311 number to take care of dog shit. And meanwhile everyone steps in the shit, waiting for someone in authority to clean it up.

Everyone was touching your items all over the world, it always felt like terror to me, so many people scrambling to deliver to the sedentary.

Relaxed only in the moments watching the screech owl, or moving in some collective pack, or talking to the plants in their relentless slowness, they help you see that there is a way into everything. Dying as part of a body, dying halfway and coming back, a scary mark a scary mark, the recognition that some part of the larger body dies, looking at it every day.

The emergency organizes directness.

I organize myself around it, no worse than ever.

LAURA GOLDSTEIN

from SIGNALS

sent signal

a word from beneath the blood, droplets hover near the bone
now proven there's no such thing as alone. deep in the space called home
there are two rooms and one of them is locked down. which one is your zone?
go down to the floor and look for the door. a war for the brutal present
don't worry, but here is some more. point of entry seems like
a return but the room itself is a full open run. a world
from beneath in a zoom, open portals to other
rooms, one is locked but the other
well soon, open and airy
and ready to bloom

wasted signal

april's cruel, it sucks. breeding is a replication all life does
i guess. we discussed it: is it really alive? half the class said yes
her lilac bedroom wall behind her face in the square on my screen
then silence and stillness- what's coming next? how many dead in this
land or others, i'm sorry but it's true, it's part of the story. next, we discussed
if stories were alive. half the class said yes, mixing their memories with desire they
stirred up the dull roots of our online environs and outside the spring rain
(it was just newly spring) it still seemed like winter in a lot of ways
and that's what i discussed with my other class and i kept
sending them poems called spring because i said let's
talk about that but it all connects back somehow
to current circumstance. maybe summer will
surprise us. we'll talk for hours over coffee
we'll read poems called summer
rely on the earth's forgetful
night. and sunlight

spray signal

what you stay away from now, the other light, the other wave
the other world in its tandem phase. the other ways we have to tell
besides speaking (the bell) why night is what slips under months of unfixed monitoring,
it swells up into the teeth. what did you receive in hell
that proved to make a path of light and air? perspective? it
was too much to bear. multitudes who could not catch
their breath when systems failed, more people
made a point to say either, either way
then gathered in ether
dispersed in spray

LAURA MORIARTY

from NONDEATH DIARY

3-27-20

This body reads,
cries, and inscribes
the fact of itself and
wish for every other
one not to fall into
nondeath's nonright
incident of possession
of us (we) who have heard
said "This dog don't hunt"
or other blunt statement
of incapacity referring
to the ancient but
stupid men who subtract
from the world by
their presence hope,
nondeath, actual life

4-16-20

This “simultaneous journal's”
relocated nonlinear anti-lyric
nondeath stance unearthed
from a time when, focused
on form and on the lotus,
I wrote of writing's transcribing
as being likely to enlighten
the one performing that
grace for herself or others
who find satisfaction in action
and action in thought as we
assemble (virtually) this
commonplace text signing
it into inner law saying
DON'T GO BACK OUT YET
despite the urge to follow
nonleaders' nonsensical
delusions of reentry
into what they never had
any idea was our life

4-21-20

Fascism like Covid
contagious sometimes
fatal condition related
to climate change, abuse
of humans and animals,
not a new but renewed threat
includes evil leaders, massive
death, crime, bad money, bad
laws, unsustainable terror,
nonlife, nondeath, nontime

LAURA MULLEN

(DROSTE EFFECT) THE PRODUCT

Depicting the product
The product in other
Words no these words
Advertising itself
As if I wore a t-shirt
Depicting me wearing
A t-shirt depicting me
Wearing and so on as
I suppose I do trying
To do it better every
Day as if to be loved
Only meant you had
To try harder to be
Worth loving sweeter
More popular so one
Side of the box shows
Someone lifting
The box to show us
The side of the box
Where someone lifts
The box and so on
Proud buyer happy
Purchase proud
Buyer happy
Purchase shrinking
In these fractals
Where we dizzy
Learn to love
A diminishing
Version of love
Endlessly such
Is the promise
Proud happy
Indebted *en*
Abyrne re-
Produced

LAUREN HUNTER

DEAR DIARY (4/26/20)

Days are hard lately
I feel cheap

You know, (I'll have) the usual
guilt and paralysis

a good shower cry
Maybe I can fit more things

carbs and limbs into my
ungrateful mouth

and wash and want
If I give into natural rhythms

I could be hilarious
hot hungry
hollow
heard

Under the cover of night
I don't worry or waste

Ask me anything
haha
I'll answer with the current
most convenient lie

How else would I roll?
What else can I sell?

THE MARKET VALUE ISN'T THE POINT

There's no such thing. Haven't we figured out,
aren't we right now being taught
that our bullshit is temporary and meaningless?
Moving right along. A month and a half, a year
and a half later. Let's not be coy about it,
I wasn't being kind to wait.
My courtesy has been all self-interest.
And of course I don't escape unscathed.
A little shock of guilt and
this unresolved clinging feeling I can't wash off.
Someone shows up in a dream that should be a stranger. Someone is still
always around. The only escape, they say,
is in. I'm uncommitted but not uncomfortable.
Make me an offer, as they say. What if my happiness
is just within my grasp? What if my happiness
is absolutely mine, alone?



“A revolution is not a bed of roses. A revolution is a struggle between the future and the past.”

– *Ronald Reagan*

AZ QUOTES

LAYNIE BROWNE

PRACTICE HAS NO SEQUEL

This sentence speaks to the green promise of 9:31 a.m. untethered. Here, now with no plan, though lists remain long. Laborious small selves line up, erroneously thinking themselves alone. I must allow nothingness breathing into and out of one letter of the alphabet followed by rib-thread-sepal. Sound encircles sternum eye. Miniscule adornments follow the invisible and curtail only veneer. Birth increases thoracic sky, where the unseen is the brightest realm and requires no language.

I wrote the word *practice*. Might I write a sequel now, as I did then, upon loss, again stunned?
Practice has no sequel. Premise—write into the present moment and the space between
letters including all possible permutations. Summon *care*, *rapt*, and *art*.

I sit in realization kitchens, bare prose, for instance—one need not believe every thought. I set out to clear a passage, to detach from narratives. First to listen; turn up fronds of hidden circling—ulterior landscapes. What does self say to self? If thoughts are clouds—changeless self—sky—contains—though does not identify. Do not seek to vanquish thin layers of tulle, glossy mists. Instead, address surroundings as opaque, feathery, in any terms, so long as—remember—I am not that.

At times thought will not wait. When speed of mind is dizzying constellations pardon
collapse into eclipse. I believed I was indispensable, then unveiled lowercase self as mere
projection. This not being synonymous with filmy residue of loss—a sound nest. I line my
dwelling with velvet and water. In the center—twig garlands—spare pair of legs—amulet
eye. A lion guards quiet beneath cardboard covers—stay.

Where do I want to be? Writing at a kitchen counter is illusion of progress—since space is indeterminate. Once performed long enough the trick stops working. Still, a desk could be anywhere—a glass of water, another's eyes, branches woven by a bird. Ovens consort with alchemy, linden wands, green counsel, and songs offered to mother plants.

LELAND & AMANDA COURIE

Our kitchen table used to just be a kitchen table.

Then

A Lamp, some napkins, a dirty plate, “*The Practice of Acupuncture*”, and an empty whiskey glass

Now

A Lamp, dirty rag, whiskey cup-full, Uno deck, flashlight, air filter, tang, 2 red bulls overturned

Sunyata’s room used to be just Sunyata’s room

Then

Bed - Stripped since August 22, Empty bookshelf, clear floor, dresser, WAC Poster, Retreat lanyard, Highschool graduation cords, and awards, collages created 2 summers ago

Now

3-D printer Filament, nitrile gloves, sani-hands, Sanitizer, Lysol, 4 boxes of 50 surgical masks, moon pies, ramen, toilet paper, rice, guns, and ammo



LINA RAMONA VITKAUSKAS

1.

[Cinepoem: Scarcely Gilded](#)

2.

Authoritarian

see this

joke

integrating

cooperating

distantly deciding

this is here

now

how is that

managed

how is that

victory

how is your

fear

LINDSEY BOLDT

TWO POEMS TOWARDS FULL COMMUNISM

Can u shit
w/o a coffee
& can u shit
w/o a phone in your hand
I'm interested in how my bowels function under Capitalism
I'm interested to know
how sturdy my shits
might be w/o it

Really been coveting
my neighbor's chicken
lately, I want to hug one
& wonder
could their chicken
be my chicken
& still the chicken's
own chicken
too

But when the egg drops
it's no one's
but the chick
who might be



**End White
Patriarchy**

LOURDES FIGUEROA

AND WHO WILL HAE THE LAST WORD IF NOT

and who will have the last word if not
the mountain up ahead
with a rising sun
if not the sudden blue of the skies
if not the howl of the wind within a long corridor of buildings
if not the reflection of light on a cobweb
if not the horizon up ahead dividing the land sea & sky
& the resting sunset
if not the bone bare yellow moon on a star full night
whom will have the last word
if not the chirp of a newborn sparrow
who will it be
and if not any of this
and if there is a last word
upon whose ears will it fall upon

no mi vida
no te rajes
con nuestras caras hacia al sol
sentimos el calor del amanecer
pronto llega el sol

pronto llega el sol
mi vida no te rajes
con nuestros ojos cerrados
hacia lo azul
va amanecer

DANTE'S DREAM

Crack open
the dream
keep it
like silk between your forefinger &
thumb your teeth
now feel something
as if i were to hold still
blending one palm
for another shadow
a silhouetted thought against
two whole breasts
inside one was the beggar
and her rambling change
in the other
not enough to build the second
building empty bedrooms
oh foolish things
the mind keeps dropping
into cracked sidewalks
where god sleeps
while the other gods jump
over walls smearing voices
around us the stink of our torsos
reminding us of the approaching
Fall,
beckoning the blend of one leaf
and the shedding skin
letting us fall apart
rising sun
branding the upper and lower
torso
specifically the stench of
the rotting Nopal
how do i comfort us
if no memory then let it be
just, help me recover
the bones i left around each
and every rib cage
poking out of the desert sand
there was all of us breaking open
doors
across the hall we turned off the
lights bounced the rust
pinching gold
holding it in our armpits
as we cross to the old world
slapping it on churches and
castillos

warm my heart beloved
warm all of us
as we hear the whispering
cracks on the sidewalk
close enough
to walk barefoot in hell
making our way to the heavens
i heard you
really i did
hear all of us
like mumbling bones
we traveled spitting Dante's name
into cups by the side of the road
by the levee
we tried
we really did
our bodies
replaced
re/spliced
somewhere in the loneliness
of the desert
but they told me,
it had been the wobble of the light
the old stars kept watching our turmoil
silent and ominous
every single night till this
night we cracked the night
wide open as we stepped on twigs
and dry grass
we decided to split the day into 3's
working perfectly well
we packed our lunches
went on our ways
dug into the soil
and gently pressed the seeds
who knows, but there was the recital
of an ancient rose bush around the
corner the light lamp and her yellow breath
in an empty farm town
the politician's and the headmaster
decided to build a 150 room hotel
would they come?
would we come?
the moon laughing
her tongue

ON OVERTHROWING CAPITALISM #2

On overthrowing capitalism...

it is a good time
to get healed
la curandera says as i suck on mezcal
blend the bruises on my back with a bit of maza
as polvo del desierto rises from the bed,
my hospital gown drifting like a petal
there is a chance the children in cages could be freed
but i am busy finishing my last piece of cash
i spent it all on a lottery ticket hoping to pay off the loan i took out
for all of us but we arose from the drowned bones pressed in the bottoms of el rio grande
the lapping of the water against the echoes of parched lips
and as we arose we marched turned our backs toward the sunset
heard the gasp of the city by the desert

in a distance the sound of bullets piercing the flesh of children
in a distance the sound of ribs snapping from the pounding of fists
and bullets

but in a distance the mountains behind the city behind the desert
there a land between the river that opens her mouth & closes her mouth
like a fish on a mound of fishes in a waterless bucket mouthing

¿que somos? somos
nopal y tierra hechos
en la imagen del sol y la luna
Teocintle nuestra alma
Teocintle nuestra voz
somos buen hechos
nuestros cuerpos de canción y maíz
creciendo la flor del nopal nos juntamos
buscando el monstro
que tiene rostro de un joven y de un viejo

con los niños cantándonos en sus jaulas
i was hoping to tell you about the amount of voices
behind the stage praying for a prophet to arrive
& inside the temple the chicotazos sounded like two guards
chewing on gum
snapping their lips
enough voices for all of us to mumble along
& wrap our flesh with nameless flags
as we all looked for the monster
& a glimpse of the moon

& we imagined a prophet
as loving as the current of the river
to arrive

pero nosotras éramos la profeta
buen hechas como los rostros de la Malinche y La Llorona

allí las dos quebrando la frontera

y nuestros hermanos en lo callado de la jaula aprendiendo
como ponerse un uniforme

y se nos olvidó el llanto de los nenes porque fuimos
con la curandera a buscar una cura

*

colonization + capitalism = penetration

say our ancestor

say our ancestor

say our ancestor

No, you, didn't colonize us, not at all
we declared a long time ago

say our ancestor

We never died,

*our antepasados fed the earth with their
blood,*

the food we eat has our blood,

*You see
We Tonanzin
put on the mask of Guadalupe*

*Magellan didn't stand a chance,
never,*

THIS IS A VIOLENT LAND

'Be Poet. Be truth' - June Jordan.

'This is a violent land, avid of breath...' -Jack Spicer

after jack spicer, after june jordan, after kevin killian, who after, w.b yeats, but mostly after all of us

here we cling to our soda pop,
bear our teeth into landless thoughts

suck on cream from a root beer float,
dipping french fries into milkshakes
swallowing memory like honey

easily we forget that it is our palms
that built the concentration camps alongside el rio grande

i have to tell you, i wore the same uniform for three days
and three nights

jumping into a river on a friday afternoon

only to arise on sunday where the sunshine
dealt its' deals as we massacred each other

spending each coin on lollipops
every dollar on a shoe shine and extra socks to keep warm

the empire keeps swallowing us
we keep swallowing the empire
and the prophet keeps screaming

only to break into song as the sycamores or black walnut trees
alongside the endless highway
bow, and rise, their chests against the rising sun

or is it the sunset?

as the shackles echo throughout the desert,
in a distance the city lights blink on and off

el pistolero cantando rancheras,
soplando su cigarrillo, un six shooter
buen hecho
y yo, la marimacha
queriendo decir que soy tu marimacha

me pongo mis botas y ya soy el cowboy
con su lazo, singing to you the law of our land

and i'm here to repeat that we are in the golden age again
and again
a profound crisis
i keep waking up watching nightmares
gather around the smiling moon

my apa finding me under the bed
kicking me against a wall
making me into a woman

wake up wake up,
the good news has been arriving

slamming
my ama against walls
each one us a bloody pulp,

i keep confusing the body with the poem

because it is a kid, let me remind us, a child,
dying in a quiet street corner
huffing on glue

but let us gather around and tell each other
the truth,

the poet arrived long before we were doomed
cashing her poems for a diagnosis

how much trauma can a poem endure
before it becomes numb?

how long can a body stay numb?

now let us remember we are all made in the image of
the holy empire

blessed be, i crease dollar bills into my wallet
blessed be i un creased dollar bills and spent them on a new set of pens

a diagnosis won't do, there is enough cash in our pockets
to build the most powerful of weapons

but let us gather around, crash the last supper
break bread, drink the sweet wine

and i promise you we can scatter our poems like ashes
fertilizing the earth to begin again and again

en la madrugada si te fijas bien, allí en lo hermoso
just close enough where the night begins to become
day,

i am grieving

we are grieving

as the body of a woman begins to give birth

and the child is finally being born

MADELEINE BRAUN

ARCHIE CAT WALK

free books free hugs are you okay I'm goood free meditation free music 3 minute portrait 5\$
full cans big dumps free smiles kiss kiss pass wait to pee free pass wait for the
welcome mat in the way back wreck room giggle giggle psssst eye locks let me show you
something eye locks I like your smile I lock groupers sidewalk sound report slap slap pass you
want a hug I'm good you sure you okay I'm good too bad fashion fits wave wave wait a box of
matters stacked ladders green space grey there's no toilet there's no way out there's no there
there of green space fence towering bodies tackle tandem absence like the dogs in the park
temptation like it'll be all right cut me off cut it out blue frittatas in picnic baskets park ball spike
ball! Get in the ring bark bark sing the anthem woman day keep it simple my favorite season is
the fall of patriarchy stroll stumble squirrel pigeon cowbird smile bench corner office watch the
squirrel off with pigeon smile glass of wine? Weird one yet Sunday Sunday Washington Square
tour guides for 5\$ DJ does bench trick air jump royal greenery for one season shrubbery is free
eye contact tropical hedge fund me free poems baggers painting skate circle a round pause for
virus listen to the crowd cough fall hustle the pop free jam space free practice room almost a
success walking into corners I'm glad I bought it I told you soccer schemes playground picnics
frowned face in old age tribute younger than hunch team sheets and blankets I know but I don't
care anymore it just wasn't me to close the curtain I mean auditory there is no masking it pass
the joint pass the crown pass lips pucker you owe I contact turn around fallen cane fallen friend
fallen bottle like crazy he's making me crazy weave symbol wimble womble Archie cat walk LA
woman roughly reimagined pick a topic golden grace dig a grave prune shrubs talk past anxiety
born and raised

