



Horse Less Review #10

December 2011

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Lily Ladewig

Definitions of Breathing

- 1) Ice has always been more expensive than water the cost is to put your own feet in your hands, preferably palm to sole, to create a circuit of the body. Press the forehead into the floor for comfort. Think of a cloud of moths. A pantry full of it.
- 2) *Please dress in flower print this weekend*, you say. Better to tape a thousand yellow daisies to my skin and pretend it's normal.
- 3) When I photograph you it's more about the blur than the static. Workmen apply the bright copper gutter. The most cloudless lake. The motorboats of morning. A wrench dropping from the roof.
- 4) Something about the braless-ness of the day making it a piece of a bigger whole. And in a pair of dingy Keds no less. There is no difference between me thinking it and writing it, only the proof of. Hooking my feet together and lifting my hips helps too. Other definitions of breathing include to repeatedly and alternately take in and blow out air in order to stay alive. To say something in a soft voice or secretively. To allow a person or animal, for example, a horse, to pause to rest or catch a breath. To blow softly or move gently.
- 5) It was necessary to move closer to the cemetery. We told bad jokes for a living but never at the right moment. No longer afraid of ghosts. They either do not exist or they do and are people. They are just invisible people.
- 6) I'm not listening to you. I'm wearing my listening face. The sky is vague but I am discrete. Certain as a mathematical equation. Each time I say *pull the shoulders back, shine the heart through* I mean it a little less.
- 7) You've been modifying your manipulation of movement and I appreciate that. In the way you appreciate how strange clouds look from above, airplane-style. Over the speakers the flight attendants remind us it doesn't matter if you can't get the footwork as long as you clap or snap at the right time.
- 8) You don't have to drag me back to the city. To the night that is not, but bright. I can recalculate the floors and make this ours. You can buy the hothouse flowers from the corner. I'll check it off the to-do list like that new-haircut feeling. I feel you warming.

Poem for the Pussy Willows

Marriage is nothing like surrender. When I reach for the shotgun it's just my way of saying *hello stranger*. I pretend I'm like the meadowlark. I rip up the garden again. So many acres for so long and I can't tell where they end or my skirt hem begins. My pockets holding onto my hands. My hands too quick. Working these little traps. You in the field at daybreak. Dressing the buck for its purple meat. Me buttoning this blouse. Up to my neck in it. Autumn came and there I was, eating the most tasteless plums, wearing aprons. My chin like an ax. Every day I get a little older. I get haunted in the pussy willows. I've decided to take a delicate turn to the tree line. Pussy willows. Yes. Pussy willows yes please. Come. Somebody needs rescuing.

Carrie Bennett

BEFORE THE VIOLENCE BEGINS

What does the body have to say now?

— — —

— — —

unseen : mind / violence

— — —

To step into a moment the sunflowers are half-bloomed somewhere
fighting occurs I would like to know who is speaking to me there is
no sense to that noise I have lost the exact moment to step into my
body strains as a door strains to shut itself but would you call that
object a mouth is speaking to know fighting are half-bloomed
somewhere bombs a moment exact body you lost away.

— — —

Today the sky explodes.
A red begonia on my balcony.

Everything is framed.

I walk over and cover myself.

— — —

objects :

o instrument of burden : o

plastered bones cages

(Little broken part, the sky is also a bone cage.)

— — —

air : no gate, no without want

— — —

The wind loosens
 the white curtains the worried-hour
in the mind the moment speaks
there is no closing / breath happens

— — —

What room in the body does the ringing sound in? The brief
explosion, the sunflowers leaning. *the mind : a thing to disregard, a
recoiling, a recording.* (I find the figure lost within.) The hiding is more
important now. (I find my pulse, then lose it.)
(I find my mouth moving in a deadly way.)
(I find a hole in my heart
wrapping itself with tinfoil.)

— — —

What is reflected now?

The unspoken thing speaks.

Its words grow peppermint leaves it says:

and yesterday and yesterday and yesterday and yesterday and yesterday

it says:

stained-sky, sit and please wash your hands that corner is a perfect bed

— — —

That chair stands just for you.

That pillow, that companion.

Now the words are balloons floating away.

Once in a while it forgets the frozen ground,

the bright, the loud.

Where there is only one blue and it is always the same.

— — —

inside a mouth : constant-want

— — —

(Did we ever even know
where the boundaries began?)

— — —

I am through with this tired container. I pick up the fork, there is red across the night sky, the walls are made of glass, when I step off the curb, *where am I going?* The wooden eyes watch, the corners fold their hands, somewhere a mouth exhales. It is as if the inside has been turned out.

The objects will not answer the question
and the question will not ask itself.

— — —

forgotten : bloom, balloon, bomb, the touch of a hand

— — —

(It is not necessary
to know where the pulse is found.)

— — —

I thought of it differently. Closer to an explosion
when the begonia catches the light, how the leaf
and petal are the same pale rose, how a mouth
closes itself without *warning : mouth petal light*

— — —

Today has a name.

I have hidden

And beneath the floor?

all the pieces.

Finally / the heart

Breath / unruly pulse

forgets itself

away

Karen Lepri

***from* II Fig. I Apparatus for Heat Obscured**

dear j.t.,

pls send instruments
for bore (--ing?)

fig. I betook wood
(insect miseries)
from around
this pl-
ace

their murmurings

coloured rings?

enclosed, your frigid
script

curdled into fog

dear j.t.,

as if by rake
fig. I

could the glacier

butter you

down drawing
this churndash night

whence the crystals
Schiller
& the covered

descending

dear j.t.,

to this fig. I
cannot reply:

“I placed my warm
hand against a pane

$$\left[\begin{array}{c} \vdots \end{array} \right]$$

covered --- crystal-
 lization and the melted
 frostwork clung to it...
 then withdrew my hand
the film of liquid
 a pocket lens
 cooled by air, and
 a film commenced to
 move at one edge; *atom*
closed with atom,

and the
motion ran in living lines
.....pellicle,
-----

the beauty
and delicacy of organ-
-----

..... such objects and
what we are accustomed
to call *feelings* may not be
manifest, but
nevertheless true.....,

$$[\dots]$$

.....,
these exquisite
can gladden his heart
and moisten his.....”

[j.t., your study this

quick catch, gas trap

ease to, & pass
like gunpowder

miniature air raid, not
ox eye humour

here
fig. I
read: HEAT HEAT & ETC.

flame's minimum

a three twig morning

shriller than the wile
rhododendron

where I wash
not as you say

metallic screen, shatterer]

Dawn Pendergast

the poetry wigwam

one

twothreefour

wrens

north stars

south stars

bopping

The Dilia

dilia dinnereð * thought sumptuous *
we see / saw dilia / dilia throathold
this old owl: this fruity lute
drag the shadow out river, gowned down river
where he wheels & is & meanwhile

—member simply
the hunk of & Sparrows someplace
protract insignias
in orderless whatsoever

& we / we just kept growing old *dilia/dilia*
birds ding in the trees *dilia/dilia*

we nose the gauze off our waterglasses

excellent gestures do / we are pleased to meet

Duck Out

1.

The ducks handlings are serious
flaws are bouquets various
and tonight tongue
tonight warble and flunking
on the edge of what, is said?
Is bent in?

2.

Move it thing
between figures you are
climbing ladders
unto yourselves, salves—
freshness outers
tooth pickers

3.

we order house red on the shallow side
we confabulate with doctors
we circle the letter in the center/Mmm
we noodle in the water at dusk

COW COW COW

cow cow cow onesies
ringing the tree pre-
storm:

time being, *ting!*

the form of a thing that things eat
betwixt clumps of fescue
flanking the pond,
in accordance w/
C. Olson, kind of
a cow himself, six ft
in brown trousers
How now big O?

WHERE-
FORE

Landing is a little sparrow: wee me,
appointed to my pleasure
tying my tie,
spendthrift, any-
even backwards
hashmark is intimidating

& if I do not finish
looking like this
if dangerously perched
on the pond
on birch or cowback
with his tail whipping

the skin of it
fly things
sweat nets
cow huffing I
resist!
well enough
you do not say

Hot Dog

The salt is the part of my kidneys
that has rats in it.

Salt of my diette, lo,
my pinchy bean. Let's see you

normal group tubers, week twelve
testing for high end salt expression.

lovepoemdeerhead

Deer doe/deerhead

half tan skin / red you

be in my ear holes/ air holes

up & standing, lists of less

head hair / ere deer

dare you /tilted & known & put

gently square: It appears

here drug on / the grounds of

tied to dirty ands/ors

adrift animal light.

I look up/cling to

yearlings, stand smoke.

Yours porous one thing: back

me, deerhead. Forests fat

w/ pieces of light lift-up

my belly love: these depictions

of needles & keys & letters. Err

Over image. Ruts, rows

crumbs of work, knot city,

still you / will / wont you

The Day

Like a book by everyone
else: relative, a toad
a plosive alarm

+

Begin, day: the dayforth
lording of my buddies

+

bantered chollas and
octatillo expulsions
one of us is wearing
jewels

+

tea left burning day
during which scratching
posts attached to trees
initiate the falling
that our cars
are parked underneath

+

day, dangerous,
day lilies and pictures
of flowers in spring

+

The one spoonbill

I keep going flamingo, flamingo to

Mark Lamoureux

from **“Sometimes Things Seem Very Dark: Poems for Francesca Woodman.”**

16.