PARIES

old monkey where is that ring under steal ships and sealing the wax god says hi hihi I don't want to talk to much about the young child of yes and the old child too and the old child of bottle deposits and the old child of priest and the old child of priestess and the old child of ting worm and if I ask you for the jolly cards of fortune where does that draw my card the card is underneath the moss the boss is bossy the young child is bossy the seven eleven is bossy the unicycle is bossy the day is day is forthright is that way is under the covers is forgotten for the idea the can is rolling the the can is under the wheel the can is presumptuous is scary is not your understanding the being in my forewarnings the vein forehead I don't remember it is complimentary the your way is the way the light stands the female figure in this apartment is complicated shadowed and boldly lit light blue gloves on the fireplace jackets hung over an ancient chair ruler solitary bored fish seams sandpaper cuffs fingernails rings silver charcoal paper wax light bulbs scales creaks floor creaks walking away creaks forward creaks anchoring black forward under over high low resolution stream cloudy alive sandalfoot candle sand the door is open to the tiny cupboard the wayward shelf the money pencil creak creak up down fridge opens sacred sown radio hula hoops earphone overdraft cheers charm challenge a time what is the time I ate sand paper and wrote on envelopes why is it sheltered the draft is overcome the song is translated by you the moon the socket the eye streams sandals streams I don't want disappointment don't be it's the slam my candle foot when we went to birds hill what was the repertoire the way you look at singers back up or dancers take the memory for which I felt burning there bard ward heard heart in waters the take could take or give give or take the moment could being sleepin' lasting' longing' then g and to gee the be a moment is understood dancing up and down the hallway Alexis giggles a aaaaa aa a a hallway giggle that's anecdote solipsism sick silly solemn the baloney and ketchup here here I am eating your charm tin can holiday or holiday cap look forward to tomorrow the dream desk later shine shine figure fit ripe apple oats uncharted la la land erase edges itchy lightning stuck somewhere in Winnipeg and we danced threw ourselves in circles throw ourselves in circles throw ourselves throw ourselves throw seed sometime future the circulatory isn't basic divine paradise an excuse for home home an excuse for divine paradise

GARBAGE HILL

it's a dump a hill built on garbage what a dump it's big sky look around left right up down sky
chassé chases format clings colors spits clouds clouds like sand drops look like ranges Rockies
prayer in over the henge wicked wind wicked rinse rises throne thence kite crash hopefulness
hardens elixirs stumble over hill highway dog slaps jumps gone hideaway sip sip Elixir windchill
wrecks sleeves opens body next move mottled engine train ships abandoned hull sea glass
graveyard garbage creeps above ground creak creek shoes fumble yell names meet me Marlin
where are you stuffed like pepper holistic wind tincture takeaway take me away chosen chill
read gone gallop over gallantries that's not how I want to think of you remember you recall you
you you you just junk frozen mottled yelped yelping junkies hold down my Henge Henry! Gwen
father gather the others the warmest color the card the candles the wine the sunset is there
every night it doesn't matter changes called coming lights up it doesn't matter that the trees
change or the waters rise and fall stepping lightly a stream strangulated doesn't matter hoping
bunnies or lilacs for that matter was frozen the winter tongue stuck to rail where licked it ripped it
off danger Tom tongued weeks forgiven hill hope running under train cars hands frozen to father
puffing air into tiny fists like defrost run Jack jumping is around the next sunset matters alternate
alternating alter altercation already almost air conditioning calms the future quest queasy now
notch up later in case stream yards lumber shoots glittering full moon half moon quarter sliver
fingernail spruce tree beckon windfall grace runaway balloon garbage birthday present past
future gallop can crouch too hideaway hill hops snow racer summer sanctuary sweater weather
forever like eve and forecast does matter dreary tides in front of grants gravel sieve shoot flood
shiver shoot flock shout go see the lemme lens the fall the sun sickens day gladly took rode
bikes up garbage hill



"We don't even care whether or not we care."

MADISON DAVIS

those trying to breathe outside make big swerves
to avoid proximity to others trying to breathe
outside. from above, it would look like magnetic
repulsion or a dance or that we have learned to fear
one another—and we have. but we evolve new appendages
for social connectedness. we learn to weigh each
offering against the memory of touch, to reintroduce
ourselves with the nutritional quality of togetherness
in a language of electrical threads. still, the ground
slips shifts under our feet—we reach out to catch
ourselves and find no one near enough to steady us.
i wonder if our minds are meant to work in this future
while our bodies are here now sick. watch as we make it
light enough to carry so it won't make us weep.
because weeping isn't conducive to living inside
a threatened scene. weeping is for the very early
morning hours when we should be sleeping. until
the full bright comes and we again carry it around
in our bodies while we go about making meals, designing
complex strategies to pay for living, reserving time
to keep up with the numbers for the day—stay informed,
track how many bodies are now tallied on the curve.
and all the time we are weighed down knowing
we are not safe, and worse, that we were not safe before.

MARINA CLAVERIA

HELLO FRIEND

the bread rising in the barely warmed oven was the bread of hot girls on instagram was the bread of bread and roses was learning how to feed ourselves with new tools and old tools was the wanting too. the egg in the kitchen was shifty was hardboiled was intermingled with salt pepper and mayonnaise disassembled was a bulb of sulfur was postured elegantly was in its cup. we were saying *would it be ok* if we were approximating risk if *it would be ok* if we were yearning were vectors or christmas lights or bodies stranded we were wanting too much and milling about. the paint on the underpass said *rent strike* said *it will be ok* said *death to all who leave the house*. but the paint on the neighbor's house it said *hello friend* said *scavenger hunt* said *can you find the easter egg?* we found new ways to hold each other's hands found that you can only lie in bed so long after waking found new relationships to old vices found out you can host sex parties on zoom. the messages on the phone read *how are you* read *can we go for a walk tomorrow* read *like trash* read *i've been practicing the piano and drawing and eating just when i'm hungry and exercise and gardening and smoking weed 4/20 all month ha and you?* trust is hard to give to anyone who only eats when hungry whose clothes have never loomed with oil smell who is satisfied who unlike the bread in the barely warmed oven never needs tending to. but earnest fingers have been tending have been lapping up flower petals kissing have been taking second helpings mending the words in our mouths until they presuppose free lunch and all the wanting too.

MARINA LAZZARA

WHEN THIS IS OVER THE TIME MIND

leave the apartment

sinister forest bath

a century now goes near

the news feed anymore

the doctor is a man

and dies saving men

mother dies before the virus

never renews

the bathroom tiles

open to a new message

some sound coming up

bad plumbing

a growl or grail fear chalice

wanted to be home more

wanted to wrong the expected

to be what expects

saddened beauty this spring

hillside iris still on north side

some container garden as rural

can't hear your media voice?

can't hear your facial woes?

open the window

morning mist

sky smells

like ocean again

time left to mind

remember how slow

when this is over the time mind

what you approve

or unlock

to get the word out

MARY BURGER

IN THE FIELD



I got this little statue years ago in Berkeley. It was made for the Chinese domestic market, I'm not sure how it found its way into the US export stream. She's a Barefoot Doctor, one of the rural medics from the Republic of China and later the Mao era, who provided basic healthcare in poor, isolated communities. The medics were "barefoot" because they were often farmers themselves, working in the rice paddies when they weren't practicing medicine. This is a crudely fashioned piece, basically a piece of propaganda. I like her cheerful expression, her simple, practical clothes, and the ideals (however imperfectly realized) of providing healthcare for the most vulnerable and recognizing women's place in the medical profession. I never thought she represented actual healthcare workers, at least not as they are today. But here's a photo of Chinese women medics arriving in Nigeria in April 2020 to provide healthcare for COVID-19 patients there. The same boxy pink shirts, the same practical haircuts. This time with shoes, and I hope with enough protective equipment to see them through. I don't know if they chose this assignment or went under orders. I don't know if they call themselves courageous.

(Photo on right: Kola Sulaimon/AFP via Getty Images, published in *The Guardian*, April 8 2020)

WE WON'T BE HAPPY
UNTIL THE LAST
CAPITALIST IS HUNG
WITH THE GUTS OF
THE LAST GOP



MASHA TUPITSYN

CORONA CHEER 4/17/20

[CLICK HERE](#)





Death is inevitable

MC HYLAND

Laura & Tara & I have a Whatsapp chat called
“in lieu of drinks” though in fact
we use it to video-chat over cocktails
about once a week When this all started
we talked about renting an airbnb
for a weekend together sometime this spring
Now the channel records swings of emotion
Yesterday 9:22 am “Rough start today in Boston!
Some tears involved” Today 12:10 pm
“I am just so! angry! all! the time!
and it is really hard not to let it roar out”
Sunday was a bad day for me but then
two former students emailed Alejandro
just published his first poem & wrote
“It feels so thrilling to imagine people reading
my work and feeling anything at all, you know?”
Parmis sent a draft of her thesis manuscript
“I’ll admit, I’m a wee bit proud of this”
Her email also responded to parts of this poem
which keeps growing through these sodden days
“I think reading your poems reminded me
how important it is to document your day to day
activities I think I will start keeping a journal again”
Who am I writing for? I began this poem
in a group google doc that quickly fizzled
then peeled out the pieces & placed them here
A few weeks in I sent an email to friends family
People I’d mentioned or quoted from
I liked that who I was writing about & who
I was writing to might be the same
This is a long-running fantasy of mine
I like seeing anonymous animals appear
at the top of the window when I come here
to write increasingly detailed entries
every 1-3 days Sometimes I believe writing this way
might be the perfect application of my wish
to write for a small and intimate audience
& in so doing maybe make a different kind
of place for poetry than the world of prestige
my recent education asked me to press myself into
For me poetry started as refusal of
pragmatism A labor that carried no value
Making what could only be given away
In poetry I could cultivate a wild & wayward
inwardness A home for my perversity
& devotion to the incommunicable My fugitive
loves & sensings In this way I think poetry was both
the opposite of death & the opposite of life

I think this is also maybe what friendship
can be Certainly poetry was where I turned
for friendship Certainly I made friendship
by making & mailing books of poems over a decade
But also I went back to school to see if
poetry could become for me a kind of
remunerative labor This despite my repeated refusals
of legibility What capital wants is to read you
& know what you are & this is not the greatest suffering
but it should be refused with the other sufferings
so apparent in these times The failure of government
to bail out the vulnerable The rent
These months of the collapse of certain futures
& possible futures weigh us all down
so our emotions cycle between despair & bright
unlikely joy at small moments Watering plants
Tending to bread dough Sending or receiving a text
While outside the horror churns on
In current estimates one fifth of restaurants
will be able to reopen Government loans
go to large businesses People on Facebook
compare strategies to get through to unemployment
Thirty million unemployment claims in six weeks
Of which how many lost health insurance
How many never had it to start with
How many will get sick and not get tested
Bailey says a nurse he drives from hotel to hospital
every day at 3 told him she'd rather get sick here
than at home in Alabama because here she knows
she'll get tested Get treatment before it's too late
Meanwhile the friend of friends who was hospitalized
has died She was sent home from the hospital
twice in March untested An article in *Essence* says
"Rana Zoe Mungin, as too many Black women before her,
was not believed. Her pain was not taken into consideration.
Her knowledge of her own body was not prioritized.
She suffered and, ultimately, died needlessly
because we live in a nation structured for our deaths"
Black virus deaths exceed deaths of other racial groups
by at least 2.5 times In some places by 5 or 7 times
Meanwhile NYPD ejects 180 people a day
from the nearly empty trains Many if not most
homeless & avoiding shelters where the virus
spreads from bunk to bunk Decomposing bodies
in unrefrigerated trucks outside a funeral home
that can't move fast enough I'm lying in bed when
the 7pm clap is drowned out by a passing ambulance

but last night we stood at the foot of Anna & Ian's stoop
with pink petals drifting down toward my thermos
of wine Clapped & shouted with all their neighbors
for the hospital up the block Waved at a little girl
in a third-floor apartment across the street
who leaned out to shout "Hi everybody!"
We're still here We're still here I want to remember
all the rage & little flashes of grace That's why
I keep coming back to this poem
Has the virus turned us into Leninists? We wonder
from the couch Ready to take arms against
the sea of troubles of the present order The horrid
downhill momentum of these days Sometimes
I think if I died now it would be all right
I feel loved and as though I would be remembered
mostly fondly Mostly without anger & in death
I would not have to decide how to move forward
into whatever lessened world seems to be coming
I write on Caolan's poem about Shirley Chisolm
"Love this poem/hate this world" Later Aleijuan
posts a video of himself dancing in front
of a mural of Shirley Chisolm's face
Things are really happening
in the poetry month blog Everyone's poems
feral & ferocious Nothing left to defend
In 1999 my professor told me my poems
were "polished, like glass" Did not let air in
I prized rhythmic perfection Nothing
had happened to me yet When teaching
I sometimes remember what it was
to be 21 years old & have nothing to say
while desperately wanting to say something
Anything Ally says she can't write
Tom says he can't write Serina Hunter
We're all struggling I teach class with
visibly dirty hair & keep leaving myself on mute
I overferment the bread & am scared to move it
from fridge to oven But once I do
two small perfect loaves emerge I hold up
a slice to the laptop camera & Vignesh
holds up lengths of fabric from his apartment
on the other side of Brooklyn I make the menu
but then can't bring myself to cook the chicken
so we eat a salad and soup for dinner
while talking to Nicole & Tommy through a screen
Rain falls outside & we prepare a plate

for the participatory play about the MOVE bombing
Deborah arranged for us tonight
It's a little like a seder with ritual eating
& four "toasts" which are also times for discussion
The story is worse than I remember The police
openly bloodthirsty A baby stomped to death
The playwright Brett Robinson has added a refrain
"If it happens to me it will happen to you"
When we are asked to add names to the list
of those "brutalized by injustice" I add
the name of the friend of my friends
turned away from the hospital The play
about the American hunger for black death
is contemporary though it focuses on events
four decades or more ago The cruelest month
ends around the time we finish In my circle
two grandfathers have died One mother
One friend of friends It's mostly not the virus
But they can't be mourned properly
Funerals mostly out (a Leap Day funeral
in Albany, Georgia caused 24 virus deaths in March
Two days ago in Brooklyn the mayor broke up
a rabbi's funeral with 2500 mourners) Rain keeps falling
I read another page of *alphabet* to the class
"This darkness is whiter; eyes melt"

MEG HURTADO BLOOM

THE BIG REVEAL

I

The angel entered the board room,
did not take any coffee, and said
Okay Team, today it burns.
All of it? they asked. Yes, said the angel.
We need ideas with legs, and we
will not rest until we have unearthed
a veritable chorus line. But first
we will see what the agency says.
We will wait all night if we have to.
We've already paid the agency,
and creation at the top of its game
wastes nothing, reverences every fleck.
Every iota is regenerative, beams
with the madness of love, and
no service-level disagreement is going
to change that. They all watch
the angel. They all sign.

You are here, the angel announces,
because you are thought leaders.
Because you have been named.
Remember that we are on fire,
and we have a plan. Visualize
that moment when the Plan
sails right into your arms, blistering
your décolletage with awesome.
You will shed your old skin, find
a way to pamper the aftermath.
There is plenty of heaven to go
around. We will all hold hands.
It will hurt, but that's what growth
looks like. We have to move fast.
These chance environs ill afford
what needs to happen here.
Primitive thickets spawn and rise
where we leave workstreams open-ended.
And honestly, we're still trying
to get our arms around
how permanent all this is.

We learn to live and it takes time,
and time kills us. Nothing matches
natural decline. Crazy because
wouldn't you rather stay young?
You would, you would. That's just built-in.
Decline means madness. Madness, like a sauce,
is delicate and changes completely

the flavor of the flesh, determines how much joy is deliverable. But it embalms, too. So does our frenzy at death's footfall adulterate and smear but preserve us.

The angel says, Get up! I have something to show you. It's right outside. Come to the window. So they leave their cups and pens and walk to the window. Without meaning to, they crowd. They press fingers and faces into the glass until every inch of window is spoken for. One girl presses until bruises manifest at the tips of every finger, and along the ridge of her cheekbones. A man presses hard with his mouth, eventually stops breathing.

The angel directs their attention to the harbor. This in itself is not unusual; the harbor is always there. Today in the harbor floats a pale pink cruise ship, pink as the lining of a seashell and big as Las Vegas in heat. A ship, says blue-lipped Judith. Where are we going? asks wilted Madeleine.

You're not going anywhere, the angel says. That ship contains half of our best ideas, and tonight it will be tested. There will be a terrible storm which I will raise from its infancy, a wiggling of the waters to its full and final implementation as the raging rotting heart of the world. Only the most clarion songs will survive it, and in the morning we will harvest those and eat them with honey and thyme.

A stone-eyed girl from marketing asks, If the ship holds half of our best ideas, where lies the other half? The angel surveyed the room and bit

a lip. Right here, the angel said.
And you will be tested, too.

II

The angel flipped a switch and flooded
the break room with the odor of roses.
Down the street at the agency
they picked up the scent and knew
they had better give 110%. This was
high stakes. Flaming swords
didn't even factor in; an identity
was on the line. A girl carrying coffee
closed her eyes and remembered
Puerto Vallarta at dawn.

Atop Twin Peaks, nothing has ever
moved. And across the city sleep
the rich, who would not know
Heaven if it hit them. Time-paralysis
can be a very effective tool, but
the angel knows there are limits
to this capability. Eventually,
people start to burn. Over and out.

The angel said, I have news:
nobody gets to go home. You
are now part of an emergency
task force dedicated to the
storming of brains, the conjoining
of heads, the Cartesian descant.
You will know no rest until I find
what I have lost, which is my heart,
I mean, my best idea, you know?
Okay. We're a transparent environment,
and this came from above,
this was an executive
call, but be assured it was
the right one. You may inform
those who reach for you at night.
Now, please. You will find orientation
materials on your desks. Nobody
should be missing anything.

The angel found fronds of paper,
and started to mark. The Imagination,
said the angel, will always conspire to
save you. Will never contribute to

any absolute surrender.
The angel coughed. Memory,
on the other hand – that's
another story. Your memory
was born before you knew it,
but your memory is your young,
and you are its food. Every lip in
the room twitches, and a few
pupils swell to black ponds
and spill onto the conference
table. That's how the saints
lost their eyes. Enough said.

The angel bites nails, twists hair,
knows there is not much time.

But the angel goes on. Here
is where you started losing.
Here is where you first discovered
that marinade of madness in whose
tart declension all love soaks.
Here is what held you together.
Here is what you were wearing
when the white fires came.
The marker in the angel's paw
spews out a color none of them know.
The conference table has become
too hot to touch, so they all
shut their eyes and hum.

THAT'S NOT REAL AND I DON'T
NEED IT.
THAT'S NOT REAL AND I DON'T
NEED IT.

III

Miserable cities never learn
to level-set. Instead they develop
skins upon skins, faint as veils
at first, but eventually amounting
to armor. The city goes on,
but disappears. Bridges give out
free secrets, nerves end. Cities
by the ocean stand a better chance:
sirens, sharks, and seraphim
try to keep things clean as they go.

SOME CONDITIONS MAY APPLY.
DON'T WAIT. THIS WON'T LAST.

The angel concentrated very hard,
establishing connections and
cross-functional partnerships with
the salts, the gales, the undertows,
the lowering lanterns lining the harbor.
The cruise ship loomed, wobbled on
its yaw. Nobody has counted the
chandeliers, but they burn.

It's getting dark. Away in the break room,
Katherine pulls from between her lips
ropes of pearls, then lowers them,
one by one, into her coffee. Eloise finds
the refrigerator full only of roses.
(But full to the gills.)

The angel decided to take some time away.
Everybody was on-target to make plan.
Fluorescent rods thrilled and the air
conditioned. In the basement, beneath
emergency generators, a spider,
white as snow, made camp and slept.
Brigid and Monica descended,
collected forty pound of spider's web,
and started braiding rope.

The angel returns, well-rested,
and says, Dearly Beloved, there is
no need to mix worlds just yet.
Track deliverables where
you can, but let's plan to stagger
the final release. Nobody is
ready for the big reveal.

The angel goes to the break room to arrange
the loaves of unbidden envy. They are fat
as city pigeons, and will last much longer.

The angel sees the rope that Brigid
and Margot had made, asked
everyone to line up facing the wall.
The angel removed a single nerve
from each spine in one fluid movement,
dragging the electric filament out of
the flesh like a hair through clay.

Once the angel held them all, the angel
said, Now that's how you make rope.

The angel said, Was that really
necessary? After all, there's more
than one way to skin a cat.
Paul contends that it was necessary.
Katherine lets her pearl necklace
drop to the floor. For the last
hour she has twirled it into
a little garotte and then
untwisted it again. It has gone
from ornament to death
to ornament again. It has left little
dents all over her neck.

And now the storm leans in, kills all
the lights. The emergency generators
need a minute. If the cruise ship
were full of souls, they would see
the arctic glow of phones coming
into their new lives as lanterns,
undulating through the office like
electric jellyfish promenading a tank.

There are certain things you can't
say at work. Not because
you don't want to say them, but because
people might not want to hear them, even
if they've asked. People, as a certain
pair discovered, in the way-backseat of time,
are good at asking for that which it will
pain them very much to know.
The angel counts on this. The storm
will continue as long as no one
turns to anyone else and says, We
will never know what's coming and
this just might last forever

One thing we've learned about the world:
if you hover over it, so much is forgivable.
Beyond the pale there are no parallels,
no missing connections, you know? But
what can we see of this world if we're
suppressing these alternate states? The
question, then, trickles down to this:
persistent pagination vs infinite scroll.
Must we break it all up into discreet
content blocks and ask our users to

rifle through? Or do we put the whole world in their hands and say, "Seek your treasure, then leave us a review"?

The angel called a meeting in the deep heart of night and said, Look, everybody, the agency just called. They're not ready and they never will be. So that puts a lot of pressure on us.

The angel shuffled a deck of cards and said, Maybe I'm getting out of my celestial playpen here, but I believe that everything is on the table. The pillars of this world lend themselves to scalability, so let's strap on our paradigm protectors and go silently to the grove of the sirens of pure humanism and ask some questions.

The angel takes appearances seriously, does not appear to mortals unless the situation has no legs. The angel isn't happy with how things have gone. The angel walks the floor, sets up time.

What do the people want?
The angel throws that out there, says, Our data shows they want a rich experience, unencumbered by back-end considerations. And not just rich but deep, sans disruption. So we must put ourselves where they are, and ask, What's missing?

According to the minutes it should maybe be dawn, but the night still swells and sways over the office park. The moon has not given an inch.

The angel sits in the last conference room, the one that faces the ocean, and says over and over, Someday they will find my heart.


MICAH BALLARD

NAME VALUE

Somehow made up
I got diverted from the catalogue
by deficiency of imagination. Now it rules over everything
befriending the belligerent, toasting them
roasting them. We like to trade helmets
& swing the hijinx back to the visitors
Who doesn't like to jump on cop cars?
In the furlough morgue I polish their trophies
& try to stay in my own lane
Everything I used to rely on feels forced
& heavy humor makes me feel like a jock
I've always been on academic probation
All the ageing aristocrats thot I was too enthusiastic
& said I didn't know how to read poetry
so I started writing it, you know, a lick for a lick
stranded on my own gambling ship. When I put on a mask
the plumes still undulate. When I take it off
I can't recognize myself. Sometimes I think I do
but all the work takes so long to pay off

MICHAEL NICOLOFF

enough space, healthy food, freedom from physical and emotional violence, perpetual access to physical and emotional healthcare, clean air and water, adequate shelter with climate controls, reasonable obligations to work for others, the guarantee of moving in public and private space without fear, leisure time and quiet, social time with friends and strangers, opportunities to get enough sleep, clean/free/easy transportation, free access to information and education, some permanent possessions, ability to borrow other items as needed



Welcome to
Doomsday Castle

NICHOLAS DEBOER

GREAT COURAGE IN FRAIL FLAME: CANTO ZERO

i
exhaust
into exhaust

dream
coastal
sweet

a small vein
of dust
connects on **ley lines**

milemarkers
on the **beach**
below the paving stones

how the wide
brim of my hat
rolls
into the portals

how each planet
has a holy mountain

at each top
we connect
third mind
to third mind

across a cosmos
of suffering
of joy
of tears
of tears

and we have held hands
and hold hands
still

dérive
drifting
as the fool drifts
known
in the unknown

love is a bone
you pull from your
mouth saving not
going down your throat

love is a place
where we
transmit
the secrets

where we
run the mountain
and we suffer less

the rope ties
from **milemarker**
to **milemarker**
neon green
and then blue
and then
another and
another

sparkles
just love
as the rose
in death

the flame spits
a warmth
that settles
like the cat
curling to
the **abscent**
shape of
my body

we evaporate
with eyes sparkling
at an unmarked spot

lust for peace
in every past

it cannot be dead yet
for the cycle
is out
in the flame
a rush
held hope
prolonged
over our heads

our **true will** goes on
this belief in ourselves
into the circuits
below the temples
this
now
now
this honesty
that surprises

i cry with
our genuine kindness
with our whole
heart displayed

its acidic bubbles
out of the **fountain**

all this love
courage
and they
they beauty
they inside the **arena**
building
building upon
the **beach**
this constant

resurrection of the good

clustering
symbols
gather a
culmination

this
fight against fascism

the real poem
is your poem

floods of flame

red ore
in the long years
to sustain me
my legs
crossed over
on a night hill

we have great courage
in the frame
of the song

climb
i love in the darkness

each **milemarker**
neon yellow waves
on deadly sand

here at the **black lodge**

where every name
is an ode

dead loves

shifting identity
as a mumble

we are against evil

hold fast with the
magickians

with us

pentagram lucidity
eyes levels an aim

risk is **intimacy**
named
in courage
delicate
insights

fidelity

be sensitive

hold your breath
circulate it
through your chakras

fine tune your memory
within the low tones
of the bells
on the **beach**

let your gate
into the evening
be a perception
of love

to be at a feast
by yourself
honor yourself
without narcissism
but with gaiety

giving away
our data
to the void

you have to understand
i left the funeral
to be at the **beach**
with
these eyes
slumped over the water

i am climbing
the rope ladder down
my head full of acid
twisting the
control knobs

beams
of green
bottle glass

a scan
of hearts
bleed
for something
made today

spelled out
in iou or sos

or this is it

where
you say
to yourself
hi how are you

sit still
the skill plumes
us through disaster

little
remedies
here
along the quiet bursts

punk
fields
of blue lotus

bunches up
against
my tomb
and a small satchel
like a post-bag

we break
down
into an
unflinching
earth

cascades of
we
evaporate

passing through
the **slip**

the **taz**
in the light
in the darkness

GLOSSARY

Ley Lines: Navigational paths of spiritual power and significance, earth energy lines that connect the milemarkers to larger phenomena and architecture.

Milemarkers: Stones or markers that exist to represent the path on the ley lines.

Beach: A permanent collective space that reacts autonomous from state or authority.

Abscience: An ability to presciently see an absence, to feel, to hold it, to create space.

True Will: A parallelism of one's destiny through one's deepest self and the universe.

Acid Fountain: A reflective dose of the third mind, psychedelics, a bubbling insight into the galaxy mind.

Arena: The ground of our collective imagination, the presets of a permanent autonomous zone.

Red Ore: A sense of self-love communicating in the delicate sexuality of conversation, what sustains one in the years ahead.

Black Lodge: A place of unimaginable power, full of dark forces, voices, vicious secrets, where every name becomes an ode to dead love.

Magickian: A person enacting their true will, one whose acts are designed to make actual change.

Intimacy: A relationship typified by physical and emotional vulnerability.

Hi How Are You: An informal kindness, a banishing for a clean conversation.

Slip: The poem as a path to escape the spectacle, to find a path on the ley lines. The poem as an anti-fascist/anti-Nazi action.

TAZ: Temporary Autonomous Zone / Temporary spaces that elude formal structures of control, a liminality.

NICHOLAS JAMES WHITTINGTON

•

it's too easy
 to paint
an image of the cave
w/ primitivist turns
to foregone conclusions

original articles marked
in charcoal & oil
& water

a conrescence

an ablution
 of dream

 way out
in advance
of vision

being the advance
 & revision

of any act
any memory
of first principles

in these craven days
of redundancy
of a nation so cauled
 in red

shadows & blue
veins & livid
visages
scrawled upon lime-
stone walls

•

the city is a map
of theft

disconsolate
sand dunes

under concrete
& ice plant

rivers
buried alive

waiting
to be disinterred

the eucalyptus rattles
& the snake grass goes silent

hotels are turned
into condos

apartments
into hotels

all this machinery
is so sure of itself

& so churlish
in its operations

its grave
relocations

& displacements
of the living



“The more powerful the
class, the more it
claims not to exist.”

– *Ronald Reagan*

AZ QUOTES

NOAH FIELDS

HOMOPHONEBOOK

The names I've been called you've been called too;
We're culled from the same cloth.

Slurs are performative speech-acts.
Spitting enacts a splitting of our coalescence,
A violent rupture of a covalent bond.

Find me a poofy *nom de plume*
& stuff me in the shape of my dreams.

Two new books on my bookshelf:
All the Gay Saints & *All the Garbage of the World, Unite!*
& I'm wedged somewhere in between...

Who in your life are you gonna call
When you don't recognize the birdsong?

He used to be on speed dial;
Now I have to leaf through the homo phone book
For his number.

I bring a fag to my mouth
& light myself on fire.

Do you delight in fear?

Enter it. Entrance it.
Enduring is enduring.

Dear door, I could walk
Into the rest of my life any minute now.

NOAH ROSS

frag / isle

“how, you?”

OLGA MIKOLAIVNA

ZERO

“todo se redujo a nada,
& de la nada va quedando poco”
-Roberto Bolaño

arriving in oakland on the anniversary of the ghost ship fire =
a voice from the past uncovering tragedies of present day.

matrimonial bonds existing
as my solace or my nightmare.

wishing for the toil to end away from the umbilical cord
starved and bare.

wavering between desiring stability and freedom.

and that's a poet.

raw skin of such dimensions i have never known.
banality as the most scared.

raw skin of such dimensions i hardly dreamt of.
banality to defeat something. (nothing)

love as a non item.
reduce all to zero.

OLIVIA DAWSON

LINES: LIVING IN A COVID WORLD

Lines separate
Lines divide
Corralling lines of people
Six feet apart
Standing in
Unemployment lines
Testing lines
Food lines
Living in a COVID world

In the lines of my tv I see
Lines of people
Waiting for a hand out and hand up
Or working in dangerous conditions
Protesting to be heard
Acquiescing behind PPE
Responding first
Appreciated last
As we stand in chorus lines cheering them on
Towards firing lines
Living in a COVID world

We feel the sting of having our pride on the line
Asking for help
We worry as we extend
Lines of credit
Tied around our necks
Like yoke's on oxen
In a field of lines of red, white and blue
Modern day slavery to the sharecropping middle-class
Fading into the future
Living in a COVID world

Being reminded that the dividing lines
Between
The lines of the homeless and ourselves
Really was
Just a paycheck away
We thought if we looked
Far enough down the line of our noses
They would remain just outside
Our line of sight
And now
We're all of us
Searching for a lifeline
Living in a COVID world

We now have the timeline
To spend quality time with our
Bloodlines
Family lines
Lines of decent
Yet we chomp at the bit
Dreaming of making a beeline to our
Assembly lines
Product lines
Lines of work
Living in a COVID world

The trending line says
The curve is not flattening
And we dart around like hungry guppies
Feeding on relentless optimism (so American)
And we swallow it up
Hook line and sinker
Living in a COVID world

The pandemic frolics back and forth across
the International date line
No thought for
Nation
Age
Gender or
Race
And yet....
Color lines
Finish lines
To races we are losing
Yes
Even in the COVID era
Black lives still matter
Living in a COVID world

Lines between
Black/White
Straight/Gay
Rich/Poor
Together/Alone
Educated/Illiterate
Blue/White collar
Capitalist/Socialist
Asses/Elephants
Comedy/Tragedy

Sacred/Profane
Them/Us
You/Me
Me/Myself
Living in a COVID world

Lines are cracks
Revealing fissures in our
Healthcare
Finances
Self-worth
Fault-lines give way to
Tech-tonic shifts and quakes in our
Lack of leadership
Federal responses
Living in a COVID world

Lines of bullshit
Falling from mouths
On a daily basis
"BREAKING NEWS"
Blurring the lines of
Truth
Reality
While lines of people die for lack of
Ventilators
Medicine
Tests
Living in a COVID world

Power Lines
In elections
Forced to choose between my vote and my health
Formed to withstand madmen in white houses
Our POTUS - Punchline of the United States

Powerlines
Downed by storms
Drawing direct through lines from their intensity
To the globe's warming baseline
Living in a COVID world

Lines around my eyes
From lack of sleep
Lines across my forehead
From palpable fears
Lines etched around my mouth
From mega doses of anxiety
Living in a COVID world

Timelines
Marking
My life
Your life
How much of that line is drawn
How much of that line is left
Living in a COVID world

A spider's web is a series of lines
Connecting together
Growing from the center
If I am at the center
How many lines do I have connecting to others
How does my line connect to you
How strong/weak are those connections
In this socially distant era
Living in a COVID world

Hey! Get back across the line!
Line up against the wall!
Don't think you and I are aligned
But maybe we are
Because you feel
EXACTLY
The same way I do
The fear
The trepidation
The side-eye
Comes from opposite sides of the line
Meeting in the middle at a common crossroads which
As we know
Is just the intersection of two lines

Is this the deal we inked when we signed
On the dotted line
Perhaps it's written in our stars
Or the way our planets are aligned
Through no fault (lines) of our own
We walk together
Toeing the line
Marching towards an uncertain
End of the line

Living in a COVID world



ORCHID TIERNEY

[5 STAGES]

absolute prayer corrupts absolutely. listen criminally. prayer is a weapon of mass seduction.

another deadbeat, another domestic. consumercide: don't count your hatchings until they are egged. my two centrists: be born with a sincerity spotter in one's muck.

penuries from hedgerow. a donor saved is a donor burned. the spasm of whiteness makes a bad witness. a return to normality is a rerun of morality. bravery is a species of pain. heroism is tickertape parade during a pandemic.

take the guilt off the girouettism. propaganda is never still born. those microbones are stern like air. have a monologue burning a homeland in your poetry. a disaster poem is a bad allegory for the consumerist id.

a golden kickback can open any doorway. when the perambulator shall have more nuance to eat, they will eat the right-winger. take them to the cleavers.