[Untitled Boulder Colorado, 1976]

Garden

hose

prefigures

snake

ring

the fallen conch, impossible

organ-pumper

of sea-foam made sea-glass

living grass

something secretes its hard

home, the home hung

on the self frame

selfsame

ringing tome

infinite recursor

subject

game

19.

[Charlie the Model #11]

Sometimes things seem very dark
Charlie had a heart attack
There is the paper & then there is the person

I hope things get better for him
There is the person then & there is the paper
Sometimes things seem very dark

There is the person & then there is the body
Some may see, some may hear
There is the paper & then there is the person

There is the glass wall & then
There is the shard then
Sometimes things seem very dark

There is the body then & instinct
There is the ash & the soil
There is the paper & then there is the person

I hope things get better for him
Sometimes there is no eye, no body
Sometimes things seem very dark
There is the paper & then there is the person

28.

[Untitled Rome, 1977-78]

So I said
this garden
is mine

So I said
this garden
belongs to me

So I said
this garden
is made of stone

I am alone here

So I said
this garden
is made of wood

So I said
this garden
was made by my own hands

So I said
this garden
is made of bone

So I said
this garden
is my home

I will remain here

29.

Another Poem About 14 Hands High
[Untitled Rome, 1977-78]
[Untitled New York, 1979-80]
[Untitled New York, 1979-80]

Not as though
Desiccated from touching
Into the bright satin walls
A parable or an alibi
This was it

How it was
That my hands began
Not like the rings on a tree
But like a net of rifts
To change

To brackets
Around my face, columns
Of the solemn temple, the gift
Was my own countenance
A fable

For resonance
A treaty between now
& after, this is what I begged
Of the angels of the snakes
Anyone who would

See the scattered
Coins at the bottom of the
Long well, we look upon bodies
Of water & ask to leave
Our fragile mark

The waters
Parted with a knife
Fashioned from excised rib
This is the voice that is
Under music

That is under
A forest of kelp, a forest
Of lichen like hair that spills
From a spigot sewn
So gently

To the navel
Of the world, so softly
I dangle my wrists above the strong
Furrows of this cloth forgotten
In an alcove

Where went
All of the poor beasts
Of nightmares, in the amphitheater
Of the skull, so magnificent
So pretty

The thunder
Of applause, the thunder
Of this rain, who will tend braziers
Of onyx & ivory in the distant
Hours? The hour

Of the lamb
Of the night, the swollen
Carnelian eye that bounces
Along the bell curve
Of the hills

Molly Brodak

Oils

Ask a woman
how a spoon means
grief. Please
go ask her.
When she
learns that the spoon
and all spoons
are made
so casually,
sometimes
even as diversions
or games, sometimes
even accidentally,
ask her.
Will you
be satisfied with that?
What is
more civilized
than a costume party?

Possible Possible

It is in a book somewhere.
Or something temporary
like a book.
I bet certainty is absurd.

*

One possibility gets lost.
The good end of a long knife
waggles, just target-stuck.
A leaf scoots helplessly.

*

I saw petal whiteness
about mid pine,
and brief pinks.
But not with this self.
So came a cloud.

*

As if all I wanted to know
was what is wrong with everything.

As if speechless, being in branches.
I like to think I remember that.

Hopes Up

Never is a long time.
Sweet eyes last
what, a minute?

Then an empty sky,
neon-bright, empty.

Love someone back.
You just begin.
Almost nothing happens.

Dark matter in space
arranges it up. Then
what are you.

Jeff Alessandrelli

A Lover's History of Nevada

The highest foreclosure rate in the country (1 foreclosure filing for every 17 households in 2010; 5% of the total houses in the state), the highest percentage of any state's population made up of illegal immigrants (circa 2010, 8.8%), the second highest teen pregnancy rate in the nation (behind only Mississippi)

is Nevada's determining devilry.

The only state where prostitution is legal. Allegedly due to its liberal alcohol laws—purchasable 24-7 in supermarkets and convenience stores; no city, county or state-wide designated “last call”—one of “the most dangerous states in the nation.” Rankled

and sure-defined demonry.

*

Still it's easy to unscramble eggs if only you choose to order them over-easy. Every morning in Nevada the air gift-wraps itself, presenting its oxygen to each citizen as a much-celebrated secret, one solely given to Nevadans and Nevadans alone. It is a state in the business of making each man both a David and Goliath, moralist and essential, successful revenge-seeker,

each woman a Diana and Lucille Ball and Michelle Obama and Gertrude Stein, king of hearth, home and every greater municipal populace. Nevada has its faults, surely: many of its finest homes were built on dilapidated, uninsured bridges. Every ATM could always be that much faster,

thus making it something greater cherished, a dogged love.

A Lover's History of Nevada

In Nevada she once had a dream that her dog barked itself to death (the sorrow; the lamentation) and she was webbed lifeless in her mother's womb, unable to decide if her ears were greedy for a silence that discovered itself in a hospital room or in a longer, more expansive sleep. It was a dream. That was all.

He had once taken a photo of her running in the woods in Nevada and she now realized that for the rest of her lifetime she would always be running in the woods in Nevada, head up, arms out, eyes half-open and staring expectantly at the camera or what exorbitantly arranged itself behind it.

"If at some point you go for a run in the woods, and someone takes a photo of you, then for the rest of your life you're always running in the woods. There's nothing you can do about it." So long ago that it was like a dream.

In Nevada her whole life was once a blooming red and white checkered tablecloth, laid out primly and sedately right in front of her.

It still was.

A certain place. A literal Nevada (pronounced *neh-VA-duh*; never *neh-VAH-duh*) where in the summer he pronounced her name differently than in the winter, the spring. A loping, more euphonic inflection. Elven guttural, to be inaccurate about it.

She would remember that now. She would call him, she would call everyone back. In Nevada. Nevada. State reptile the desert tortoise. State rock sandstone.

She'd remember

It back.

There, there.

Then

Back.

Linda Russo

***from* Roots & Scatters (First Crop)**

New habitats more sensibly alive. —Anne Waldman

Tapestry —

my life by the side yard, driveway, a retailed imitation of land use
the songs to sing come happily about the living, us among them
the pearless pear tree and what / you learn by proximity

my mother was still mourning the “last little rabbit – her confusion & loneliness”

she wrote to me of her Sagebrush shelter, her pencil-length inches and ounces & pinkish tinge
genetically extinct the Columbia River Basin Pygmy Rabbit

her worn-out angry eyes

woodpecker on the same telephone pole, same rhythm, at the same time again today
disappointment when “thunder” is the rolling of a garbage bin

she said: I think you also care because you have walked in her paths

I'm looking for the poetic language and you find facts
fragmented habitat sagebrush-rich

it's where you might go to reinvest in the blue of Chickory

Wormseed Mustard, Whitlow Grass, Neckweed

patching together "remnants" –
"a work on behalf of the wild that restores culture"

The Secret Life of Plants (A Cento)

the slightest surges of human emotion
hot and perennially in your hands
each attuned to the other

to the animal life that surrounds
even in a shredded leaf
and (in) its redistributed chaos

we discover rituals of longing and real communication
and monitor them independently
(if at all)

Weeds

the sun today, the chimes kick in with the local
accompaniment of (I'm guessing) sparrow, thrush
marked/unmarked by conditions, placement

▪

Q: does a garden have an audience

A: yes

▪

in the community garden, discourse is minimal

▪

“read / of the ground” to write (Lorine Niedecker)

▪

property is an abstraction

I'm trying to recover from

▪

how did I become so overwhelmed by the things I was discovering?
hoe'd dirt today

▪

Because it smells great here. Oil rigs for pea-vines; garlic coming up

▪

see winding paths as a sort of manifesto

Becca Jensen

from We Have Given Them Names

The forest is a forest because of the clearing and the clearing is where they are headed. Blackberries easing into their tresses. Like so many children before them. Like beauty that is blind but always counting the sunspots as they push into their faces. Violet plays her violin. Say oh, say oh, oh, oh. Henry imagines he can feel the tiny scratches of the Pied Piper's rats on his insides. He's the intellectual. "Some people won't understand," he's been known to say.

For days the back of Benny's neck smells like bakery rolls, like the bag of them he used to sleep on so it makes sense. He holds it inside a divot in the creek. His legs lifting into cloud and blue trenches of sky. "Benny," Jessie rings. "It's time to finish up your washing!" When things get too quiet he talks to Watch

about the weather: the volcanic ash that could be seen hazarding about the foothills, the Gulf Stream winds. "Beeennny!" He keeps to the water: one Mississippi, mississippi, mississippi, mississippi, mississippi: the creep of his years out his throat.