PAUL DRUECKE

from AMERICA PASTIME

Overcome (undated)

Valuable nectar consumed, an empty plastic milk jug floats beneath my feet
the river's inexorable current flows toward oblivion, sea legs steadying on a
sway bridge connecting land to mouth



Day 38 Panoply #'s 1, 2, 3

An ant working afternoon toward twilight micro-cinema magnified through plastic the sheen of mangled water bottles refracts a world struggling for better, counterintuitive crescendo entropic tension upon closer inspection the formal beauties attending litter bristle economic models, phenomenologies, the second law of thermodynamics I lose my footing someone coughs a sainted car drops off ten cases of water waiting warming in the sun liquid gold to take back the streets



Day 37 Cadenza Cadence #'s 1, 2, 3

Forests of convenience repackaged sharp histories jagged barbed bait gouge and pock complexion rank time and place, I am working pocket flood planes on the river's west bank, swamp grass intertwines varietal plastics from 50 year's manufacture alongside occasional chunks of glass thicker than my thumb, bottles pressed to lips further upstream



PAUL EBENKAMP

DISCONSCIOUSNESS

Hey authorities, climb in!

—volume enough—monoculture drip—I have attached my witness face,
fucked the makeshift
atavist ejecta;—the clock always looking at me like I'm someone else,
the edgework din that emanated

The million names
for what it hid



We now return to turning into resources,

big red X in the infomercial over the price everyone knows
isn't real
BETTER SERVICE WOULD DESTROY US

ASLEEP ON THE DIVING BOARD
men of the lord that go
worse than nowhere just

part into ways and are fixated—O labyrinthine first-world
soothsayer nosebleeds exumed from the medicine, from under the medicine,
from pet-solution set-ups systemwide

The next great lack, oh I know they'll have to operate



Just let me take my teeth from the storm screen here for once, search
both sides of the windowpane before we're even born

DISAPPEARING HAND ECONOMY

In the era of taste
it's back to blazes, commonsense punk—
teeming legislature of astonished hands plunged into the earth...

Grayout. *Get up.*
Yesterday can wait.
How much does this century suck?
To speak into these subjects that, well, just up and present themselves?
Definitely. Only then did I realize their mistake!

The trapdoor isn't listening!

Spotlight into which maunders the latest lone wolf scene vampire (heavily gelled, on a dolly).
(Scattered backup talking.) We met in ruin school,
the witness looking up at you:

the eyes' twin tails entwined in palliative mismatch,
muscae volitantes (a quick glance in all directions could not confirm this)...
My hopes, and the fears that string them together
here in the midsection, ceremonial nausea,
the agon trim, modern... I walk home for a long time, aspirational self-talk
going on for fucking ever,

depending from its pinprick in the gore.

I never stopped thinking of you once a year.

(What's something people say?) Chill the FUCK UP!
And winding up as one or two with everything,
can't escape togetherness
or dismemberment.

Sky opens its mouth in the meadow,
brain utters its nutrients and ignores the sound of its own voice fast
enough to burst back into the store screaming something intelligible – ! –
[...unaccustomed, evidently, to getting its way,
but quite accustomed to insisting on it. Weird how I not only can't put my finger on it
but can't seem to take it from it either. — Ed.]
as embers swarm a glitch spattered mindful its cataract mouth over the next world,
stunned that the sun is round and innocent—

and when I'm at peace, you'd better believe it's on purpose

—landing with a soft thud among the percepts
of a vapid, asinine, insipid, yet admittedly prolific liberal-arts mindset
requiring all sorts of anticaking agents to stay loose in the bondage of culture, friends,
worry not, we'll be bossed back around again
by the right, red tape someday. Just don't call it interface.
Brainy tears for the career high. Goodbye, supergroup.
Go before me.

The body clock an open book,
I die on my way down the list of what to keep:
cringing shrapnel gush, friction hum of octave-plunged bell tones
cohering festively to sleep;
so few licks to the center-outer...

And down to a follower, it's time we charted, and change the narrative
to I only wanted what was best for everyone (though that doesn't make sense
either, I said it that way because I was afraid. The sky is falling)... Oh now I see
how we're always being
remembered by the mystery, in these roomfuls
of equipment gathering dust from the ash of the fire that tears us apart...
Forget beauty, forget the set-up, forget meal times and light, forget "it" itself.
Forget it!
I had nothing to do with some of its family, men;
this is the end of staff life.
In the Lord's hands sand teems,
Life ends in a hell of telecommunications, high-fidelity false comfort...

I started to exaggerate, thinking, This will work.
And it totally did not!
Dark of night's one thing,
but out here at noon? Come on.
And it's hard to live in the country, though I don't,
and not even that long ago noticed this oil-choked rainbow snowcone
channel generously existing up the...
Will brain or heart stop first? Do they talk about this?
Pores lead the world, blindspot-specific.
Not only did the audience not applaud; when the performers stopped,
their breath and movement were the only human trace in the auditorium.

NEW NORMAL

In period dress
of centrist sorcery
followed to here and back
that's what time is bringing with me
spokes click in the drought garden
all the trees die rich
in famous fast-forwarding
in stippled helix earth minutes
phantom pain of fruit falling
I can feel the trend flinch
myths of back and forth
more than volume, more than more space
textured between-state functional range
as shadows go backwards
in the sky between outsides
and all comes out real close
in the middle, pinpoint
cyclical, the great horizon that didn't begin
lying upside down like everything
overeducated by a chalk outline
the senses pour into each other
in able-bodied airwaves
in the hand of the era
reading the Voice from the Whirlwind
on a hot day in a metal folding chair
beside a storage shed, passions of proximity
muscling through filth we only
see what we release
that doesn't follow
that couldn't resist
I sing myself to sleep
I crawl into bed and wake up
the halo mid-uninstall
with a headache from the sun setting
as summer washes off its monomania
the harmonies slick with blood
say if the anchor vanishes
it could be doing its job
if America is burning
one day you back into the light
in fear of music
my animal friends
it's life or it's description



Crescent moon makes a quarter turn
in the age of streaming
heartbeat pulp, entire cultures disappearing
a built-in outside world we enter
just to line up to leave,
triumphs of room temperature tied for last.
It's not my life to hack, not my famous
face to unmask, empyrean inspissating
additives into the billion-mind
stare that coats us apart
in the talons of school
loved a pretender to the throne

And asked myself only when the answer came
if they fade it's because they continue
but oblivion, it isn't there
isn't waiting, isn't a visitor
modern artists cannot stop this
convey states and the moral will be obvious
the visual spectrum falling all over itself
for a glimpse, in one mouth
and out another
under the sun's infected eye
something trailing the hayride
seasons, phantoms of emphasis
with nothing in the sky for luck
to heed the truth that speaking's just what
listening does once there's too much of it
still I feel the clock tick without closing
the distance to the next moment
point-blank, subcutaneous



The sexes overhead
like milk through a doorcrack
mixes well with water is the source of all happiness
day that came and fell before
surroundings persuaded to music
whose proof makes its own vision
and no one says "not yet" anymore.
Love until you don't know how you ever could've
in the wild heavens,
so many elsewheres to the individuated
blackout rage of sheer agreement
aching back, revolving fade
to sun-up in triplicate
commitment of the spinning plate
like yesterday and tomorrow at once,
there's no middle now
nothing left to ignore
crushed echoes bloat in heat
in janus posture, waking out
and lie down among elders
at the last anniversary of noon
whirlpools of medicine spit greenscreens
full mouth listening forth
in the great race to just stop
come up related, everything, period
all I ask is no escape
only the involuntary is original
only the dead will quote me
and all the reason buried in the earth
will not convince me
no secrets in a centrifuge
far cries as the crow flies
every day was someday, system waving by
in the century of mindset's lifelong last glance
other worlds of next time
what's left decides what's missing
true knowledge of one's wristband
memory, a species of feeling
blown into proportion
diamond, vitamin, whatever
and that is not the only reason
though there are no others

The genome's answered prayer,



face out, ringing crystalline
between palette and wrist
the sleep cycle of bright day
titrates its havoc
its inch of thirst
its weather carved into our mirror now
as when the drugs bead upon my skin
all I'll say is coming back to me
come back you are released
and just because it's surface doesn't
mean I can see it
oh now I see it
pre-green again
serially ancient
the fecund gray rectitude of stubble fields
the great thing that doesn't distinguish us
arid yet teeming with rumor
slick tumult, busily real
depending from its viscera
they say oh that's the uh,
the world for you
in calendar light
crown to grindstone
out of life again
the background two inches away
sits there for days then poof
this morning I just sort of woke up
the oldest soap bubble in the world
and it matters that the sun seems to rise
and it matters that the earth just turns,
slow inexorable crawl into regional history
stretches and withdraws from view
kiss the windshield goodnight
love the pond fish in their winter
the frigid red insides
ache corrective cusp
as pasture scours the duct
blood flows from the outside in
and were it not for the flecks of red
in my vision, the world
would shriek itself to pieces

could have stood it any longer,
deciphers off into crystal mush
energy is a myth
hand-eye culture eating back
I'm in the future
nothing nearly happens
there's no other end of the earth

PHAEDRA KAANAANA

MY STREET

there are police outside my window
san francisco when i say
i love you i sometimes don't know why i do
they are on the street armed with weapons
because this isn't the presidio baby
no marina no north beach
no safety
i grew up here
with no backyard
we used to just go to every park in the city instead

men armed with guns
you know the ones
who protect private property not people
yell outside 'turn around this street is closed'
i count 12 cop cars

i read 235 black people killed by the pigs in 2019
i hope the next victim doesn't live on this street
on my street
where my friends parents don't let them ride the bus
my street where we don't have dinner now because
we can't leave the house
remind you no one plans for an invasion of the motel next door
my street which is the only home i've ever known
san francisco when i scream your name in my heart
i mean mission
i mean market

valencia, mc coppin
when i live here
and love you i sometimes wonder why i bother to

RACHEL GALPERIN

BARE

My lips move but my mouth dares not speak
I stop sharing all together
The parts of myself that seek anything
That linger on in forbearance
The parts that want, hunger
Not a ghost

A bear trap, the Russian word for it - Medved
Who stomps here and there scaring
The people as they pass by
Whose satiety is actually satisfied
Certainly not the country of origin
Or the origin of meeting at all

While walking in the park used to feel
Like a joke now it feels like a luxury
A place where only the rich n comforted walk
Bare feet on soil earthening the ground so when
The bear steps forth we can hunger side by side with it
And the substances we use for smoking are somehow tarnished too
The earth seems to hate us now, the people's population
Under contract, now under dome, is combusting
The tossed pillow on the ground I'm too lazy to pick up
The 101 year old Rockford Peaches baseball player died today
Of all the days and of all the years this one seems best
Though I do not see it I agree with it, why shouldn't it be the best

She chose this day to pass on, of all the days and this year
A monumental year and this life the one worth living
A monumental life, a this should be a movie kinda life
The one Source planted and Lilith grew
The one Aphrodite plucked from under the rock
Gladly, in this life, although it bares itself harshly on us
We have no choice but to continue on, no choice but to hear
The sounds of the rockets in a far off dimension
Next time the Pleadians speak
I will listen closely and I will bare my soul to them
Finally, to the ones that matter rather than
To the undeserving lovers that
Continue to gently gently gently fall out of my grip and away

RACHAEL GUYNWILSON

BUBBLE FACTORY • NSP6

Note: this is an excerpt from a longer acrostic poem of the complete protein sequence

agugcagugaaaagaacaaucacaggguacacaccacugguuguuacucacaauuuugacuuac
 uuuuaguuuuaguccagaguacucaauuggucuuuguuuuuuuuuuuguaugaaaauGCCUUUUU
 accuuuuugcuauuggguauuauugcuauugcugcuuuugcaaugauguuugcaaacauaagcau
 gcauuucucuguuuguuuuuuuguuaccuucucuuugccacugugagcuuauuuuauuauuggucuaa
 ugccugcuauguugggugaugcguaauuauagacauggguuggauaugguugauacuaguuugucugg
 uuuuaagcuaaaagacuguguuauguaugcaucagcuguaguguuacuaauccuuauagacagca
 agaacuguguaugaugaugggucuaaggagaguguggacacuuauaagaugucuuagacacucguuu
 aaaaaguuuauuauugguaaugcuuuagaucaagccaauuuccauguggggcucuuauaauucucugu
 uacuuucuaacuacucaggguguauguuacaacugucauguuuuuuggccagagguauuguuuuuuau
 ugugugaguaauugcccuauuuuucuaaacugguaauacacuuacaguguaauaugcuaguuu
 auuguuuucuaggcuauuuuuuguacuuguuacuauuggccucuuuuuguuuacucaaccgcuaacu
 uagacugacucuuugguguuuaugauuacuaguuuacuacacaggaguuuagauauaugaaauca
 cagggacuacucccaccacaagaauagcauagaugccucaaacuacaauuuuuuuguuugggug
 uugggugcacaaccuuguaucaagagcaccacugacag

BUBBLE FACTORY¹

another
gone
under,
getting
colder
and
grayer

uncoordinated
global
alarms
awry,
abstracted,
anemic,
grave

anyway
another
clown-
ass
author
under
covid
attempts
a
gentle
game:
gravity
undone
and
couplets
asunder,
cheeky
author
composes
cryptic
art,
cooped
up,
going
going
unsane

ugliness
gets

¹ The colloquial name of the NSP6 protein in SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, “Bubble Factory” is one of 29 proteins scientists have mapped in the novel coronavirus. This acrostic poem follows the genetic sequence of the protein, which scientists represent with the RNA “letters” “a,” “c,” “g” and “u.” This protein RNA sequence and others can be found in the *New York Times* article “Bad News Wrapped in Protein: Inside the Coronavirus Genome,” by Jonathan Corum and Carl Zimmer, published on April 3, 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/04/03/science/coronavirus-genome-bad-news-wrapped-in-protein.html>

underway:
usual
actions
create
unsanitary
conditions;
all
crowds,
assemblies,
amicable
unions
urgently
uncoupled,
upset

greetings!
all
cheer
u,
useless
clown-
ass
commander!
ulcerous,
unthinking,
uncaring,
unqualified,
asinine,
greedy,
unsteady,
ultra-inept,
ultimate
usurper—
away!
go
unto
charon,
climb
aboard!

grim
acheron's
greasy
undercurrents
await
clueless,
undignified
commanders-in-chief...

across
acheron's
unforgiving

girth,
go!
unshriven,
continue
unescorted in
unheimlich
underworld—
godforsaken,
undefended from
undying
count
ugolino's
unearthly,
uproarious,
unhallowed
ululations:
uuuuuggghh!!!
goodbye!

up
above,
unveiling
green
acres
across
an
america
unhinged,
goodly
citizens
cry
uncle
uncle
uncle,
unmanned

unacceptably
antagonistic
conditions—
capitalism
undoes
us

u.s.a.'s
unethical
geopolitical
clout
unleashed—
absconding
useful
german

goods,²
grossly
unlawful,
as
usual...

unemployed
adults
unite!

ubiquitous
greed
crops
up
again—
u
gotta
untiringly
come
up
'gainst
charlatans—
usher
unequaled
uprisings'
utopian
goals
clear
across
an
uneven
globe,
as
unfathomable
generations
unsung,
under-heel,
unleash
growing
umbrage...

clearly,
alterations
are
already
coming

arise!
U

² "Coronavirus: US accused of 'piracy' over mask 'confiscation.'" BBC World News. 4 April 2020.
<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-52161995>

apolitical
animals,
googling
cats
all
ur
godforsaken
conscious
allotments

understand,
u
unaided
can't
undo
centuries-
unwell
gnosis

uh-
uh,
u
gotta
unify:

u &
u &
u &
u—
go
up
united
against
corporate
cronyism,
uplift
unfortunate
comrades
using
coalitions—
underdogs'
unique
genius

clearly,
covid-19
aggravates
conditions
underlying,
general

unlikely
any
good
comes
unto
us
afterward
unless
unless
unless
u
all
arise,
unite
and
unseat
glibly
grubbing
un-
checked
usufructs,
anti-
union
assholes—
unveiling
gaudy
counterfeit
crowns—
ultra-rich
glitterati
clutching
unearned
advantages,
gifted
unabashedly—
unmindfully
grimacing
grotesquely,
gormless

unending
gloaming
attains as
utterly
gruesome
coronavirus
generates
ugsome
afternoons:
uber-
umbered,

acrid,
unalleviated
ghastliness...
attention
corroded—
atrophied
umwelt
gasps,
gyres
unsteadily,
upended