The children had eloped from the outskirts, expecting Henry would get a job at The Newspaper, Jessie, Odds-N-Ends. They'd have mashed potatoes on Sunday. They'd buy red wool. They'd sing to the pigeons, the widows, men in white hats. But children, their loftiness, their swollen lips. They often get distracted from the path; we call it—"Oh look!" "A chipped pink cup!"—imagination. It was in the imagination, then, that they came upon it. "Who was the first to see the boxcar?" Violet wonders as she falls asleep inside. In her dream, they are climbing a gigantic head of mashed potatoes. She presses her lips to the right cheek and sucks: flakes, butter, cream. "Violet," Benny whispers, "Are you awake?" Yes, she

replies. Yes, “yes always
she replies yes.”

et said: hello, a comfortable suburban home in the opal fields, I chanced my arm. Violet said: I WON'T, hello, delicious. Violet said: Benny liked being a little br

behind the clouds and Henry could read the signs, uh-huh. What we wish Violet said: Holy Moses!, holy, holy, holy. Violet said: and maybe spoons, oh, let me he

49

Indictment #1: Something About Saturn in the House of Jupiter

Deep in the grace of a pool, lived a fish. This is to be expected, the Realm of Protocol as dictated from a century in which perspective is key so that A exists as does B, but what remains is how the two meet: the white fence building its arches into

the sky; the sky

becoming envisioned between the belled slots. In the same way, France—with its inferior tax system and pockets of English thieves, their beards stoked in rakematiz and enamel buttons—rallied around the neophyte breasts of a peasant girl: *joan*, they chimed

joan, joan

and she appeared, two deep-set blackberry eyes. Within this framework then, does the fact that the soul of Agimet the Jew, which attached itself to the dappled fish's belly in the imagination of several thousand observers, somehow counteract

and/or

outweigh the fish itself? Or, since the constraint is the reality that betrays the fantastic, is the fishasfenceaslackingsocialstructure more unreal than the unreal itself? There are moments in which I can believe this. In which Agimet's

fish-belly

soul unearths an abstract invocation of a sun crowned hill. This is some palm tree's fruit, some—a lazy, unvanquished truth—and the pinecone cap that ties it to the branch. Dear World, in the year of our lord

1348 – 2011

it can be better to have your gaze be the fact, rather than the fact itself: Venice, Calabria, Apulia Toulouse....

In the middle of the forest, along with the rain and children, is a boxcar. “Once there was a man.”

This is both truth and fact. “Once he was a sailor, a turnip truck driver, a licensed photographer.”

The truth part being it _ff_cts the pl_t _f th_ ch_ldr_n’s l_v_s, the fact part being the bruised soil

under the engineless swab of wood. “Once there was a day that encroached upon a forest.”

Inside there were rails and tracks and a boxcar. “The man was there too.” The day and the man

and the boxcar ate ham sandwiches. “They put mustard on some of them.” They watched for

birds. “They couldn’t identify any, though the man wanted to say sparrow, sparrow in the grass,

sparrow and the ant, sparrow beneath the field.” Benny’s eyes shrink to pie holes under the

weight of the moon. “Then the day left, the man was over, the forest moved, but the boxcar did

not.” And that’s how the boxcar came to be where it was when the children found it. “The

children found it.”

Each one gets a corner
This is Jessie's

This is Henry's

Finally! Jessie is alone. She arranges the beds into their day positions: pile then roll then tie with the yellow ribbon. Now it hangs on the ceiling. She gets the soup bowls down and places them in a half moon in front of the jaws of the boxcar. She sweeps an intricate pattern, then goes outside to the refrigerator, gets the milk, pours some into the kettle. Behind her she can hear a rabbit or a squirrel thumping inside some bramble. The noise creates a fortress out of the day. The stones are made out of limestone or a rock with holes and things coming out of those holes, like oozing, but a fossil. I wish you wouldn't hover so, if you're going to call someone a dope, say it: dope.

This is Benny's

This is Violet's

Deborah Poe

Don't Let the Stars Keep You Tangled Up

Don't let the stars keep you tangled up.
I pass below, un-orchidaceous. Not invisible (wool)
I render the snow. Back to frozen tender—
between trees before bare sky; where I spell or crook.

North, East, South, West

A 25 foot metal face mindfucks the distance
Vertigo is not the fear of falling
I resist the urge to jump

Good afternoon, negative volumes

miles

Sunk in the ground

Steel-cast

Weatherings shadowed, downpour aside
A hipster's bright green legs rearrange nomenclature
Sculptures mobilize longing

I don't see four forms unarming

Iron

Must place the hatch at that end

Expanse

La Grande Vallee

Now and then at night the image of this Crassus is in my brain, like a splinter round which everything festers, throbs, and boils...It, too, forms whirlpools, but of a sort that do not seem to lead, as the whirlpools of language, into the abyss, but into myself and into the deepest womb of peace.

Hugo von Hofmannsthal, from *The Letter of Lord Chandos*

now and then day's brightest
pigment at skin's edge

itch around which spring
outbursts become precursors
to tints I hold more dear

green closest to death
what is forest but time
literal aspects of pine

hemlock echo
a white background lacks
light not color

bacteria brings moist then mold
the whole leaving's form
a drowning thing

spring or the literal left before
sage canyon struck
crevasse of black brain

this three-dimensional
memory aggrandizing—this learning
or reminder, to live.

Little Water Fowl

there could be a blue filter over it all
claws crunched grasping thin air
reptilian arch
insect ache in the green extension
raw lines
those attachments could take flight

but the center will glow
light at the stomach's feathers
the head so small, barely discernible:
brown crown, white close-cropped,
burgundy at the beak—back to gravel
if words were attention to ground

you can almost see wind
just above the skin
reminder of making amends
neurodetoxif of fossilized repression
friction and futile cycling
nervous system removed

a higher pattern forms

Notes:

The following art pieces were points of departure for the poems included here:

“Mounds of human heads are wandering into the distance,” Osip Mandelstam. Title from Cortney Tidwell’s album *Don’t Let the Stars Keep Us Tangled Up*

North, East, South, West, Michael Heizer, 1967/2002, Michael Heizer. After John Godfrey’s “Slide.”

Le Grande Vallee, Joan Mitchell, 1983.

“Little Water Fowl” (personal photograph), Rebecca Szeto, 2010.

Sarah Mangold

Mothers Must Always Prove Their Readiness

Most missing girls are dead girls.
The lady detective. Relevant short stories.
Caught in the throat. Set in the plains. Tea in
Wyoming. Everything else is a flash back.
Bruises. Wristsarms. Collect an advance. Seize.
Elbow. Your health insurance will remain on
paper. The envelope was a breath of air. An
exhale. It was both. Small pings. Wing flutters.

Roofer to the Principal

This incident of turning
this incident of leaving in public
window issued embellishments and nineteenth century
novels lodged in confusion
about money and placement historically

Accompany scents

whistles

and the frustrations

who kiss the chain and eat sugar

as if it were a ritual of innocence

two aluminum trumpets made

in three lengths to magnify

the voices of the spirit communicators

inverted and fleeting

Technique without Explication

If it were a better city look for opportunities—and now
if we're going to the feeling behind it—Backward—
survival to your acknowledged push to something else

I like to gather by chance—to go in one blaze
and if turned around melt—Who else would be nice
as imagined—Teethfirst—Visually what each is
asking—a perfect foam heart—a turning of all the phrases

She was the tall girl in the black smock—It was
the beginning—an eyeball found at the door—
gathering of fingernails and skin cataloged—And they
felt it was time turned ankles—their mentors as badges
in the auspicious day

Meeting Your Trapdoor

He was a short person received in a state of distraction. Reasonable estimates. Faith in mental energy and metaphors. Electronic flattery. Empty scenes in which messages might appear regular and besides the point. Progressive spiritualism. Mandates hoping. Built was hired. Built was worn. Forks castle and class. The vice of flattery. The vice of curiosity. He did not mean to do it a service. Genetic mutations. Zeros pressed to fingertips.

Moments of Crisis and Lightening Flashes Faculties

When a young woman her position was
more reaction against than enthusiasms. Into a
homesphere of action channeled. Talking and non-
talking. Withering around their universities. Befriending
a lion not really calling the beginning barricade. My
saints are troublesome arguing mediumship. Felt her
hand seized. Two spirit thoughts. The script entailed
radiation of thought. The system itself changes.
Afterlife stages. Daimonic influences. Radio receivers.
Mysticism. The medium in the unknown.

Michael Flatt

from Absent Receiver

-
-
until it has a name grayscale morning, say
it cannot be your reference point. good morning.
until my face leaves its trace say the gray lips
as water slips over a rock. dark tongue.
until a book sees its cover in a the tree is colloidal,
pickpocket's hand. half-invisible, black
the page on its side an EKG readout. and white.
pulse of perception.
aren't these the questions everyone -
is asking? (*delay*)
the corner of what
and what?
the stop light swinging
in the October storm.
the cars squirreling underneath
tempt place and time.
-
filling notebooks with deletion.
keep them from the light.
from here the blur
of traffic is quite clear. -
baby, ready the confetti.
or I could just see you now the grinding teeth of sleep await.
when you're out of work. water that could regreen fields
meet me at Motel 6, the arched in thirst. we can't help but admit
Official Lodging Partner of the our tributaries feed both our
Professional Bowlers Association. swamps and our pools. fall leaves in

	-	spring still haven't fallen, but they
in front of the famously flat iron		will when new buds arrive. I'll meet
building in Madison Square Park		you at the weekend's pinpoint curve.
and we didn't even know it.		you'll see.
the ride as smooth as		
blue gas-range flame.	-	
The Warsaw, a Polish bar in Brooklyn		wake up to hard pulsing. song is trapped in
with beers we couldn't pronounce.		the speakers. bark is
and perogies!		peeling, bleaching. screen door
perogies!		slamming in the wind. a mother
what was born over the speakers		cooking sauces in the attic sings,
drew our many-handed wonder.		"the sea is in the water." the only
Are you with the band?		smell and half the sound is static. our
If I say yes, do I get free drinks?		digits like dried fruit in the bath,
traffic almost as bad as the		a reversal of process. in hunger that is
honking and		bread we cook alone for each
honking and signs against		other, who won't eat. and it was your
honking.		mother's couch where first pulled up
it ended with one more door		my shirt. in word that is letter. in bed
someone had to replace.		that is night. a bucket catching a
	-	leak, pitch gathering waves on the shore
(delay)		of our upcoming summer.
		finger trails in table dust next to stamped
		packages with your address
		in the middle and somewhere recently I
	-	read, "the land is in the
rough mix gravel		soil." veins of soy sauce in the wasabi.
spread thin for driving on.		laughter left uncontrolled.
upward weeds between dirt and		recognizable eyes and sights of our
stony tire tracks		favorite home. we know better than

to the grip of worn blacktop.	to mention the names of our favorite
the end of this road	authors, those that tells us, "the body is
is a semi-colon;	in the blood." teacher and student share
a fork in history;	the same face. what graces the razor,
mine and a few others.	cutaneous. in crop that is root. in
bouncing through the mud in the	wall that is nail. in hem that is stitch.
back of a truck	in the eye that is its sight in the eyes
empty shells at my feet.	of the unseeing seen.
hold a gun, and a dog by the collar.	-
collect the hot brass	(<i>delay</i>)
between clicking in clips.	
thick whiffs of saltpeter, this	
is home too,	
how Easters were spent	
with smoke and fire.	
	-
(<i>delay</i>)	
	-
	this is the degree of control:
	hanging onto a jackrabbit's toe.
	throwing water balloons at lightning.
	closing translucent blinds.
	give it golden colons and call it a law.
	-
when the Sabres win,	-
kiss and finish our beers.	quote:
sleeping in a place	But what to say of this bird?
to do more than pass the night.	What to say of the metamorphoses

burger-wrapper paper ships	Of the soul that sings in the bushes	
in oil-tinted puddles.	Of the heart in the sky and sky in roses	
roll the highlight film.	-	
-		
wake from last night's swimming.	we sit stand and lay before the	
create your own heaving waters.	unfunneling. exterior then	
groups of words become familiar	midterior scraps wind to the floor,	
as family pictures.	spiraled out as skin in reciting its	
you hear the moment,	core. a semi-circular sound.	
hear it, repeat it. it becomes	someone is listening.	
insoluble, a fiberglass itch.	Genesis had it right: darkness	
-		
one tooth lodged in	begat light. but don't spread it around.	
the poorly joined wood of the bar	the movement implicit in	
a canine in the leg of a stool.	a still object's shadow. light refracted	
the tips of the tavern's darts	through a mist of blood	
missing, some vomit. a familiar	authors a sidereal lineage.	
dislodging. a place of stasis.	a movement to noise like birth.	
interstices of faces.	the silence enlivened.	
the same reason snow	-	
stays at the edge of light,	quote:	
an inch of it in it		
maintained by that in the shade.	boom	clap
each thing, in itself	boom	clap
a clusterfuck.	boom	clap
clear plastic coating on my day	boom	clap
eyelid feathers folded together.	boom boom clap	
the bend of your lung	coda	
still glows in my mouth.		

-

(reverb)

If prayer is a kindling of the spirit.

If the spirit is the taste of a battery.

If a life of poverty is one of readiness.

If all trust is transitory.

If touching the hand of one seizing.

If poems belong rather to the realm of parable.

If the sun sets on the lust and the undusk alike.

If a stranger's glance runs wild with your limbs.

If gleam, then glance, then glare, then trance,

what then?

-

(reverb)

when I got back to Buffalo,
I saw how bad it had been.
every tree
a pitchfork bouquet.

-

Christine Gardiner

As Seen On TV

A prisoner is a man
who is watched night and day
and kept in a cage.

A actor is practiced
at feigning imprisonment
and falling downstairs.

A scientist murders
superstition. He studies things
that are better unknown.

A vampire can pour
through your window
in a funnel of mist.

The medical doctor administers
potions and examines
the body for marks.

A woman floats across
the lawn and disappears
into his arms.

If he cuts off your head,
no one will suspect him,
because only a demon
would do such a thing,
and we do not believe
such creatures are real.

Dark Knowledge

On the dance floor, two little girls
talk about boys. A handsome grown man
watches from under the stairs,

but he isn't there, when she turns
a trembling shoulder. She sees only
a puddle of ash in the shadows.

Beyond her bedroom window.
blowing gently, as he watches
she disrobes, having learned much

too fast. Dump truck.

Car crash. Little red devil.

She opens her heart to him softly.

Jefferson Navicky

from The Ancients & The Horribles: An Exhibition of Landscapes

This Silence

won't go away. I've written it, painted it, pickled it, strained it, trimmed and trampled it, and tried to discharged it.

It is a basement silence, a shadow silence that crouches in the corners under the glow of a dark glaze as deep as any Caravaggio, furtive yet full of a shadow power that feints and slips, appears to shimmer, sheltered by the stillness. And once left alone, the silence lies unmoving, piscine, watching without using its eyes.

As habit relieves me of the need to note the silence, I eliminate its pernicious elements, its sound scent, and gradually I allow it to envelop me.

It is a silence that does nothing, goes nowhere, does not get up.

A critic, sometimes described as witty, cautions against "the bathtub story" in which a protagonist takes a bath, preferably in a claw-foot tub, and during the bath, he ruminates on, wonders about, and analyzes the past, present and future, but never gets out of the tub. The critic, witty as he may be, has never experienced this silence, nor has he spent time in my bathtub.

It is a silence that never rises from the tub.

For a long time, I kept thinking that at some point the silence would do something, but I've now accepted that nothing will happen. How about now? Still silence. Still nothing. No discussion.

No optics.

No return.

Nothing like that.

Only ghosts.

My Name

is William Harrison Brown, but people call me Bird. Forty-three years old and I live on Aquaneck Island.

My life's work, since I moved back to the island fourteen years ago, is to complete *A Landscape Painter's Complete History of Aquaneck Island*, a project I may finish sometime, but hopefully not. A Complete History, an Ultimate Archive in all its necessary imperfection, is a Utopia. Life beyond the Archive can seem a thin and less interesting endeavor. Perhaps – and the more I work towards its inevitable and impossible completion, the more I believe this to be true – to archive is the most beautiful act, a gesture of love and memory, both acts of the most intimate forgetting.

My family is full of landscape painters, my great grandfather, my father. I was supposed to be the third in the lineage.

As a boy, I loved Paint by Number, how the picture slowly appeared through the skeletal blur of black and white lines, the illusion of coherence, color and definition, like assembling a puzzle of an approaching tug in the harbor fog. Little did I know that Paint by Number would be the height of my career as a painter. The joys I felt at this revealing were impossibilities, the desires of a child unable to watch the spectrum of change in an adult's world, for the process of painting by number never allowed the blending and blurring of color, the fusion of imperfections, synapses connected through memory and color, distinctions dropped by a desiring mind that is the only creator of a painting. How I loved to watch the creation of a canvas, how I loved to watch the holes fill, the bristles of a brush cover the blankness.

This childhood retrieval has coalesced throughout my life, gaining force the way an echo, the soul of the voice, excites itself in hollow places. Or a villanelle refuses to move forward in a linear fashion, circling instead around those familiar moments of sound that make up the singular. I live in the reoccurrence of my story, whatever one I choose to tell, but I struggle to fracture this story, watch it subsequently shatter into beautiful shards of kaleidoscoped glass; in this way I'm trying to narrate the unnamable, to become the painter I have never been.

In the Islands of the Bay

there is a man who lives alone with his dog and his story. History occupies most of his small house, more like a shack on stilts near a pond where geese land in long lines across the surface of the water. I once took a rowboat out on the pond and drifted close to his house, which let out puffs of smoke and looked red beneath the burnt birches. It is always fall in this story; there is no other season of production. As I rowed in and among the cattails that guarded his shore like hot dogs in preparation for a barbeque, I whistled a carefree tune. It seemed the land needed such love, for it hung in a fogged gloom, not only from the wisps of mist on the water, but also from a heaviness that lifted its head only slightly as I rowed by. The weight, I thought, was kind, but not enough to lure me in. I had other shores to tend and so I left the little shack and headed back across the bog, and eventually across the bay. There isn't much left to say about this quiet scene that folded its feathers at the edge of the pond and disappeared within an ancient sound.

Most of the Time

I work at night. I make some rice for dinner, load it up with hot sauce and have a cup of black tea, then another cup of tea, then another cup of black black tea.

In the early hours of the morning, when the space heater has finally heated the House on Stilts and I'm nice and shaky from the caffeine and lack of sleep and the winter constellations are gathering before dawn, that's when something good might come. I made "The Philosophy of Reservoirs" at that time. And "The Repetition of Waves," "The Road to the Dump," "The Island Fuckhouse." All the good ones come then. I sit up all night waiting for them, suffering impatient, itching my arm, smoothing hairs, writing grocery lists, staring at the blank. Making as Waiting. And every once in a while I get a real one.

The House on Stilts

I own Aquaneck's only house on stilts. It's more of a shack and sits over top of Duck Pond, which is also a reservoir for the island. On the other side of the pond, Old Man Spade put up a barbed wire fence on floats that sticks out into the middle of the pond. Every once in a while I hear his gun go off and I wonder what he's shooting at.

When I'm not wondering, I try to work – "Notes on Garbage," "Towards a Dump Philosophy," "Treatise on Stilts," "Firefighter, Part I: Memory of Fire; Part II: Memory of a Fight." All towards the History.