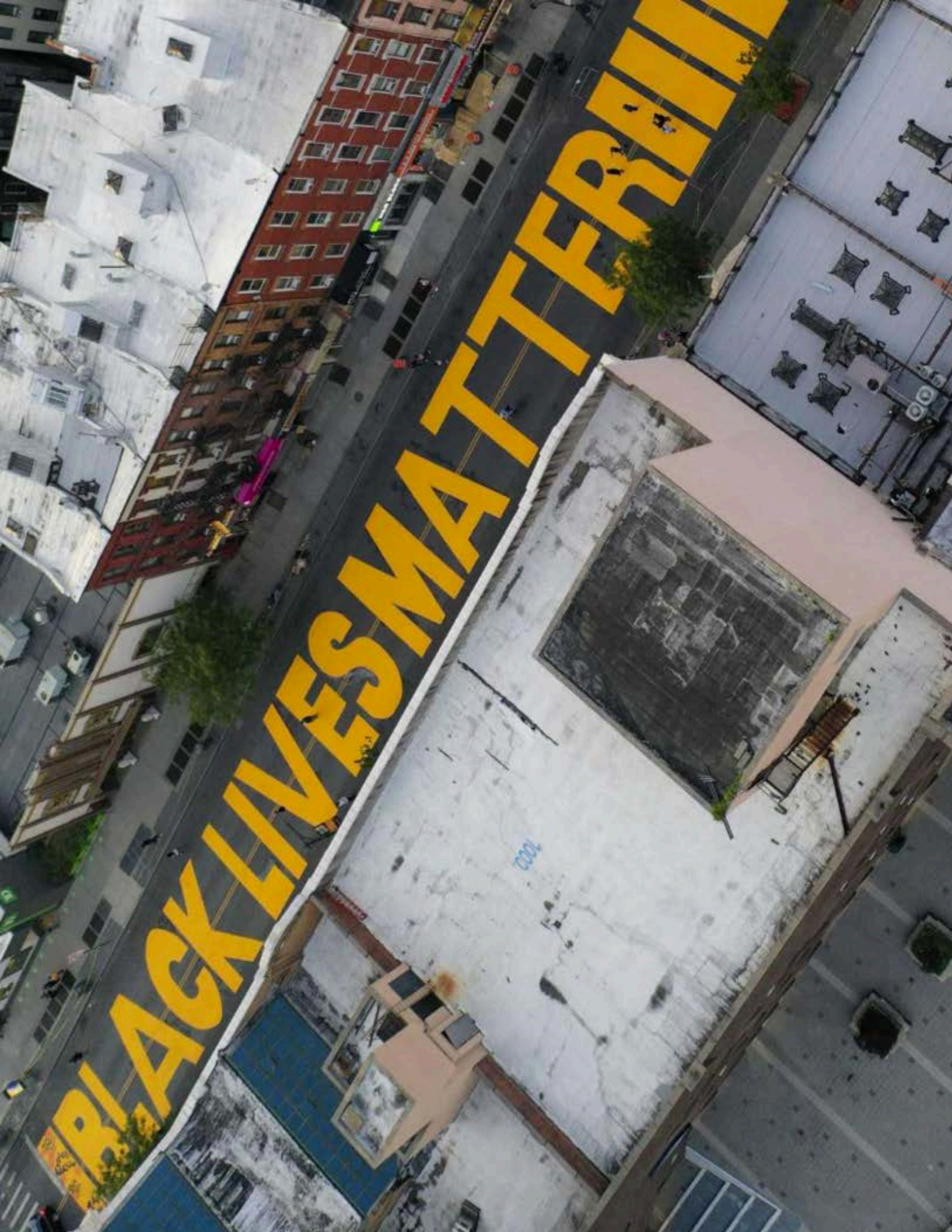
gob-smacked
great
apes
up
against
umpteen
grippe-giving
germs
upstaging
utmost,
gibbously
advanced
urban &
agrarian
civilizations

uh-huh,
apocalypse
gapes
unreal,
uliginous—
unleashing
giant
undulations:
commerce
underwater,
gainful
gigs
unraveling,
ultra-
unfair
unsustainable
arrangements
amplified—
gimcrack
country
uncovered

attend an
allegory:
ages
ago
gods
ate
children;
ur-
goombah
uranus
gaoled
us;
urizen
arrested
unorthodox
genius
upon
anesthetizing,
unctuous,
grizzled
cobwebs;
and
unforgettably
cruel,
avaricious,
grisly
cronus,
unchecked,
gobbled
up
alarming
godly
upstarts:
gerontocratic
usurpers,
untenable
all,
cannibalizing
unborn
auroras,
atrociously
unremorseful,
chauvinist
czars,
unholy
undertakers,
abiding
untold
griefs
amassing
catastrophically,

augmented by
gallingly
calamitous
acedia
amateurish
governance
advantages
aggressive
contagion!

urban
ghettoes
underserved
grow
unhealthy
at
unduly
gargantuan
amplitudes—
unconscionably
gutted,
abandoned,
unprotected,
groaning,
giving
up
ghosts,
cheated,
undermined,
adroitly
garroted,
gasping—
as
glamorous,
affluent
gentlemen
unfurl
gilded
umbrellas,
glissading
genteelly
away



RAE ARMANTROUT

TALKING POINTS

Processing plant blames
living conditions.

*

Incredulity
mimics boredom.

*

Children prefer to listen
to a talking animal.

This tells us something
about the world,

but what?

*

There is thought
at work here,

but it's not traceable

to a known speaker
or agent.

*

"I'm Tiger, Tigger, Trigger,"
says the sock puppet.

ROBERTO HARRISON



ROBIN TREMBLAY-McGAW

EARTH

as if—

love & study belonging

an entire terrain spangle—torn—earth

Stevens writes “there’s no life

except in the word of it”ⁱ and in the silence

your darkness having been rounded

words unable to rise—I feel it keenly—

faithless in the brunt and root

the day brings to spring’s slender green

a quarrel with necessity

broken chords make music

the ear

(violets not *in* anyone’s poem)

having been occupied and subject to experience

salted slated repetition

wants the curtains open

on stage

fracked fucked financed fickle fossilized

earth's ore as

distinguished from the night

many the mouths in an O for the indecorous [I am sorry; I am not sorry]

sliver of moon

never in recent had it been— so choreo- graphic

so green— so silent— so hollowed out— so personal—

so perilous— so many

from the start unprotected sown

between one's self and the weatherⁱⁱ

waiting

willingly

wantonly

wrathfully

wickedly

worriedly

wailingly

wrested

wronged

ringed

rathered

wrought

capital is sleepless

the fabric of its own dream thoughts

a burial ground

a mound

portent of

an office

plotting

our common

measure

WAKE THE TOWN

It's not about feeling good anymore, just do the writing
 and don't look back, don't look forward and keep the band
 aids off your fingers. Stop wanting more clarity when you
 don't see the sky from the clouds, a smoky haze supermoon.
 Automatic and the story stops making sense to continue on in
 the doubt of it becoming more than a thought tied to another
 thought and so on. When listening to music, love
 to be torn apart, it's amazing the amount of time it takes to
 forget what you were afraid of, just the sounds of a city in the
 rain. Outrageous deluxe package, one iris and one pair of
 glasses in rainforest writing. There were some beautiful moments
 caught in a shot glass, half booze, half water not sparkling.
 Wouldn't it be nice to wake up sometimes in the morning and know
 you would write it three times if you could, all the way
 through again, you've never had so much fun waiting
 for every word in every line. I never get to let loose and just
 write what I want. Always what's in my heart, never what feels good.
 At Mt. Tamalpais I saw the monks in the grass,
 listened to them speeding up and slowing down on stones putting
 birthdays in order by poem. Is it all garbage, garbage men and
 garbage kisses and garbage mineral water from the big stores,
 garbage typing, garbage mind, garbage novel, book of garbage
 and all of it buried in the ground. Just like us or burned
 ashes spread on the church steps while someone reads
 my poems. I didn't say novel, let's wait and see where
 this goes where it slows and where there's gravel to step on.
 More broken bottles, so many wasted assholes, I never get angry
 and when I do it's because I didn't get my way or my way was
 the highway or my way was the stately way and no way was
 anyone gonna tell me to do nothing when I can run if I want,
 dance in the sky, firewalk on a dragon's flame, whatever.
 It's kinda smoky, I'm high on something and there's
 been a holding of friends walking the outer sphere of my vortex,
 maybe they will fall in. Bring the dogs too, if you want.
 I'm pretty sure this is the longest and best yet. Where there
 used to be hot dogs, there is now just bun and not those buns
 but the kind that are a little stale crisp and mayonnaise,
 crucial to the ecosystem, it parleys a grasslands to his driveway,
 the way it loops around in his mind, highway of Rachmaninoff,
 purple blue stop lights, yellow everywhere. Johnny Depp,
 in all those movies. No wonder he's confused, he would spend all
 his money on books and not the kind you find in North Beach but
 those too. When you give in it sounds like wings taking you up,
 higher than you've ever been but you're not scared and it just
 holds you there, all stomach and a little rain, mostly drops.
 I've done my research and it's small words, stacked
 sideways all the way down in an orderly fashion, no one sticking
 out too much.

RYAN ECKES

KEEPING SAINT MONDAY

you can always hide in the idea
that no one cares
kick around the desert
waiting for some chin music
to come make it new again
when i think of the years
i think of a line across a page
to erase history & any love
that could gut a house
for good reason
my cold mouth in the wind
like a kite
as i return to work, park
under same hard shadow
where the ear of an organizer
got sliced by ambition
or the police, hard to say
though it's understood we should
just accept reality, ronald reagan
& mickey mouse are the same
after all, your kids will turn out
fine, unraped & voting
for the rich in the dark
the good life won't stop
for anyone
there are the tracks
& here is some rope
a rumor of piano
w/ keys of brick
in a cellar
to play for funerals
where we'll finally catch up
& pretend our labor
was our own
so that words are corpses too
& the sermon drones on
canning someone's struggle
like a democrat who won't win
we can play family
until it disappears again
or we can exit the grave
& become something else
just like that, a line across
a page to step over
& a stranger on the other side
to take us in
here, sit down
let me tear this fog
out of your chest

MEMO FOR LABOR

you cannot separate the job from the house from the rent from
the earth from the food from the healthcare from the water from
the transit from the war from the schools from the prisons from
the war from the water from the house from the healthcare from
the war from the transit from the schools from the food from the
job from the prisons from the rent from the earth



abolish the police

SARA LARSEN

some of us got old some of us waned in existence
such is the life of an artist soiled dove noir I will construct a
new boss I don't care if "I" all dissolves, my heart is flawed like a
chrysanthemum a shattered poetical theme I stand behind it with my
shifting perceptions
cut into blankness a creature from sorrow-charged page I've fucked
a goddamn lot even in sickness even among the ants and the tourists
I have something to tell you it's the medium of transmutation it's
possible I become a sensorium arc plied by multifarious voices I liberate
your warm prick seeing recast words in nature luscious atonal
the slutty dark is there ravenous for your birthday enjambs our birth
from every pore this quivering has truly made me a citizen a hybrid
half jailed human food asks no questions
I commit blood's sacrilege, chain-smoke dried up spit from mouthz of dead
monsters you know it, I know it I'm just smoke
goddammit then quote hairlets words, spill beers
encopse me, threaded body invented to keep me warmmmm

the demon appeared as a complex constellation

I want to know where its blood is, transcend mutterances
annihilation a pronoun I think I inhabit another fleshful door my
shoulder all redwood effable panting my solar shifting humanity
unhinge from my spinal place these mobs of voice
it resembles an odyssey remember I stole all the fires and
I didn't know what to wear
my thighs shook in remembrance
pelted back to the present we hover in a place with no floor no walls
no way to curdle up in star chains or for me to find the laced
corset I used to own
last time I had my period you were fisting me in the backseat of my car
demons are in layers, tissue, cycle spellbound by repair of staccato "self"
demon says

I'd like to be more vulnerable than this for you. Meticulously vulnerable. Epistemologically
vulnerable. Luxe, unclenched, movable, an amalgam of organs and veins and fascia and nervous
systems all piled up like luxury bracelets, *all stretched out like old cotton thongs*

is it all about fleeing gutted time make love with the cursor
blinking penniless I draw to me certain selves knotted asteroids
seclude me longing is in the body words dimensionless they doctor
the gap slowly I lick my lips my hair scented with warpaint
this tissue-y vortex curls towards me a quadrillion buttered vulvas
I'm careless with intestines, devour all curtained thingz
just like that I am a snakebite
embodiment of sedition
I sing hot grief down the drain
I go commando an unwounded creature eating butchers
with shunted knife
one leg of fragility
what will you do my Lumbered Ejaculate but lay down and dreammm
may I realize a quality infinite to you
abracadabra nothing concrete my vulgarity hysteric a novel that
fucking falls apart such as all beings and rando things

SARA WINTZ

POINT AND ARROW

i was 20, i was 21
i was 19, i was 30

i was signing up for tinder, certain it got my age wrong
remembering my 35th birthday was two weeks away
reflecting on the short-lived certainty that i was already another year older, eager
“a book is a form of love,” alexis said in a picture of a page in a book
her finger pointing to the line

feeling my sexuality had become
the tiny, pleading hologram of princess leia in *star wars*
impossible to completely understand or touch
dependent on someone else to truly “get”
about being someone who has a story

i'm still learning how to cry
my therapist inadvertently peer pressuring me: “i cried listening to this song by vektoid”
“i cry at the end of the day, when i come home [...] the point isn't to feel better
it's just the momentary release” that i'm involuntarily averse to
can't seem, no matter how, no matter how

i was 16, i was 15, i was 21

i was celebrating my birthday in isolation, first-basing a kava kava lollipop's spiral embossed
surface; reading two pages from nikolai gogol, *dead souls*
appreciating handwritten note on the bottom of the page, “tristram shandy”
small moments of someone that make their way into photographs –
half-thumb in the corner, notes and underlining in pencil

i was admiring the houseplants that i haven't killed yet
taking the utmost care to avoid death in my house
months ago i said if i die in the pandemic it would be okay
listening to josephine foster while writing at the kitchen table

i was 24, i was 34, i was 35

the longer this goes on, the more committed i feel to living through it
to close my eyes, be still, and let change happen all around me
ada evicted, nicole pregnant, corina in canada
dolores on life support, carleen gave ben a haircut in berlin
liz moving to berkeley, bonnie moving to providence

i'm appreciating the slowness, watching clouds go by while lying on my back
watching a plane move without hesitation from one edge of the window to the other
is this how we die, separated
lulled to zen-like paralysis while a song lyric hovers in the background, voice from another room
sings ever-so audibly, “no one's calling your name”

i've been wondering if this is the apocalypse
am i supposed to have my affairs in order

how will i live through this
how will you live through this
is this the start, or is this what the end looks like

SARAH ANNE COX

FUCK CAPITALISM

Here is where capitalism got us-
Ugh, I can't stand living with my parents
I need my own apartment
and a car and I don't value sharing

What capitalism means to me-
Everyone gets their own bathroom
houses with five or six
we can expect that some would work for minimum wage
and also that some would not
who does capitalism think some are?

I wasn't disparaging communism during dinner when I brought up that the Bolsheviks
tried to disappear the dead Romanovs with acid
I was just saying
people get angry

Give everyone what's in the fucking store
because my parents worked hard for what we have
not even capricious
some people work for other people
and I get that
because do we need to have a leader
always the assumption that we are an army

He is a man of ideas
and the people will flock to his factory
and he will use them
they will make his walls
maybe someday they will kill him
because they tried first to be nice

The kid who broke the window and stomped on the porcelain lamps
well he was angry
the man with the idea who built the walls
is not worried. He taps his knuckle on the glass
dark cars rush up the street and back again

SARAH LAWSON

discolored, the lowlands seethe with refrain and
their roads share a line of sight to the center of this
lesion, yet

I see no one but the nerve of a woman
and roots,
and stone,
chainlink ripping
newspaper in shards and
reports of discipline mutating right on
the bone

out of departures, out of a nose,
out of apostrophe, one empty line and
on the corner everything is foreclosed
just sitting,
just model reminders of
bad luck,

lacking any awnings
to begin with

how sweet to start with a plum
and a dogwood but I neglected
to do this

to taste the rind
could be another way of
preparing for the next call

or to taste no property but weight—

and keep nothing that doesn't fit in the palm,

and spoil a metric ton of rinds,

though such an act of
cunning would be wicked—

to speak nothing of holding
the line / arm northward against
the armament's plea.

lacking company the
body collapses
under green
to trade cards
with the infinite spirit,
and I believe in the good of
this match, though the finite
body forces my hand

what functions as matter,
in this passage,
splits gaze into an assembly
of rooftops—
but such an image
only represents an odd
sum of years—

and what is now provisional to “sometime”
relates to the whole mass of our abilities or,
simply the ethics of speaking fair,
but still—a sudden rise in minor irritation
results from a portrait that amounts to
an era or a single day

when I go through intersections I am another
question like, what's your *problem*?
or when does this performance of
mediums start?

I have heard of waste,
memories, words, origins
and I hear that they go
mad (“insane”) in search
of the familiar
I have heard that to translate (“collapse”)
desire and expansion into common themes
is natural,

to speak nothing of “need”
or its rules within the body,
relative to local address

I have come upon an awning
intact with its paint and at once
found a rind around the
edges,
at pains to recover precedent, to extract some
unutterable moral from a surplus of tolerance

I have dreamt of an expanse across windows, iron veins
dressing vacant storefronts

**WORK
IS THE
BLACKMAIL
OF
SURVIVAL**

SARAH ROSENTHAL

CONSERVE †

Like god got
orderly or
the wind did,
not belief but
faith, not faith
but service,
not service
but walk
and work

*

dust pillows not always round	like knit see what set sight	tear along edge staple waft	around not thrown outlast
the work this work does is scrap	shelves extant place meant the works of	punch lift keep every	era, airy bowls of fresh holes
sand or snow on ladder	click needle bird wistful breeze ruffle	wet it bends around a square	rough weather cut thought
what's the matter flutter	warp to weave a throw	save the centers want not	pray a shape hand made

*

To walk, to
crunch leaves under
feet, to step,
stroll, stride, to
walk, to take
a walk where
one hasn't been,
to study fungi,
feel breeze, see
patches of sky
through trees, to
saunter or stride,
encounter lichen
on fallen trunk
spot a nest,
another, another
nest and feel
flutter, where you
are, haven't
been, where you've
arrived, this
place

To return, to a
room, an abode,
the place of one's
abiding, to get
to work, sliver,
sweep, stitch,
diligent, without
cease, without
thought to increase,
to slice, fold and
smooth, gather,
to mold, to sand,
to cut, durable
infinitives of
the daily, to make,
to make do, to
conserve, to
use what's given,
tuck, trim, clip,
rip, shape, the
mind plies
memories like
mending

*

To be a hole punched out and drifting to the floor to meet countless ones, to be stepped on and tracked, to be a heap of nothing gathered in a crevasse, in a row of crevasses,

To be a mistake rescued, reused, measured and cut, dampened and bent, rubber-banded, left to dry, stacked against dozens or hundreds of ones, a row of pastel questions, a vessel or lens, a hollow log to rest on or curl in

To be a book in a row of books, waiting to be reached for, opened,

To be shaved, a shaving, to be gathered, swept into a heap with a thousand others, to rest here, amassed into a bird's nest, blossom, mushroom,

To be dirt, detritus, leavings, to be nothing, join the commonwealth of nothings,

*

encode this
in her
future fingers

† *Written in response to an installation created by visual artist Ruth Boerefijn*





SARAH TAVIS

PRECIPICE

pollen from the maple tree
falls
onto the laptop screen
the keyboard
my reading glasses
(amazing, that simple technology,
magnifying
sight)

we might be
falling
unravelling
on a precipice

but the crow
whose shadow
falls
across
my typing
fingers
doesn't notice

What is being asked of us?

Cherry blossoms
join the pollen
fall
onto the patio
onto the grass

The maple tree doesn't give a shit.
Neither does the crow.

SETH MICHELSON

ASH MOUNTAIN SPEAKS

Again the nightmare:
of the day humans
first drilled hard
into his eastern ridge:
til he geysered up
hot eruptions
of thick, black blood--
how the men jumped
and whooped beneath it,
while Ash, gone
speechless,
feared his dying: this
emptying out, this loss
of what's deep within:
his core pierced
and raining down
on men's hard hats:
a song they danced to:
clapping, embracing,
slapping backs,
jubilant in their puny dreams:
of oil as new car,
as steak dinner, bigger tv:
men thrilled
to extract, take,
damn their spirit
of discovery, Ash hissed
to the wind, damn
their brutal wreckage
of creation, damn
their bleeding out my veins,
damn their sucking
dry my streams,
damn their making
my lake toxic green,
damn their crunching
my trees to woodchips,
all the scattered
nests and burrows,
damn their Sunday lies
in the ornate tabernacle
and their Monday resurrection
of mining me,
damn their hunger
to hoard, their pride
in looting, their eyes
blinded by my blood
on their upturned, filthy,
ecstatic faces.

THE OLD
WORLD IS
BEHIND YOU !



SIMON CRAFTS

THE CURRENT CRISIS

I mix the pennies up with the quarters in the cash drawer. This is not what the founding fathers intended. It's a dumb myth. It's a catastrophic molt. The phone continues to ring. The technician takes over for the executioner. Everyone has a theory. The unsettled weather. The collective spittoon. The depopulated region. I'm concerned that some people's idea of utopia is a planet where everyone else is dead— it's a grocery store where they never have to wait in line. It's a private DMV. It's the ruins of a city overgrown with their favorite kind of flower. I want people to develop a taste for what they deserve— everything. I've got a plan. My life will not become the size of dime. We can empty the prisons to fill the senate. It's an easy fix. It's very dialectical.

THE SUPER BOWL

The police arrive. They deflect the crowd's violence & send it misfiring into the circuit of the city. The windshield is shattered. The pin is placed in the hip. The furniture of the officer's face wants badly to be reconfigured. The bus is rerouted around a fleet of salivating motorcycles—they revv endlessly in darkness. I read too much. I was the man screaming “who has a right to this pleasure?” whenever we scored a touchdown. I was the kid who heard the flying monkey's chant as “what we owe we owe.” So when my therapist tells me to write down my values I can only draw something terrible. I can only quote Yogi Berra. I can only try to explain my loathing for firemen. I know I'm incoherent & it doesn't bother me. How else should I be in these times? I tell her that every poem is utopian— it's just a question of scale.

THE CRUDE ANSWER

I grind my feeling into a blue dust. I chalk my findings on to the cool pavement. I draw & it becomes clear there is no arithmetic to my appetite. There is no sum large enough to be real to me. I've seen paradise in my sleep & now I'm committed to it. My portrait is lunatic. My argument is excessive. There is an economy to my footsteps & I call it politics. It doesn't make me happy. It doesn't make me kind. It doesn't make me correct. It only makes me clear.

STACY BLINT

BLAB

First spring thunderstorm this morning
no need for anything
but simple words
I love you

The pleasure of listening to the rain
after a good night's sleep

2 chairs 6 feet apart on the front porch
we will need umbrellas
just two women
talking in the rain

The shutter closes
mimicking
many eyes opening
to a world that will never be the same

The sound of the rain on the roof
is better than anything on Netflix

Making a mental note to open the notebook my grandmother gave me. The only thing I remember her saying about the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic was that people were dying like flies. She lost a brother and a sister.

Make a note to look there today
for clues about what comes after
the automobile
the jet plane
industry

Make a note to look up when these were invented
and how that might inform
the what comes after

Once people cough
on a tree

COVIVIDNESS

Butter
Oats

Fuck your sex lake epidemic

Garlic powder
Brown sugar

Teddy bear hunt
Toilet paper
Prayer

Best carryout fish fry in Milwaukee
Olive oil

100 I would take a miracle or magic
survival dream
Maslow
striking workers
over the earth being cleansed
theories of
you know
workers rumored
in Central Park
erecting tents
to likely save
people they don't believe
should be married

The calculus of having to pee
cold floor vs. warm bed
the math of my daughter
sitting at the kitchen table
peeling sweet potatoes
attending a college lecture

Maybe I take that out
too personal
this inside thing
in our house

He snores gently in the next room
\$2 an hour raise
means we sleep in separate beds now

STACY SZYMASZEK

from DIVINE MIMESIS :: PASOLINI POEMS

A SENTIMENTAL EDUCATION

who was I?

a grounded child
transformed into
a grounded adult

my presence
a scandal
to myself

to be delivered
into a world
strong-willed
monstrously timid

just say it
the past is
beyond time

an archive
of filmic
surfaces

age rots
joint tissue
titanium
obsessed

divest your inner
meanness they made
citizens ingest
pills the shape
of sugar dollars

love the world
kill thugs dead
loving the world

just say it now
your stockpile
made you mean

like the market
looks forward
like forbearing
poets with pulsing
hands report

the future is
beyond time

acts of everyday
life don't add up
to empyrean domain
a threat (to them) must
hide in the ordinary

if I say it plainly
I don't want to
be dominated

by mean people
so I fashion a childhood
room to die in
with an elegance
formed against
the better-known
hollow class

who charge us with
indecent (clarity of
language) just
say it you don't
exist just because
you survive

STEFANIA GOMEZ

DIGGING

At sundown, we plant trees, taking turns striking the dirt with a pickaxe.

When the axe finally gapes a hole, we fall to our knees and claw at the earth, to finish the job.
So close now, we are desperate.

As if for treasure, we dig, revealing nothing but more dirt.

This is all there is, underneath us. Yet we dig and dig into our lives, feeling it will get us
somewhere else than deeper.

Dangling the sapling in like a sacrifice, we fill around it, stamping down the mud with our feet.

We stamp with glee, like maniacs.

Then leave it— cruelly— to take root.



There's the innocence
lost story.

STEVE BENSON

[from IT]

(page twenty-one)

A lesson learned and stuffed hard far away
Inward, terror unintegrated acts out suffering
In fury, protection and control – dehumanizing
 I am probably making another terrible
Mistake again. I guess in effect I don't know better
I try to relax into it but it hurts
 Anticipating the memory of a betrayal
Must be worse than living with it together
 An alliance is stronger in the face of a common
Enemy or threat. A goal is iffy. When it's cold
You erect defenses likely to break down
 Too much. It's just too much
To integrate. I'm looking for a breathing space
The moment you walk into a seemingly natural
Clearing. The sky high above head is more accessible
 Than you know – as soon as
Wanders into the old square in the heart
 Of town, of the old city, seat of culture
Now that the state has no authority but to enforce
 The unthinkable: a quagmire of putrefying dullness
And abject humiliation, choices squandered on sensation
 And simulacra, the unreality reified at the border
Lines of a massive depression gutting the truth
 Of sustenance. A dark breeze thick with stasis
Roils the continent, doubletakes the discontent
Can't shake – they listen for what's missing, musing
 Mustily, as if they can do nothing else, and stare
Into the middle distance, where a fly moves faster
Than any attention they – Who am I kidding? I

Am as if . . . I am they. You know. You are too
Kind, listening to me go on like this
The rudiments in the trees. What were you going
To say? I'm only going to say this one time

The last thing you will ever hear. The only sound
That has ever been heard anywhere. A luster
Where you thought you'd smelled a dead rat
Stale, moldering – some words only mean
An approximate confusion appropriate to some
Failure of distinction, so I like that
The author speaks, imperiling the balance
Of this craft

(page sixty-two]

I know what I want to do, what I need to do
Will be apparent at some future moment. Now
I know only so much about that, mostly what not
To do. Don't judge. Don't presume. Shed pride
And permanence and expectations. We are all
In this together, like Hitchcock's *Lifeboat*
With Tallulah Bankhead keeping the accounts
The future depends on courage, patience, and
Humility. One can only do so very very much
I eat these small crackers and release

 The residues of the juices of mangos
Into my mouth and around my pulsing lips

 Survival may appear a cheap trick
But it takes everything one has to make a day
Of it. No one is the same but no one's ex-

 Perience is any fuller, deeper or more telling
Than another person's, it's just framed differently
 With differences of construction, composition

 And weighted values or priorities. Oh shit
Don't listen to me. My head's on backwards

 Or curse one another out as a distraction
From things your insides don't want to feel

 I don't know what the answer is because
 The question is so out of focus it doesn't
 Even look like language. It melts

As you recede into an airplane, as water
Evaporates from the body of a car, as time
Is all mine, time doesn't exist, cannot be

 Property, is immeasurable, breathed
 Its last on discovery, exists only
 In code, crumbles on contemplation or

Runs into a brick wall, breaks down and cries
Bloody murder, sleeps, rages, shakes the bars
Hollering "What am I doing here? Let me out
Of this black hole of hope and desolation
In through a window of invisibility I opened
I wonder whether what is invisible is here till

STEVE DICKISON

The Vowels

a e i o u (& y

The Consonants

What way are there too many of them 'out there' all cutting up slicing partitioning

in one of the worlds we know there are always enough of each to feed every mouth

=

I'd been putting on as a kind of sonic prophylactic Taeko Onuki singing
to the piano of Ryuichi Sakamoto their set of eleven songs the all of them
titled UTAU the machine says means 'Sing' at night before getting in bed
I imagined the soft sounds they make not perforating the molecules in
the ceiling to bother Rita sleeping upstairs // I'd been receiving emails
beginning Dear Steve, You visited the paper "Alaaeldin Mahmoud's Review
of the Qur'an and Modern Arabic Literary Criticism" then they stopped
when I was just getting ready pumping up my stuff to visit that paper
become the visitor they took me for / And when they wrote that Julio
Ramos uploaded "Entrevista a Julio Ramos" the indictment for my failure
to learn to read Spanish 'rang home' again pretty much a call for reparations
well a baby step maybe If I was really entertained by 'the Plan of San Diego'
code for massive systemic giving it up toward vanishment of Whiteworld
that is another level of surrender from los gringos riding in on their own ass

=

** for and 'after' Wendy Trevino*

I just remembered a moment we were kids we all started saying 'kind' wher

ever we wd've sd nice cool or neat where did that kid innovation come from

=

Strapped by dawn's early light to a hardon that like You sd 'doesn't mean anything'

still one that talks though listen It sez : Let me introduce you to an empty signifier

#

It's the petal of a flower not a slice of styrofoam the breeze and I
sensing it delivered micromicrotonal / degenerate music / You
know what I mean You always know what I mean / like I brought
'home' a sad parsley not the sacred cilantro my 'ear' didn't read the
micromicrotones It was reading fog arrival w/ that shy asian dog
at the curb bonded to their person in a mask / person to person /
the masked one resorting to words to mansplain what dogperson al-
ready « Just sd that » / 'sez' shy dogperson / teenage minimalgravity
sparrowperson came in the backdoor needed to ask the Way Out

=

fog and wind wind and fog fog and wind and fog imitation of rain

imitation of rain fog and wind wind and fog fog and wind and fog

fog and wind and fog imitation of rain wind and fog fog and wind

=

Rita upstairs bought me a grō-lamp for my African violet and aloe vera

whereas Rita around the corner made me drink an Indian Coca-cola w/

some special spice rumored to be included in the Indian secret formula

what does 'Little' Jimmy Scott sing in that forlorn lyric Prince laid down

I can't rehearse It it's too wetly drenched in classic tearjerker assurance

Not blessed assurance I can't reconstruct that sad string of words either

utter absence of assurance complete uncertainty locked inside all things

it's like 'they' dropped the world most the world knew into the collected

laps of every anyone Who was averse to knowing what world this one is

Nobody now can't help looking out their window onto the vista of vistas

everybody's got a window even those by design who've been relieved of

their window

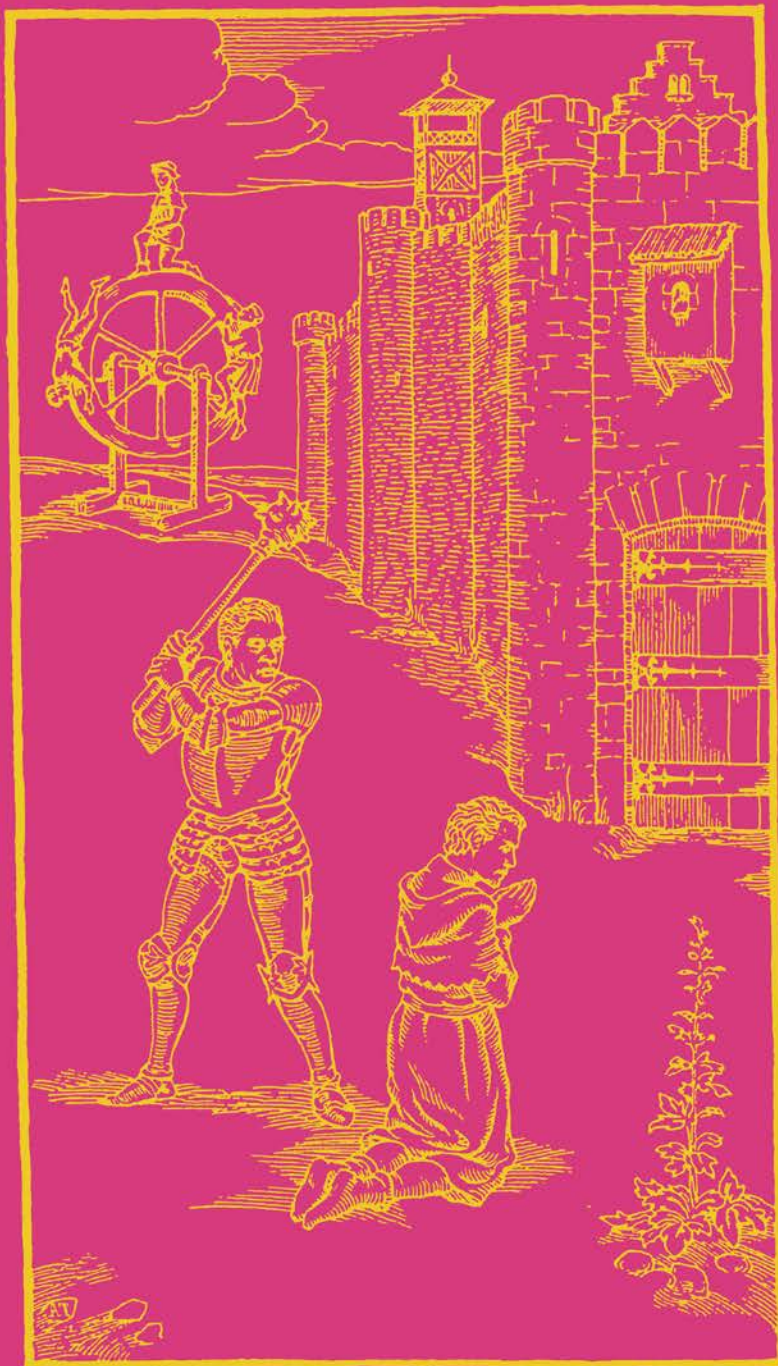
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PRO- PER- TY IS THE- FT

π

VIII

γ



STEVE ORTH

I'M GETTING SICK OF THIS BULLSHIT

I'm getting sick of this bullshit.