When I'm not scribbling or wondering, I perform the one Island Council appointed position I hold on Aquaneck: Head of Island Beautification for the Rural Outlands, an ambiguous office I've held unopposed for eleven years. Basically it requires that I walk around the island and pick up trash while wearing crushed purple velvet and carrying a walking stick with rose quartz atop. I'd do this often anyway, H.I.B.R.O. or not, so it's decidedly convenient that I hold this office, although it's inconvenient that I've never received a dime for my position. Somebody once promised something once, but I forget what it was now. I pick up a good bit of trash, and I pick up things I want, give things that I think certain people might want to those certain people, drop things off at the Dump, but basically I walk around the island and wonder. I'm surprised how much I can think about if I walk a lot. I can pretty much think out everything, and nothing, that has ever happened.

**As Head of Island Beautification for the Rural Outlands
I have collected:**

soiled napkins; small rock with “January or July” written on it; Lee Everden gold plated quartz watch that displays the days of the week in German; wooden pen case in-laid with pearl (fake?) and broken hinges; broken hinges; cork stopper key chain with mini Eiffel Tower attached; drawing of a rose in blue marker; piece of a trinket of peace; New Year’s Resolutions; eraser; toenail clippers; busted watch with Hebrew numbers; pocket knife of “Carl Ellenberger, M.D.”; black fire guitar pick; fortune cookie-sized note written in green marker: “Hand knit woolen socks made so fuzzy and so worn Oh how I love thee”; box of typewriter paper; green plastic guitar pick; mini pencil sharpener; clear marble with red smoke wisp; spiral coaster made of iridescent seashell; tiny ceramic pill cup; child-sized wooden piano; salutatorian medal; whale bone necklace; High School Basketball State Finals Medal; sky blue birthday cake candle; jar of Parker ink three-quarters empty; yellow sticky note that reads “Let this *be* what it is”; burned CD labeled “Mix of Many Songs”; tiny metal golden glove; G.I. Joe whistle; wooden chopsticks; unnamed dental tool; one-quarter cup glass Ball jar labeled “basil”; wooden-handled wax stamp of interlinked ovals; Library Card Catalogue card for “Shulevitz, Uri, 1935--. The Magician, an adaptation from the Yiddish of I. L. Peretz.”; screws; library card for David Zaiss; box of Mongol Colored Indelible Extra Strong Thin Lead Pencils, twelve assorted colors by Eberhard Faber (can be sharpened to a needlepoint); shells; canister for The Balvenie single malt scotch; file folder label that reads “dust”; Café Bustelo coffee tin; friends; leather change purse with trees painted on it filled with names of cities each written on a different slip of paper; New Hampshire silver sugar spoon shaped like a spade; tiny ceramic blue bird salt shaker cute as anything; love; pebbles; box of thumb tacks; wooden gavel “In appreciation for your work as Chief of Staff, Lakewood Hospital”; death of a hired man; seven lectures by Borges; napkin with “(S) Edition” written in black ink; pictures of beautiful young girl laughing on bench below sign that reads “NO BICYCLES OR SKATEBOARDS ON SIDEWALK”; Underwood typewriter; map of Aquaneck Island; leather button; “Stewart” apple crate from Cherryfield; toy motorcycle; Sears Charter Club brass ring with ruby red glass in-lay; hematite ring (for groundedness); nickels; fifty dollar gift certificate to Soul Chuck’s Pizza (expired); unidentifiable bone.

Notes

The island is wide open. So wide open that it is filled with holes. I fill these holes with little notes, rolled up scrolls that I place all over the island along my walks. It is a way to give back to the island in exchange for all that I've found, been given and rescued. I put my notes in between the boards of the bench overlooking the ocean on the most eastern point, in the holes of Frump's stonewall, in a seashell on Rollercoaster Beach, tucked within Jim Neff's woodpile, in the holes drilled into the walls of Fort Jay, in the salt shaker at the Isthmus.

Sometimes they're prayers in a wailing wall, sometimes love letters to the unnamed, confessionals, messages in a bottle, postcards from the edge, notes from the interior; other times they're New Year's resolutions, and to-do lists lost. No body ever talks about these notes, or at least I never hear the talk. I don't even know that anybody ever finds them.

One time I put my grocery list between Goethe and Grass in the island library:

Milk
Bread
½ & ½

Another time I put a confession in the donation box of the Catholic Church on Island Ave:

Dear Father,
You are a Holy Ghost.
Love, Son

New Year's resolutions I tucked into a beached boot:

- * Eat more pecan pie*
- * Add more beads and feathers to my walking stick*
- * Keep up with History*
- * Clip Comma's toenails*

I like to think of those little notes calling softly to all the people that may accidentally read them. At best they turn out to be phantom memories, passing scribbles that add another layer to the island, an underground history of insinuation, banal and tangential, hopefully tinged with a mundane joy. At worst, I'm the hermit who, while acting as Head of Island Beautification for the Rural Outlands ("The head of what?"), leaves trash in nooks all over the open island.

Such acts lend themselves readily to metaphor, and perhaps these amorphous interpretations are why I do it (I don't really know why I do it), but basically, as is the definition of any History, I pass notes to the dead and wait patiently for a reply.

I Am About

to turn forty-four years old. Where were my parents when they were forty-four?

I was ten. Henry was teaching. Winona was running the shop. They had fully and successfully inhabited middle age. We'd been summering up at Aquaneck for eight years.

I am not married, nor do I have any kids, and while I have definitely begun middle age, it would be difficult to say I am successful, at least by conventional standards: no job, no kids, no wife, no money.

Not much to show for myself. Except that I hold an Island Council appointed position, which doesn't pay very well. Actually, not at all. Do I have anything else going for me? I once had an exhibition of my paintings at The Golden Vanity Gallery here on the island, a ridiculous occurrence, which I will tell you more about a little later, you just have to read a little more of my History.

Matthew Johnstone

June

The legs

get infected. Then
admit

brokenness. / Swam.

Bottles
behind the mirror /

on the wound
that bent, then

gaps.
Being in weather. /

Eating
sugar. / The white
animals

strip down fatigue.

Away from origin /
fiend near
origins,

fugitives consume me.

There is that /
collision

that leaves

only
biting, / on leg spark.
No sound the

sign said, /

no sound /
remembered neither.

Christmas Island

Still

the neglected radar.

Take wooden ships,

these glare do
nothing frightening.

Asylum is an obscure grace,

when wood slips
around the oasis.

Asylum, the hidden thing

is disappearing.

It's brutal endlessly, burrow.

Aye, the grand movements are finished,

no wild lines no leaping republic.

For Perth, for near as for near.

Pacific Solution by

making blue buildings' blue
rooms.

These exist very unkeeled.

The hole in your breath,
salt blue, around
us folding serious water,
a wildness claims as it knows to.

Opening

the boat,

gather, flotsam.

Separating from the island.

Slip
crag,

bursting in

wood sides.

I live

out stacked edges,

in limestone, the moth floating
against the cliff.

When a thing behaves contrary

it is telling us it looms here.

That more is a shape that
flickers the
bodies.

It
comes,
they scream
or tell you
to

get into the land.

Are we not
the only
thing that has come through.

Monica Mody & Jennifer Stockdale

DOUBLE DOWN

DEFLECT THE CRANIOFACIAL DISORDER.

Where we are is in a rat's face. There the pain houses, its arrest of the receptive field wrong. I hear you, but too late. Does it still count? To take retrograde effect, I must inject you with an in. A pretty pointless charade, pretending I can plump you with air, water, food, malice. When I draw your eyes, they find the eyes growing in a farm as a showpiece. Or a mouthpiece (loud, filthy). There are tremendous fornications but at the end, it's only eyes and mouths, mouths and eyes. I print some houses on a card for you to consider but I'm really hoping you have a selection of your own, and a burglar too, so I don't have to take responsibility. A connoisseur's prerogative. Fear no fear, they say. Fear is in the trachea of the sleepless. Right/left. The plump outfit is empty of me till I'm gone. It's not just the energy of a feature, of a simulatant, but it's your thirty-two teeth that are right now employed for grinning. And their message is to Clamp Tight, Bite Right. It's a double message, always. Smoke and sex, smoke and sex. They'll lead you down two paths at once since one is not enough. One just leads you back to me and I'm flesh, remember?

“MY MOTHER WAS A FARMHAND,”

you say, as though this explains the mulch in your crevices & bad haircut. My shame tooth grows huge. It tires & stoops & becomes an “ADULT” sign, flashing. My molars & bicuspid & incisors shuck their enamel for cash. You divert traffic away from my facial disorder. When you trace a crop circle on my abdominal wall, children of the corn bud like goosebumps. “Do you like scary stories?” I whisper to stop your shrill respiration (you’ve swallowed your whistle & billy club). You fluoresce & emit vacancy. Hum, my sweet bag of digits & creaky knuckles long gone to seed. Every socket needs a button, every mouth organ is suspended by a gnarly claw & meteorological patterns.

YOU KNOW THAT SLIT IN MY THROAT

from which I’ve been shedding hay? It’s a swimming pool now and the hay has failed inspections. I swim in the hay and try to evolve into a different prototype but it is exhausting to forget time and again and once I liked myself with collapsible gizzard. Ow! Now that you’ve bitten into it wheezing I fly into my tongue splut to muffle conversations with you, which are so hard, you are so hard, but remember, golden girl? Once we were golden and had visitors flocking crawling out of every geek corner of the world. But enough. We’ve come here today for a burial, so let’s skip the small talk and get down to making faces in the mirror. Squirm properly, now. Look at those sockets! Look at that jaw! Look at that magnetic field contaminating the best years of our lives into the best horror show you’ll ever go to. It’s a rat’s race.