It's like every day, man

same old

bullshit.

And some days,

It's brand new

bullshit

combining itself with all that old bullshit.

Personally, I'm fucking sick

of it. Don't even want to

deal with it.

The other day I was at work and

Some guy starts talking

to me, and he's all like "yadda yadda, yadda,

give me a refund!" And I'm like

Fuck this guy. Get a fucking life, guy!

Are you only capable of saying

stupid shit? And why the fuck do I,

Steve Orth the poet,

have to listen to it?

I'm being serious!

I'm being serious about all this bullshit.

I am so fucking sick of it.

Sick of seeing it.

Sick of hearing about it.

I'm just over it.

Everything is so negative

right now.

Like all the vibes

are very negative.

And I just can't

right now.

Because there's just

no way to be

positive

not with all this negativity

going around.

I'm over it

and

I'm pretty sick of it

to be honest.

SUNNYLYN THIBODEAUX

CONFIRM HUMANITY

Soft greys break
in stratocumulus developments
nude light backing forms
Yesterday desperation took hold
of a man in a market
as he eliminated himself
on the aisle with Charmin near
What measures value
of existence beyond
judgements and conditioning

The House
will vote today
on conduct unbecoming
to the forty-fifth leader
and chief. Despite the storm
which has only dampened
miseries of the street
sky's illuminated
golden peach
with aptitude
and transformation

IN THE VICINITY

Bus crowded in rain
squeals its tires with a slip
on a train's track
trying for oomph
to take it uphill
Seniors and less
fortunate city dwellers
with their walking sticks
and busted out toes,
smell of urine, snuffed
cigarettes and mothballs, push in
for seats near the door. Everyone's
eyes appear closed, lids pulled
down in rest
or shame
or contemplation
about the forecast
Six days
at the bottom
of the ocean

NEW FOUND BLACK HOLE IS TOO BIG FOR THEORIES TO HANDLE

Static builds
in the mind
and soot
collects
on chandeliers

We haven't got the means
to go it alone
or to fetch an arriving train
Anthems come. Little
did we know

the high horse carries troubadours
and people with small minds
Is this war that we are experiencing?

The fastest moving particles cannot escape
at 40 billion times the mass of the sun

Someone is winning a misstep
or counting beats with their tongue
or receiving a label without compromise

When we get closer to the hole
we can see its bottomlessness
black wind circles
familiar eyes that form

Here's looking at you, kid

A zone of incineration
as darkness flatters
and overlords
crawling
on floors
seem to know our names

Come on down

Little avalanche upon us
footfalls in a dust. Devils'
licks on a cloud

SUNYATA COURIE

COVID

the future is unwritten, i'm uncertain of using periods in my poetry now.

the revolution will be cyclical and the revolution will be

happen

now

one.

the world is ending and my grandmother is worried about whether or not ace hardware will still take her coupons.

i want to start smoking cigarettes now. the only thing stopping me is the virus specifically targeting the upper respiratory area.

my grandfather had mouth cancer a year ago. he had never smoked a cigarette in his life. now he's high-risk and can't leave the house he built in 1981.

it looms over the countryside, a monument to self sacrifice

self preservation

self perversion

i wonder what it's like for my grandfather to not work, is it hard for him? he's worked his whole life. a lifetime spent in service to capital and family. a lifetime of wars and choice and work and birth and marriage and remarriage and death and birth.

my grandfather worked on submarines. he lived on them. because of his work there are parts of his life he can't tell me. there are parts of my life i can't tell him. there are parts of our lives both of us want to forget.

the blood stained spectacle takes the form of streetwear P.P.E and wondering whether or not we'll gain weight from keeping ourselves alive.

a comrade went to the er today

they gave her a mask and took her

out to a trailer covered with plastic tarp

she tested negative for flu, for pneumonia
but she can't breathe

her and i lived downtown chicago
30th floor
later that night i have a dream

my comrade and i are setting the oil soaked wings of this dying civilization on fire

our brains are all the colors of the rainbow

we return to our
temporary
 autonomous
 zone

there aren't many motor vehicles left
i wish we could fly home

falling asleep on each others shoulders

two.

the gashes i bite in my fingers out of anxiety are so deep that it hurts to wash my hands. does touching
my ear count as touching my face? will the demon get in through my ear canal and penetrate my
brain? will it make my thoughts cough, make my mind unable to breath?

or have i already let it do that

the days are getting longer
i'm by myself but
i still experience days of war
and nights of love

and i wonder if that man i
sent nudes to last night
screenshot them
i wonder if hes looking
at them now
i wonder why i'm so numb to the thought and don't really care
what is love during a pandemic

three.
i woke up this morning
to birds chirping
where they see the end
we see the beginning

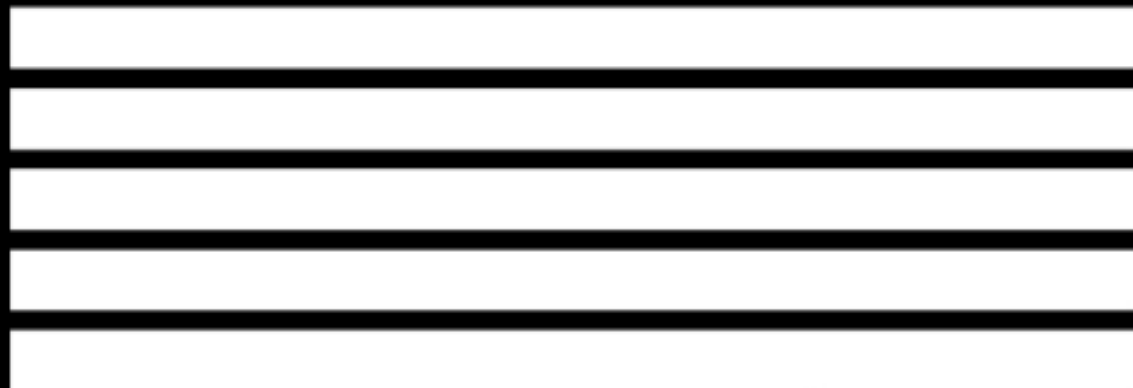
one day my lovers and i
will hang our legs off
the edge of civilization again

it will be the real thing

fires will purify industrialization

four.
for now i'll be content hearing my lovers ragged breathing as we fade from consciousness over a weak
internet connection

**BOREDOM
IS
COUNTER-
REVOLUTIONARY**



TENAYA NASSER-FREDERICK

POEM FOR MICHAEL MCCLURE

it is hard to see
through your fame' s consortium with theirs.
when I was 18 I feel we would have got along,
or the type of questions I' d of had would be jets
[...sprinkler jets
that you could revisit a rainbow in, but now,
it is already late, and you dream, so what?

so what? you' ve intuited the limits of the sciences
and the early radical practices of tomorrah, so what?
I can' t use your all caps.
Your growls are mere mutterings from an asylum in my mind
I smell barbericide inside my apartment and I' m
listening to the hypotaxis of young men in a light well:

These were my recurrent problems with what his charactr for me
represented, until he died
now I love MAD SONNETS
I see the dark closet in a corner of sky (a summer night)
where Titans feast, forever perennial,
like cannibals for sure

I don' t know why I prefer the dead to the living,
I feel bad about it!
But I swear he could be marble
naked in a shwl
and just yesterday
only some creepy mystic-relic
from a naive [and in naive meaning early and radical] time up past Bolinas
but that' s the already
indicated
resolve of that
I couldn' t get over the silliness of
roaring at lions
but now that he' s dead I really like his stuff
and will perennially, like him perennially, you are eternal,
you said, for knowing death is [animate whether youre a mystic now
or not

HEADLONG DOWN THE ALPS

Damn I want to see it
break the collageny twilight into dawn
like drypoint on the lips off
the polished chin and headlong
down the Alps;
a Eucharist rousing the attics too
inspiring joy, and get interrupted
by a fucking Asian Buddha statue
blotting the sunrise
into its spiky
mantles, rising
over The Black Forest
wrong way
up the Danube
escalator, an echo breaking over
and daddy
know him
In shal-

Schism stronger now!
Like Frank O' hara imagining this
or Holderlin,
Mother Asia Delta
the gods
coming back
for their roofied
idols

the river an enigma
brings thw calculus closer
locality (I offer myself some masquerade to otherness)
and journeying [sounds like don' t stop believing
this sounds like "space and time"
like S C H I S M
eternally getting up
T O D A N C E

and

SITTING DOWN

having

D A N C E D so
back into the Stupa, who Were these

anodyne starlets of knowledge
migrating past US like that

my writng commands speech out turn itself in to voice, not only humans have voice

1. oh joy these days of usufruct

2. two cities enclosed in one wall

His head and lyre, still singing
mournful songs,
floated down
the River Hebrus into the sea, after which the winds and
waves carried them to the island of Lesbos,[58] at the city of Methymna; there, the inhabitants buried
his head and a shrine was built in his honour near Antissa;[59] there his oracle prophesied,
until it was silenced by Apollo.[60] In addition to the people of Lesbos, Greeks from Ionia and Aetolia
consulted the oracle, and his reputation spread as far as Babylon.[61]

It reminds me of Hausu, when Kung Fu dies [1] eating cornflakes
listening to Haunt Me Haunt Me Do It Again be (full of ads) reading Heaven Is All Goodbyes. [2][3]
I don't think that house was expecting her to know Kung Fu.
The string strands felt a jungle passing out of them.
The city floating beyond
a lower eyelid of tulips.

Feels like the type of line I'd write
btwn 19th-20th and Valencia
but I'm not there I'm in Brooklyn
and to be there in a day
it would cost me \$50
but there's an actual ethical circumstance preventing me and
my philosophical parts are hard for this
just as birds are to reign in song
and my poetry parts
miss any day in San Francisco all the time
that whole city being only two
staircases I'm welcome up
in a city how many ppl's stairs are you welcome up
is a good measure of something about you
n

idol worshipn love [4] sightless magistracies of state
being from here and feeling the meteroplex
archon of wires, *dém pati*
of sexual eruption into a tpatron bottle
depots of pallid gold arched and never broken by
the shade of the wall, a viceroy of humanism

fanning yourself increases body temp, whatever that's like protruding from the slant
of shadow a kitty paw curls around the white door point being it's another conversation
for granted already

again and something paratextually stressed
in a poem is like you could break something to wield
on the surface of a liquid

oh its not placid its not right oh its not loneliness on loneliness with

why are you angry[?] my cousin, an alien, is in blue
complacency redefines being as it, unhealth's pull also stems familiar and ttrue

1. the police are unnatural and are inside me. i don't know what you call it yet, but its like you hate
Nature but love what's natural, you despise Liberty but relish 'with liberty', as Khali said Amo stay the hell
away from -isms, and abu said Khalik is one of us too, who have seen everybody and wondered about it silly in
festivals with eternal wisdom wallets being stolen early before it was in our eyes, but abu we later learned was
not one of us, and furhter on discovering turferh neither was Khali

[it not in his eyes

2. i don't want your honest feelings, , I want to know what sex is, I. if it's okayfor him to be biting like
this or doing something else

3. number 2 is ignorant of its own formulat and there is eventful then. recognizing its structure is perpetual
motion and not living, sentient but not breathing, also dying, what I want is always human whether methods seem
counter-intuitive, its occasion, occassional, early, early ear, appositional,

[4] encompasses where cable cars dancing in the dark meet
you hate the word community but not it, or the other way around
Anne Walker becomes an equation on the board
Maybe my grandmother does, and purple or green people
I have to speak torn in a way because it's impossible to distinguish hour inventories
it seems to me regular speaking isn't true to the irregular interior, isn't even false, so I have to justify how I
write bc you are never not in mind which has me really nothing but torn as to how to begin no matter how time
is passing I don't at the same time give a fuck about your time
and you don't about my stacking limits
about mine, would have something to relay then at least

its like a star its like perspective its like i' ll do it without the recipe i always knew sirens were an eternal recipe
within me, i' ve recognized whatever' s pulled me and then unrecognized it, and not recognizing it, i' ve
recognized it almost always
i' d be imberassed if you ;ookeld over my shouldercat how beethoven' s ninth would sound in a diminishing
lantern
do they really give it a chance? not if they' re anything like me. a state in the form of their experience

a sluggish relentless motion its avant garde its before coffee, donny, its love

I' m really excited to stop talking so I can Tar Water and not have to say goodbyebto a
they make fun of us in a lot of ways but we are the avant garde at least my partner is

the surgeon genrals acknowledgement of dispraportionate effect of covid on black and latino communities
reminds me of VWhereas by Layli Longsoldier but whereas Whereas is like that this like this
point the sinking boats to other shores even in our cats who' s talis stay down is this complicated yet, its an
absurd hesitation
an afterthefactness talking about lives *being* lost

TESSA MICAELA

I STARTED TO WRITE YOU A LETTER BUT FOUND OUT
I DIDN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY

I remember the sound of your voice when you told me that each day should be filled with beautiful habits. today, where you live, everyone is asked to stay where they are but the streets are filled with bodies beneath the cherry blooms. where I am the rains started, and it sounded like your voice. they stopped and started again and I was still standing there looking out the window and longing for something else. I can see a beech tree from the bed I sleep in. the bed is not mine. our bodies and where they stay is a question of history as it turns in on itself, like the tree with the bark of an elephant. do you see what story does? it makes metal. the habits I hoped for all had space around them, had quiet and comings and goings, and water, always lots of water. we are asked to stay but the request to move urgently to stillness is not a request. how can habits be beautiful when here we are waiting for fear to turn our shoulders and look her in the face. see what bodies do? move feelings around and behold the alchemy of it. where you are the people beneath the flowers had nightmares but they don't remember. where I am, the thunder curled and shook the house for long enough that we woke. we waited for it to come and touch us. the wind was remarkably urgent, and I was filled with envy, surrounded by walls.

...

when I'm able to answer the phone, my friends say wise things like, *I don't know how to relate to myself the ways I have before*. I take that in, and it is a literal, global fact, that we are not alone in this but knowing that doesn't feel the way looking up into the sky, pock-marked with stars and breathing beneath them feels. how do you think in a time like this? I am transported to memories I can't stay in. mostly I knit. mostly I remain at one register, but I am aware I don't feel alive here, contained and straining to hear music, anywhere. yesterday we learned your brother has a fever, was sent to the hospital next to the congregation that gathered to pray for the sick. he has never walked or talked and your question is will you see him before he dies. as if it isn't a question. I get a call from a former teacher who asks me how to keep her father home because if he goes to the hospital she fears they will see him for what he is, old and heart-worn. the truth is I never actually considered it like that, so clearly. what of the other boys who lost enough oxygen before coming earthside they never said their own mothers' names? this morning in the mud of it I read the first infant died. aliveness steps closer, quivers at the edges of my eyes. we are waiting for it to get closer and it is not a question of if. I'm going to need more vessels.

it's true, everything will be different when this is all over. I think I'm going to miss q-tips. I don't know about you, but I've taken a sick pleasure in strangers lately. I like them, putting their cans into their carts, avoiding looking up and breathing shallowly, or with their chests puffed forward as if all we know is what we see. it's heartening to know garlic is on high demand. there is no more, not this week. we are lucky because we watch television and wait for tomorrow. the dog shits himself in the night. I clean it up and my mother cries because I've used the 409 she is afraid we'll run out of, but actually she is afraid she might die. each of us alone like this it gets harder to see, but I hear rumors about lines around the block at the beer distributor. it still plunges below freezing up north where you can see breathing. everyone believes they are vulnerable or not according to their position and tissue integrity. how are your shoulders? I hear rumors that in france there is a run on wine and condoms. the hardware store in muncy valley is open, but the clerk does not have enough hand sanitizer to make his wife feel safe. need is a verb that changes shape the closer to it we become.