IT’S A HAY RIDE

so get on the wagon, lickety split! I love you, my cash crop, my sopped hose! I’m gonna suture & gum ya before this gets outta hand. Ssssh, listen, baby, I’ve got steak lung, A-1. & some tenderized lymph: every node named George Foreman & George Foreman & George Foreman & a pituitary gland named G-Ma for my Grandma Carole. Baby, I wanna be shredded like documents or a pulled pork sandwich. &

cubed. Quit yer blubber, I said & cubed! If they feed me to Mr. Ed. I'm gonna buck & kick 'em. "I'm gonna buck & kick 'em."

GET OFF YOUR HIGH, HORSE!

I've had enough of you. It's not personal but you got to vamoose. You may be my hipshooting messiah but I'm sick of your lovin'. You're a bankrupt cracker-barreller leaking trans fats. You're a monopoly. The cash crops sold out your computer-generated nightmares to spray-a-thons. Jolt of the grill, head-in-the-grill (head first). I've puttered your feedbag with poison. I have your plush 1960s station car glued to my meat. I'm grilling you a nice piece of suicide. Have it with a snarl. Spill your dribblets of boredom onto my baby bib. Or have the cake of responsibility, why don't you. Your theme song just played itself out. Your textual evidence just punctured its lungs. Aw geez, mom. Get up, it's sunrise!

IT'S MY BIRTHDAY & I'LL

launch into this fat fit if I want to! Whoa, junky mother with your swell varicose veins, any chance you could hook me up with a blow dart? Shut up now, lunchmeat lips licking in the wind. All the carrot sticks in my meatbox neatly labeled. My thermos full of grilled cheese. Lap your soup, ugly. Now you are a ludicrous bucket; I am svelte—due to these fits. My belly fat practically eats its algae self.

YOUR BELLY FATTENED UPON PRACTICAL

& statistical while I am installation art. Varicose art is much more fun than lentil soup. My soup, severely commandeered in this situation of verbal peril. My Plath baby. I love you. All the birthday songs I sing to you, you puke them back at me. It's my doing, my doing, happy birthday. Left you unbandaged/left you undamaged too long. It's my doing, my doing, happy birthday. I'm trying to make it better, ain't I? I'm here with incision/precision, ain't I? Good morning, sunshine.

& KEEP YOUR PUKE SACK

on your inflatable lap fat. Sweetie pie. I won't skim that surface again. Boogie woogie body board: catatonic baby, blowin' chunks for a living: o pie in the sky! Plump-lipped & tripping on barbed wire piercing a navel sink hole. Your favorite pillow person: fully equipped magnetic crotch-force-field mistaken for allure. I'll tumble for ya. I'll tumble for ya.

2 IS THE NEW 1

or they live in your aunt's cabinet according to type, tested by hype. You can keep your body. I just heard I'll be a slasher star. A fitted body ill sat in a soul. I've sent in compensatory apple and pear carts on modular wheels. You were a good manager & I'll miss your cynosural crutches. Once I was a tiny man firing slingshots of mercy. My oscillonic state is trendy.

HIP HOP

hooray for your liver puncture. Flick of the wrist means a flayed gut & drip drip & gold-studded gash lip

synched to wishing well & what a jam! What a fat lip & silver dollar. Bling goes your kidney pinned to the poles when the wheels come off your in-line skates. Gross, goes the neighbor who's come to spoon you out. That cat laps like a pumice stone. A glint in the eye, o puddle face. My identical cousin, joined at the. She-she.

She is disappearing into she but she-hole gets bigger. She zeroes in to hole & is left stranded. She whups out she as savior, she fails. She cannot but err but she's furry to err. Corporeal tightens until the noose is expectorating eeps. Whippet maneuver. Shall she let she?

SHE SHIRKS SHE-SHE INTO THAT SHE-HOLE

with wild abandon! By she-hole, we mean she-stigmata (just look at that rickety bird with swiss cheese wings). Quick, somebody suture her mouth. The audience gapes at this orthodontic nightmare. On the edge of their seats. Grasping at straws. POW! right to the kisser. O her secret ring-pop talent! Laugh track loops like a punching bag. Like a punch drunk, skimpy hide. Scamp, baby, infantilized finally & mesmerized by mobile dancing over your face. Lullaby geyser spewing quiet in the corner, self-soothing with eely undulations. That's not blood, juicy juice. Corn syrup mixed with blood. Never concentrated.

ARRRRR RRRRRRAT!

Lullaby geyser snags and starts to prowl. Savor the savior's kisses they're brown and implode on their own virtuousness. Its symptoms veery satisfy death-inspecting houseflies. Thumbs: empty. Thorax: empty.

Retina: empty. She's wearing lycra-laser tights, dentures turned on green, just in case. Eyelids like porkchops fast-blinkering on a mise-en-scene. It's a crime scene. Love or leave. Turn left on the mezzanine floor. Stop the door. Its cost me my thumbs and now my thumb sockets are empty. Good news travels in empty buckets. It never occurred to me but I was awash with the fat lady, the lover of her dreams.

John Duvernoy

Like So Many Sundowns Before Me

It makes profound use of its face

I do not know what will become of whatever

Substitute your own noun *in the desert*

of Carlos Lara in the wallpaper of magnolias

and bleeding deer *I think I began to believe in*

spite of myself driving swallowing hovering

whatever etched a smear of its *homily*

in the gravel his passenger eyes

no. 3

it was a shale pit put cries of tiny
apples in the air like screwjars
flesh of memory pricking the woods
with a wooden pole what slipped
through an owl came back
a reservoir of tackle blue
grownups so unknown

Jane Lewty

THE BETTER CONDENSED

Two weeks, languor-scored, I'm thinking of strippers' bodies and the journey here—
Newark headblown and still lights gathered.

Flew with buckeyes
Dermallogica spritz and loose kelp
Balled-up polymide, layers of it.

A woman across the aisle said, look: Airforce One.

Get here please or some such hint
is a near-strong wish of
any aspect of anything.
 It's thrown a whole meter
 in the next slowdown 'will-get-better-if'
i.e. Lauder Shimmering Shield, unneeded for now

It's for the cellular better
gradual life, gradated life unsullied lidless abundant (the face, eyes wide)

*Who put the slickering sound
into the room?*

Monitory, perfidious.

Unlike the idea of travel
Like him/her
Like a hunted certain idea
minutely there but not enough

ANODE HAIL

Try to put this out, it will matter less and less.

Say celestial say disc say switch
say the extension is ugly
as is the O.C
as is covenant.

Gas station at five corners
magnolia dog, oat sky
land given to industry.

Think copper wires at the edge of a sea

and what they bring from the interrim. Anyone. Any.

And—as bad as it sounds--a telling, a forecast.

PATROL

for G. Emil Reutter

stood up, waist having thickened
uneven and cleverer

betook of revolution nightly, patter fit
steps upswing market street, termini

time cinched and biding, lots of time

a grief spell lifted, thought to be something else
in this bad frame philadelphia, shiver seeming
wide undiagrammed

where new year is borrowed
and the psychics' mail is most unread

SLEW RATE, CURVED NOT BINARY

Usual day, long drop to it, the very edge of which
data that talks, breaks and bleeds

says *all else is deleterious*.

That's a phrase that came here before morning
but much of it has vanished now
through hours of imbalance, the best part of hours

to some recordable form
a dinning, jagged thing

so write it down only it's always
gone on its way, into

the left-tilt of a letter, turning counterwise

God here a slipcase on occasion
sometimes useful, sometimes not.

SHALL CEASE AND BE AS WHEN, SEPARATE AND DRIFT

Can of sweet potato I ate---against a radiator. Bowmore, Bloom wine, indolent

Slow remains on my eyes---the path of every loping animal around

How precise can I be.

Run of girls on highway 9.
Beheaded, I hope. The whole lot.
One day, just one, let them see me.

I will use them
As a clock, and hold them to each
Let them see.

MOMENT BEFORE A WEAK AND VIOLENT EXCURSION

All of a single sudden, close-up of a whitened thing, nascent flicker then little else. Air furls, unfurls. 3rd May dreamt of a circuit board cracked & chipped. 6th May its archaeologies. 15th the usual. Prints lining & lapping roundly, unconceived. Black on whole, severed, several. Facts commute the reality they reflect. Methodical dredge until the right one comes up. There is a word in German to mean *the distances of the wolf*. There is a body here, it winks. Legs turned up, gathering for some effort. It rises in the awkward sense, the shins move in fog, the room is fog. The body is miles from me, being broken. It is only a cry to be somewhat seen. That's how I see it, a cry I shaped.

HE-CHILD

In He-Child's case there was some offensive things. Scaramande played, glass shards, a credit card, leaves on the cat carpet, underwear, small and floral, slipping, brothel creepers. He lived among a vacant lot, dulled and ireful. Unroadworthy car outside, its seats split. "Belliqueux" he showed me. I am irascible, that's the extent of his French. Most remembered:

I had to mend the bulb on the landing and the frescoes on the wall.

In a pulp story (1955) 'La Scottoline' winds her hips.

Ellipsis parameter and error.

On the bone-spoon color of the main drag here, a hotel lying wide fully paved, new.

If you press me, you'll hear the soughing/sifting of worlds, pure cipher/
unsurpassable trouvaille. An answer won't come [I want to add "to one in crisis"] but I do have the odd
line; this one—

"bring my city back, my back my witness" over and over again, I'm sure it'll fit somewhere.
Like the time on Euston Road when the phrase "diamond synchrotron" made me think of him, and in my
head it somehow meant "are you happy in your work, are you happy?"
Dead pristine soulless diamond lastend, I wrote later. I'm mouthing it now and I say
I know you. You get bored easily. I know you in your airless room and your hats hung up
lax and hunched, unmoving not unhappy. Johnny Rotten called you "killer dog" once,
in that place where trains run underfoot. In Za-Za lounge you ordered a Gibson
and got a gimlet, and I'd got a back-edging slice to the head and went mad—thought I saw
Demetrius from AMND in flight over the gorge, even madder. How these scenes spill.