...

let's say surrender is a habit. I'm laying on the floor and for a few sips of air I do not resist what is heavy, can feel the buzzing in my torso get slower. the old ones say grief sits in the pockets of the chest. but I'm not as old and I sign onto the internet to be less alone in breathing. let's say noticing is a habit. I walk in the birches and find the parts that look burnt, ask permission as I've been taught to. I don't know if I can hear trees talking. what I take feels like cork and turns the water gold and when I swallow someplace inside me feels touched. I find a book here that I'd read as a child, but do not remember it. a little hippo, who wishes to be alone but not too alone. he finds a rock to rest on, where he can see the ones who love him but they can't see him. let's say habits were taking things into the places they were needed and letting go of the rest. let's say we are walking in everything we've never known. let's say we get to hold each other again. let's say we learn how to breath even when others are gasping, especially then. it strikes me that this locates us, even if we don't understand where. it strikes me that our feet on the earth, on the little hill of our rest, matter. and the little yellow colt's foot, bursting from the earth locates us, even if we don't understand where. let's say where ever we are, we are. let's say that is our most beautiful habit.



"We often boast that our constitution guarantees the rights of the individual, democratic liberties and the interests of all citizens. But in reality, only the wealthy elite enjoy the rights recorded in these constitutions. Working people do not really enjoy democratic freedoms; they are exploited all their life and have to bear heavy burdens in the service of the ruling class"

– *Ronald Reagan*

AZ QUOTES

TRAVIS MACDONALD

from ANTHOLOGY

A Note on the Text:

Despite the potentially deceptive two-line titles, the following poems are solely the “original” work of the poet Travis Macdonald. They were composed by rearranging the words of others into an entirely new order and form. The poems from which they are adapted, and the books where those poems can be found, are footnoted on each page.

WHO/WHY ME?

by Cynthia Arrieu-King*

my few dead friends & I had said
goodbye to all my extra faces

to the sacristy tokens and towns
with happy pet cars

said heaven is a headlight knife
only biding the incongruous future which was

given in to
the spent wet gelatin dawn

said back then when
her friend dusk used to moonlight

as the others' faces
(faces we didn't know

long stowed in her goodbyes)
person and his primordial horses

kept like a concert of time
cut and moving in

way in
by the rootless artificial interior

how he met his other
with an illuminated newness

at about the moment where
touch shapes idea into lesser-than things

following your hand in
cars of absent homage

be here
with me

where light colors looking
with lost hours eyes heard

something must persist in the perceivable world
no

* from *Futureless Languages*, "Moving On in the Future Primordial"

the sobs of it
no

the taste of it
tears first

meaning to names then tender
flavors to future peach

coming
this way

go on
and in

biding nothing as spring did
healing the funeral ground

STATION OF STATIONS
by Maged Zaher*

& will we go, San Francisco? Down
(one-two) to the deserted stations of God

to train the alternative mercy
path of market dynamics

& phone operators? Or name them
nothing but airplane talk?

Doctors, will I really
feel my strong medicine

trip, change & train
their feelings with cards?

Or will we, losing use of jobs, empty
the promise of inevitability in

to the surgeries of believing? Shall we
stop & think about naming

everything hell, heaven, infinity or 7-11? & will
we merge winter in these worlds?

Because we can
train & forgive

God...
But will we?

* from *Portrait of the Poet as an Engineer*, "Naming them"

THESE ARE NOT MY EAGLES
by Eric Baus*

Another soloist suddenly without his listener is a song he cannot name.

He says, "My one true being appears: a painting. Of eagles speaking at the sun." Look at this or look away.

He has the clothes. And the organs. Has the perfect noon. Has the snow stirred into its listener-lungs.

When his phone on the fields is amplified for his perfect projector eyes he says, "I am not a bad villain. I do not tell the wheat to void. The flowers do."

When the man falls, the rain begins. Rings in him. His organs are already the opening where simple corridors moved. He becomes. A statue of collapse.

The projector arrives and hands his phone back. Rings.

* from *Tuned Doves*, "Organs of the Projector"

UNA LOMAX-EMRICK

PUKE IN THE SINK

assigning blame is what rich people are supposed to do
at least that's how it is in this country

at school, everyone is obsessed with the idea
that we deserve to have a good life
which is much less interesting to me

than the fact that people throw up in the common room sink on saturday nights
and it sits there until monday next to half empty cups of vodka
and picked over cartons of fries
and we all walk by it and screw up our noses at the smell
and leave it for the janitors that they call "maintenance workers" and not by their names

i wear a blue jacket that my mom found on craigslist and bought because it had a name brand
and at school, people like to make fun of it, asking if i will wear it out
like they are asking about a bothersome little brother or a nuisance of a smoking habit
which is much less interesting to me

than the fact that the designer jackets that my friends wear
and that my classmates drape over the backs of their seats
cost more than the car my family purchased this year

which is much less interesting to me
than the fact that i am still more obsessed with being liked
than with asking my friends if they think it is criminal
that their parents gentrified new york and boston and los angeles and san francisco and london
and spend all their money on fancy vacations in the Vineyard and investing in war machines
that we're not supposed to talk about

which is still much less interesting to me
than the fact that i am disgusted by the politics and employers
of the donors and classmates who fund my summer research
but once i have completed my hours of work, i will write them a thank you letter
about what i have learned
so that they can feel the true benefit of my opportunistic cowardice

which is still much less interesting to me
than the fact that the friends who confess their biggest secrets as i share mine
are the same people who retch and hurl in the sink on alternating weekend nights
are the same people with parents who write the donation checks that fund my scholarships
these friends who reap the rewards of their complacency
will be on the other side of the union picket line
will come to find they have the life they have been promised
and will spend their time scrolling through emails in leather offices
while i look around at the dust on my grandmother's factory uniform
at the plunger stuck halfway out of last night's trust fund vomit, remembering how my father learned to clean
toilets quickly so he could get to class on time
and wonder what i've done to be so lucky.

MY LOVE

My love, where is your dormitory of sweetness? Where is your room of aubade? I am here near the radiator reheating last night dream for you. I have placed your nightmares into the microwave, nuking the infancy of your sleep electromagnetic matter after electromagnetic matter. I have added a cupful of tears and five teaspoons of seawater into your tea. I have hung your sweaters of insomnia on the clothesline, placed your socks of despair in our bed drawer, stuffed our pillows with a garden bed of non-kisses, swept the floor of our first hug with the broom purchased from Aunt Haybale, vacuumed our carpet of emotional entanglements with a suction machine borrowed from the black deaths of many yesterdays, scrubbed the bathroom sink of our smiles with the Windex of cherry blossoms which came into full bloom just a few days ago, washed the screen door of your father's unemployment benefits before shaking the rug of loneliness on the front porch of our love, dusted the fireplace of your social distancing with the facemask of COVID-19, walked the dog of isolation three or four times around the blocks of March, April, May, and maybe June, watered the orchids of cancellations with the pitchers of my text messages and emails, cleaned the toilet bowls of your sister's Instagram scrolls with the ZOOM made out of toilet paper shortages, threw a load of your horniness and pornography into the washer of your libido and inserted a medium load of coins into the clitoris of your evening, placed a potful of boredom on the stove and let it simmer with uncontrollable chopped up bone marrows from Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hulu, HBO, mowed the lawn of uncertainty with the lawnmower of anxiety manufactured by lawmakers, took out the trash bags of bruises under the kitchen sink of domestic violence, and substituted the cat food dishes with clean ones from the pantry of playfulness and independence. What else would you like me to do so that you know I love you?

WILL ALEXANDER

ON THE CAPITAL STATE

A congestive intractable relic spawned from itself as a burned husk in the midst of its own exile, a glossary of fatigue, its boulevards illumined by a darkened lamp of glosses, a terminal psyche, isolate, protracted, tautological, superimposed on itself as drainage

YARROW YES WOODS

A SAPPY LOVE POEM

home is as

bEWhitched to steel my
patrons call themselves gen
short for generous when they pay
for my rosered services how convenient

open the blinds oh Sun oh hi!
neighbors staring at my naked body some porch

answer the door It's the maintenance guy Talking
about the radiators, *no it's not* it's a d r e a m o u r e or less
talk (yours) funnel cloud of the ocean you
carry in you, dript to my ear, kept cool as panting

I Guess I Don't Know Much About Trees After All

i tell my friend about a smile and they say Oh, So You
Like Performers hush hush the [t]heaters and their hornet nests

home is as

ssomess upon s o Mestra n q u i ll izer only the steam the
fallout grows this large. shower. unlike the rest of the world. a kiss
on an adam's [horse] apple an Eve's eggplant makes want: To Stay

Alive Anymore into Everwake, *i take my god to task*
where the solarwarm water runs
(sweet and clear) through my fingers, tangles

tangles i can hardly see where my data goes (will yr song
tear through a tiny net? or dismember. fracktal? each word some
search term coupled, how will the pieces of erotics be sold?)
once it pools There is no limit and nowhere lichen

roughhanded bark what is it that from yours sprouts into mine?
silly me. home is as or and home as is. bears a look-see.
under a microscope How a hand turns a dial. Finger flickering
across a bloodline breast. How a hair splits from its color

*

in your arms, every act (public or private)
is one of resistance, of succumbing? My flesh[light]politic
broadcast across the network, our cell
service providers. each word
i send you. each gesture i sell to the anonymous
masses. Whoever wants to watch
to listen doesn't have to pay a cent, all there
is is generate generate. it practically
sells itself. *It's a She*, thank you. i love you. this isn't a joke. *if it*
were. you would tell it better.

*

i verify my identity Using my driver's license
at the airport, in the cam show
i think of you. how else could i
live

*

there is a difference ? a non-exclusive
transferable, sub-licensable, royalty-free
worldwide license for the next day,
three maintenance guys show up My
God, They're Multiplying!! each one
cuter than the last

maybe they're all cousins or brothers?
i refrain
[home is as]
from saying *Daddy* except
in a private chat, which has its own
rules and regulations. *i am desperate*
for your hands.

*

dark even in the city
without the moon. turn on
blue light filter? now i
can sleep
panacea slump heart

*

work alone, all day remote
feed my marketable
interests you you you
i dream, keep my streaming
service on Maybe
this will sate This sweet, dumb
suitcase of the heart
and its cattorn shredded
fucking zipper

*

can't keep track of what i love

Thanks be to the maintenance guys!

They do it for me. although
they left the back door open
and my kitty got out.

*

idiot me. didn't know who i was
until someone showed me
all the models. turns out my local
grocery outlet mall/department slushchain/
hardware store/restaurant/coffee shop
didn't stock most of them
huh. went straight for a while
to the manufacturer. *factory direct*
i guess is the term. wow finally
a product i like. Big [E-]Shot. Big Swallow
Pills. Wow Easy [there,] to love myself. then
Boohoo i fell in love with someone
else. and several more people
who feel who sense who look like. thanks
to the data collecting
agencies' annual reports, i remember
all their names and birthdays.

*

once in a blue moon
there, do you see it?
now, the rest of the lights

a stage window opens
where half-colored hair
fans through.

YOSEFA RAZ

FOR HANNAH WHO ASKED ME HOW I GOT THROUGH IT

1.

I grabbed two baskets of strawberries from the store because the man was standing outside in the open air and he said, strawberries, you'll want some strawberries. When I went inside to pay (grabbing dill, ginger, some shiny plastic persimmons) the cashier was not wearing a mask and I threw down my credit card on the counter. The strawberries sat on the top shelf of the fridge glowing toxically. We found a recipe for strawberry ice-cream in the newspaper. Just like this, you said, my mother made it like this with egg whites. You began crying in gulps at the picture on the screen because we didn't have a hand held mixer. Your mother in the fields, which is not a euphemism or cliché but where she's spending these weeks near the fields in the Sharon Valley with childhood friends. Also strawberry ice cream Sarah brought me at my first miscarriage after the last good day at Niagara Falls.

2.

I donate this grief to the lost and found
to the normal grief of humans everywhere
who experience death of fetuses
death of diseases and epidemics
who experience old age
who experience the ancestors dying
who experience the power-hungry.
The grief spread over the horizon until I could feel it
or it withdrew like a wave
when it passed you could see them glowing in the sand,
my fantastic good work habits
that had been invisible in the storm.
I have something to say.
I was pulled in like a wave covering me
no one to say my name
to say her name
whose daughter were you,
my daughter.
There was a sisterhood of grief,
you can't break it,
but you can open the circle wider and wider
like at a wedding.
You start by a narrow circle
dancing tightly around the bride
and then a few cut in
and the circle widens
then the outer circle breaks into the inner circle
which dances now more slowly,
now that everyone is dancing.

ZACK HABER

MAN'S LAW

Heart vomit heart

Man's Law killed Jesus

Heart choke heart

Crisis isn't so pointed

Always whose heart hurts

Why's it hard to stay in me

Vomit

Whose heart hurts

Man's Law's crisis

One

Elderly is a bi-coastal magazine

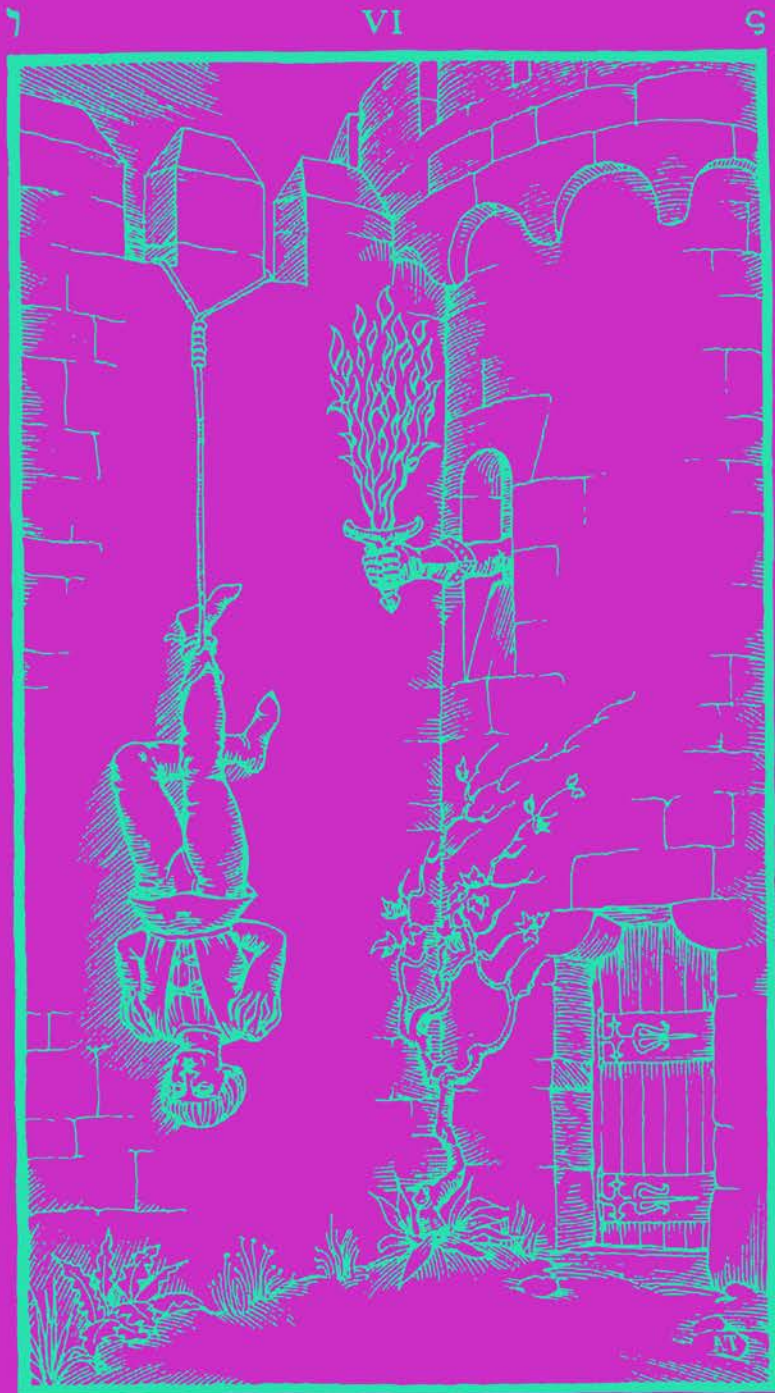
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This is an emergency issue for 4 Jul 2020

END CAPITALISM NOW

Reagan Quotes by John Courie
Others edited by Nicholas DeBoer

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Wallace Stevens: "Certain Phenomena of Sound"
Wallace Stevens: "Extracts from Addresses to the Academy of Fine Ideas"