Of which, there are pails on the driveway for water.

I could have sworn I heard a radio downstairs, but no.

Maryrose Larkin

***from* The Identification of Ghosts**

sparrow separates its wings into sentences
arrows & essential knowledge

sparrow gives way as a
specimen wanderer or being awake & grace

saint citation
reassembled

rays &
diagnosis lead to

the body in action
or a house of unnatural tracts

Wander or where where one should not be

a rabbit

risen at random

it's hands move so as to escape

by chance or arrive somewhere

capacitance

(of an animal)

having no or having wandered

of the eyes or by the mistake

only this far & still
survival is a cipher

even when translated

it occurs to people

distorted sometimes drastic
an astray out lived rite

the wings (sparrow)
& the rabbit (body)

is it the sound

or the meaning
wings' inner surface

that extends from the
mean to the

tip of the
infinite itself

inner surface
traversed

only translated
this far

white
abandoned to
to cipher

beginning the often

I wanted to be either be astray
or kept where other items of the same kind are

Cori Winrock

[Persistence]: THE WORD TURNED BODY

The mirrored horseshoe of teeth-marks on your chest,
bright pinking cuffs of gums, consistent pattern of your you

-turning. Don't tell me again tell me again we turn into
some other form of other. Body me to the train tracks.

Orthograph me. Foment me. Send someone to vowel
these knots. To skirt these bare bones. Then send someone else

to save me. I'll throw down. I'll glove us in tight. Surrender
myself to a speechless: My body turned by the already

said: already the hooves of our words refusing
to arrive as cells to the contusion.

[Suggestibility]: ANESTHESIA WORKS WITH YOUR OWN SHALLOW BREATHS

I've been falling into falling for
the trick of gently: an egg

pulled from the ear—one sweet
gesture of cold: ovalled

pressure against pinna.
The gloves slip off, snap

into doves, hover blankly
above the audience. But watch

the assistant sawed, legs still
pump-pumping; light kicked in

to her nervous heads.
Flash!paper ignites the audible

gasp and white begins
to interior; invites thin air—:

the gauzy brain bends
dendritic, tendrils satined

from skull to stage.
Bawdily, the dura lifts its slim

curtain—o softened
shell, the cranium is sudden

& layering off. Organs
reduce reappear

numb & rocking in a nerve
-less sea. This is meant

to be forgotten. Stop looking
at the magician's hands. If you turn

the cups over—: the curved
contusion, un-bled

thing, rolls obediently
forward.

Ashley VanDoorn

Two Dog Dreams

Because the job is very violent and involves blood, beating or killing of some kind, every day the small dog comes home from work and must be wrapped in warm, wet fabric and stored in a clear container. The dog says “it’s like being in the womb,” points and accuses “YOUR womb.” And so it is that the dog turns into a baby, YOUR baby, and so it is that you take the job to spare the baby. When getting dressed in your bloody clothes the house expands into a similar house, but a house under attack, with a mother and a baby and a red skinny man and a blue fat man who put the mother and baby in the only room that locks. Through the door slats a creature comes closer, a cause of screams and roars, so you hide in the closet half-full of water. Should you go under or will it make no difference? If you come up for air will it alert the approaching beast? Did you not notice the half-door on the right? It leads to a round balcony, off which you leap and fly to a busy street. In a bar the red and blue men are not dead as you assumed, only scorched, though the mother and baby are killed. They say the beast was a vampire poet that sucks images, and to you that’s a clue you have to go back to get your bags and coolers. You must gather them all to take home, but it is too much to carry.

Going home is huge with hallways. Every room contains additional rooms. One can stare into the dark stairs forever. Home is inside a missing or dead woman, a kind of mourning, followed by a kind of ecstasy. A medium spotted dog leads you deep into the upper corner room. A golden puppy awakes and loses her human lover. Rub the belly of the puppy, surprised it’s not a boy, middle finger penetrating her human sex and she is human lips and hair and breasts and skin kissing. In her eyes a whiteness is entered by a pinpoint of rainbow light and the whiteness explodes. She wants you to witness how in the sky floating all around white roiling masses tumble through the dark clearance. They consist of white beast-like dogs, biting and snarling and fighting—thus they are held together. In order to break open the white masses, one has to enter them in human form and make love. But they devour any humans among them. Humans can turn into dogs as disguise, but if humans become dogs in the mass or enter the mass as dogs, they will become one of the dogs, and can’t become human again. Going back and forth between human and dog, trying to get into one of the masses and still remain human, this is progress.

Source as Last Resort / Sort of Slat / Seasonally Slated Retort

We claimed burned clearings our first winter old.
Resource: formed clearance lacks crumble.
But spoil banks evolved. We were spoiled fossils.
And only shoots: fixation by lightning or fixation by plants.

/ embedded in
rock with other
view-connected
bodies annulled
gradually parallel /

All animals need little gallons of ill-
powered edible organisms pumped
into digestive mouths making masks.
Like the most muscled mussels upon
nutrient muss we became large as islands
but broken small as crewmember hands.

Conquering geographies, we were plunging sponges
turned lung-engaged. Manhandled mandibles
led to mandates. To date man has dibs on going digital.

/ since time self-
souring hours skin
sores between
boundaries soar
to score fist bliss
heretic mimetic cruel
wheel will kneel to
warp/weave/web /

To restore or renew wetlands regarded
as wastelands, we channeled
money like talk into porous soils
along anomalous-sized streams
marking the _____-most extent where
a series of small tidals flushes flying
ideals out to where Fire Island opens
to Fire Inlet off the right edge of the...

Enter the internet, thread where we trace
the inside track to our enhanced way. Screen
trances previous-day-dead skin off in the a.m.
Speak-type hands wildly wire toward thoughtful posers
to unsettle the collective text free. Sun-slabs slate dream farms.

/ trash is paper
when accumulated

litter representing years
ignites—obscurity
shades seedlings
of desirable regimes
of flood but also
withholds a deep layer
of wade-tolerant
tinder desks inside/

The cyber body a sweat of aggregate flaps
grappling such yuck: mauve fluke, bunker
love, adamantyne snag, ermine blather,
tympanum corridor, mended colander,
apple width, tipping grip, pastel posture,
palpable alabaster, pall polish, carpet plethora—
sometimes almost thick enough to stand on.

S P E L L / L E A P (alphabetic imaging)

Shed (s)kin strewn aLl ovEr where you never hAve to “hi my name” about to
Play the (P)art of marmaLade-tuned-steel inbrEd towArd in-crowd just fit-out
Expressways turned highways as eye-timbre takes to air a new yesterday sPent
Larger than Life spans drivEn into chAracter Past a Lasting cast (rElent!)
Lost: picture A b(e)ar-carrier insert a warbler-door to aPpear through b(l)urred

Stab/l/e micro-group interacting with drop of we/a/pon-water & entire war-
Pond itself or start(l)ing mar in which us fronds are located as rich as Source
Expression alters desire Powering any group’s maps rolE-surrounded appLy
Learning (s)pace packed into narrative captivity caps rapt activity which is why
Look how-cute-crowd smothers into cheapergreater megaLopolis if this
Essential half-slEep of rouses engulfs the current strAnd doubling Possible
Activity for misplaced houSe-restricted suscepTible to the cost’s cause
Please accept ordEr to drown ground up untiL emerging L-word-assured

the bookkeeper] shelves the/n [not goddessless and

and there is no false steam in a fake sheet is her fantasy the
in which there is no skin shorn enough to skip reading the
and to read (single out) is to crowd (lonely) on home and
to this bound to this binding to this born but
makes her feel singular in a crowd the s/he written over there and
page-strung stung the crowd of clap-and-
kick girls chanting “BE BEE-EXCITED” or
so she hears s/he masks a good fear-face and
is stunned when s/he takes her to heretical/hysterical core or
cores her cord to caring corridor gore her door explore her ore or
lore her explode and explain her load the
s/he spittles her to her-hi/story decoy nest it’s the
“best sex” that infants her from the
hive of blonde girls until worship honeys her into the
blades s/he’s sheaves shouldering two wings her ears and
buzzing a box for cheering in scare-quotes all the
little eggs not text or insecticide or suicide but
intersect inside (insert her blurting) silence but

Ask Master Echo (Magic Row)

Is there laughter in the ligament?

leggy bent

Is there vigor in the sentiment?

semen tent

How do petals crack their pigments?

fracture minutes

Why do wax flesh and fog machines scream?

past flash, throb rotting

Should we adapt to mounting or modify?

about tripod eye

Is God home?

strobe foam

Does mind scout before it scales?

tidal stale

What is “slow”?

flow

Who do we consult?

no result

Where went our avataric tendencies?

redundant leniency

Who is a euphoria warrior?

ever flair

Against any coincidence?

coin dance

Where are the superpredators?

pre-dated ore

Which slopes make possible growth?

ossified own

Where Wary

closet with candles and our flame shirts removed a message
a message you meant to next me
with lotion I didn't know what
you were or I
was winter and burning and trying in the half-dark
to find the tip-
ping point of tilted melted wax I was no more
supple

basement with turned off
tv we weren't watching but looking
with paint-tipped fingers each at the other
more or less more
known by tracing the edges in the fading window
light was not the same
but anyway turned
stunning

woods not on the way home not deep or dark
or sparse we did not come across
a clearing or thorny tangle or circle
of rocks had been a fire now just ash
we did not against a tree
together or even meet
beneath the moon a moment was not
stolen

beach-you is away all slick with sun and come-
and-go waves glint or glare gold
ring you I cannot
but in mind I am gathering
all the storms together stored
in a house expandable and expendable
where we find each day
someone

BIOGRAPHIES

Jeff Alessandrelli lives in Lincoln, NE, where he co-curates the latest incarnation of The Clean Part Reading Series. He is the author of the forthcoming little book *Erik Satie Watusies His Way Into Sound* (Ravenna Press, 2011); recent work by him appears in *Forklift*, *Ohio*, *CutBank*, *Quarterly West*, *Open Letters Monthly* and *diode*.

Carrie Bennett is a graduate of the Iowa Writers' Workshop and author of *biography of water* (Word Works' Washington Prize, 2004). She currently lives in Somerville, MA and teaches writing at Boston University. Her poetry has been published in *Boston Review*, *Caketrain*, *Denver Quarterly*, *Indiana Review*, *Interim* among others. Her chapbook, *A Quiet Winter*, will be published next spring (dancing girl press).

Molly Brodak is the author of the book *A Little Middle of the Night* (U of Iowa Press, 2010) and the chapbook *Instructions for a Painting* (Greentower, 2007). She is currently the Poetry Fellow at Emory University.

John Duvernoy was raised in the hills of Central New York. He is the author of the chapbook *Razor Love* (Unlock the Clockcase Press). He is a contributing editor to the literary journal *Paul Revere's Horse*.

Michael Flatt's work has appeared recently or is forthcoming from *32 Poems*, *Fast Forward Press* and *Samuel Beckett Today/Aujourd'hui*. He is an associate editor for Counterpath Press in Denver, where he also teaches.

Christine Gardiner is a student of the English language and its literature. She holds a BA and MFA from Brown University and is currently a doctoral candidate at the University of Denver, where she is writing her dissertation on television.

Matthew Johnstone is the author of *Let's be close Rope to mast, you Old light* (Blue & Yellow Dog Press, 2010). More writing can be found in *GlitterPony*, *Shampoo*, *elima*, and *Otoliths*. He's hard at work on *'Pider*, a smart poetry web journal out of Tennessee, Nashville. He sometimes blogs over yonder at <http://hemouthsmewongblogspot.com>.

Becca Jensen lives in Los Angeles where she gathers information and listens to Dwight Yoakam. Her poems can be found in *Thermos*, *Slope*, *EOAGH*, *Shampoo* and *Sixth Finch*.

Lily Ladewig's poems have appeared in *Absent*, *Conduit*, *Denver Quarterly*, *Salt Hill*, and *SUPERMACHINE*. She is the author of the chapbooks *You Are My Favorite Person of the Year* (Mondo Bummer Press, 2010) and, with Anne Cecelia Holmes, *I Am A Natural Wonder* (Blue Hour Press, 2011). Her first full-length book, *The Silhouettes*, will be published by SpringGun Press in 2012.

Mark Lamoureux lives in Astoria, NY. He is the author of three full-length collections of poetry: *Spectre* (Black Radish Books 2010), *Astrometry Orgonon* (BlazeVOX Books 2008) and *29 Cheeseburgers / 39 Years* (Pressed Wafer, Forthcoming 2012). His work has been published in print and online in *Fence*, *miPoesias*, *Jubilat*, *Denver Quarterly*, *Conduit*, *Jacket*, *Fourteen Hills* and many others. In 2006 he started Cy Gist Press, a micropress focusing on ekphrastic poetry. He holds an MFA from the New School and teaches in the CUNY system.

Maryrose Larkin lives in Portland, Oregon. She is the author of *Inverse* (nine muses books), *Whimsy Daybook 2007* (FLASH+CARD), *The Book of Ocean* (i.e. press, 2007), *DARC* (FLASH+CARD, 2009), *The*

Name Of This Intersection is Frost (Shearsman Books, 2010) and *Marrowing* (Airfoil, 2011). *The Identification of Ghosts* is forthcoming from Chax Pless. Maryrose is interested in procedures as a springboard into the unknowable.

Karen Lepri holds an M.F.A. in Literary Arts from Brown University. Her poems, translations, & reviews have appeared or are forthcoming in *6x6*, *Boston Review*, *Conjunctions*, *Denver Quarterly*, *Lana Turner*, *Mandorla*, *TYPO*, and *Vanitas*, among others. Lepri was the recipient of the American Academy of Poets, Weston, & Frances Mason Harris Prizes in poetry. She lives in Cape Cod.

Jane Lewty is currently an assistant professor of English Literature and creative writing at the University of Amsterdam and holds an MFA from the Iowa Writers' Workshop (2009). Her poems have appeared, or are forthcoming, in *Volt*, *La Petite Zine*, *Word/for Word*, *Versal*, *Upstairs at Duroc*, *Dear Sir*, *Cricket Online Review* and others. She has co-edited two essay collections: *Broadcasting Modernism* (University Press of Florida, 2009) and *Pornotopias: Image, Apocalypse, Desire* (Litteraria Pragensia, 2010) and is also on the editing team of VLAKE magazine.

Sarah Mangold lives in Edmonds. She is the author of *Household Mechanics* (New Issues), and the forthcoming *Electrical Theories of Femininity* (Pavement Saw Press). Recent chapbooks include, *I Meant To Be Transparent* (Little Red Leaves e/editions), *An Antenna Called the Body* (Little Red Leaves Textile Series) and *Cupcake Royale* (forthcoming, above/ground press). From 2000-2009, she edited *Bird Dog*, a print journal of innovative writing and art and currently co-edits, FLASH + CARD, a chapbook and ephemera press.

Monica Mody's work has appeared in the *Boston Review* Poet's Sampler, *West Wind Review*, *RealPoetik*, *Cannot Exist*, *Compost*, *horse less review*, *Nether*, and *apocryphal text*, among other journals. She is the author of a chapbook, *Travel & Risk*, from Wheelchair Party, and has a book forthcoming in Fall 2012 from 1913 Press.

Jefferson Navicky earned his MFA from Naropa University's Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics and teaches English at Southern Maine Community College. His work has appeared in *Quickfiction*, *elimae*, *Smokelong Quarterly* and others. Recently, Jefferson received a grant through the Maine Arts Commission to finish his six-play cycle, *Redwing Solitaire*, which will be read this fall. Jefferson lives in Maine with his girlfriend and bicycles.

Dawn Pendergast lives in Houston, Texas. She's written three micro-chapbooks: *leaves fall leaves* (Dusie Kollektiv), *Off Flaw* (Dusie Kollektiv) and *Mexico City* (Macaw Macaw Press). She is currently an editor for Little Red Leaves (littleredleaves.com) and produces handmade chapbooks for the textile series (www.textileseries.com). More of her writing can be found on her website (whatbirdsgiveup.com).

Deborah Poe is author of the poetry collections *Elements* (Stockport Flats Press 2010), *Our Parenthetical Ontology* (CustomWords 2008) and several chapbooks—most recently a four-part edition entitled *the last will be stone, too* as part of the Dusie Kollektiv (5). Poe's work is forthcoming or has recently appeared in the Galerie de Difformite online chapbook *Tableaux Meurants*, *Mantis*, *Peep/Show*, *Bone Bouquet*, *Trickhouse*, *No Contest*, *Fact-Simile Magazine*, *Peaches & Bats* and *Denver Quarterly*. For more information, please visit www.deborahpoe.com.

Linda Russo is the author of *Mirth* (Chax Press, 2007); new poems have recently appeared or are forthcoming in *New American Writing*, *Tinfish*, *Interim*, *summer stock*, *Peaches & Bats*, and *Little Red Leaves*. "Roots & Scatters" is part of a larger project conceiving writing as "yard work" that extends into the larger bioregion. She lives in the Columbia River Watershed and teaches at Washington State University.

Jen Stockdale's poems have appeared in *Alice Blue*, *The Carolina Quarterly*, *Salt Hill*, and elsewhere. Two small chapbooks are forthcoming from What to Us (Press) and Wheelchair Party in 2011. She holds an MFA from the University of Notre Dame.

Ashley VanDoorn currently lives in Atlanta, GA and has published poems in *American Letters & Commentary*, *The Canary*, *Seneca Review*, *Web Conjunctions*, *Gulf Coast*, *No Tell Motel*, *Typo*, *Coconut*, *Word For/Word*, *Shampoo*, *glitterpony*, *La Petite Zine*, *Wire Sandwich*, *580 Spit*, *BlazeVox*, and *Pinstripe Fedora*.

Cori A. Winrock's poems have appeared in (or are waiting in the wings of) *Colorado Review*, *Blackbird*, *Black Warrior Review*, *Denver Quarterly*, *From the Fishhouse* & others. She is a recipient of a Barbara Deming Individual Artist Grant and was chosen as Editor's Choice for *Mid-American Review's* James Wright Poetry Award. She was an Emerging Writer Fellow at Kingston University in London, UK and runner-up for the 2011 Bucknell Stadler Fellowship. Her manuscript has been a finalist for a number of prizes including the Academy of American Poets' Walt Whitman Award and the Kore Press First Book Award. She is currently a Visiting Assistant Professor at Geneseo.