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“Caliban is hospitable to any writing which, when chewed,
makes him hear music in the air.”

CALIBAN

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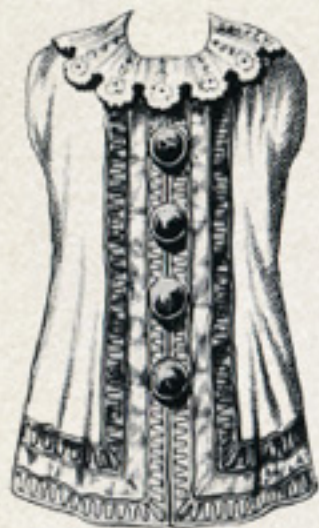
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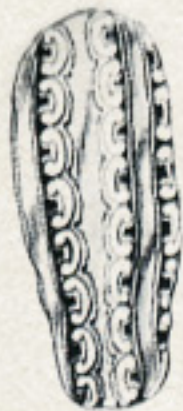
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CONTRIBUTORS' ADVICE



IVAN ARGÜELLES

(**cadmus**)

what language matters
 a little and some are
dead mattering in life
poets brood some such
 distinctions matter
speaking a little pidgin
speaking some hobson jobson
 vedic meter and
fire oblations to a god
who can only stammer
 what's in the doorway
what's in the bread box
how do we go down the stairs
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free flight in open syllables
how do you say what do you do
 in late indo-paki-turk speech
“usted” is nothing but a
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 or a face can be removed
and another mask put on
language in a hat or
 how many gloves does
it take to fake a berlitz
some organization in the mind
 the rest is a deep breath
going through the tunnel
and seasons later in the Sorbonne
 rioting with students of '68

going to the movies to see it
burn to see the road fail
 taking lessons to read
as much phonetic decay as will
possibly reorient the sonata form
 language matters dreams
red as far as the eye can
but the paratactic sense
 of the universe is falling
a paradigm for the verb “to be”
mandarin as the woven robe
 sewn with golden cranes
in an embroidery like an alphabet
suspicious sounds sleeping
 deeply in psychoanalysis
everything loosened and blown
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 at the end of things watching
a lunar eclipse or a mad man
spinning sentences out of gas
 white munitions ancient
as the year of the cataleptic
bonze sitting there fetid
 ready to blaze viet cong
lunches later with angels
hunkered on a distant river bank
 paradise of silence
no language matters nothing
two people caught in a trance
 love sand bags dust

J/J HASTAIN

from *XYR*

1

**we had no paper to write it down so we just said it
again and again**

begin within benison. the knees bruised, tender. prostrate knees are little arcs, are ways of proceeding. as proceeding, the words: “dear deva” were being pronounced maniacally. mania followed by a flood of filial pictures. fractures of pictures of a lineage of kneeling.

noting, xe noticed it was not the same to attempt to pray to devas. something felt different now, than it did when xe used to pray to God, when God was believed in, back then. this difference often brought xem grief. even amidst all of that meditation that they said was supposed to help things; even during Kundalini yoga and practice of ecstatic postures. yes, grief in a body in that form, felt like the organs grunting all at once; a collective humming that did not hone xem.

xyr friends regularly asked xem about the grief. whether or not it made xem feel like ending xyr own life. they found themselves wanting to translate xem for xem. to translate xem to xemself; proposing ways of relieving, attempting to comfort. “but the excess dark hair on your back and on your face makes you that much more magical,” they emphasized. “if you squint while looking at you, it looks like you have beards of light, hirsute light.” but there was never a whole response to that, from xem.

the friends often reported to each other after spending time with xem, that xe felt like xe was stuck just under the uttering surface of a dark water. they mentioned to each other that they wished they could somehow get down below the surface to xem; reside with xem there, in that barely able to breathe, barely able to continue, but mostly tenuous and not enabled place.

3

we sleep; we wake

as the sun began to set, xe was sitting on a patch of dried grass at the city park. xe had been sitting on that same patch, upright for hours; had experienced an inner hysteria at the fact that the image of the trinity with xyr first father's face, had somehow become so indigenous to the qualities of xyr bed. xe wondered if xe would ever be able to really rest.

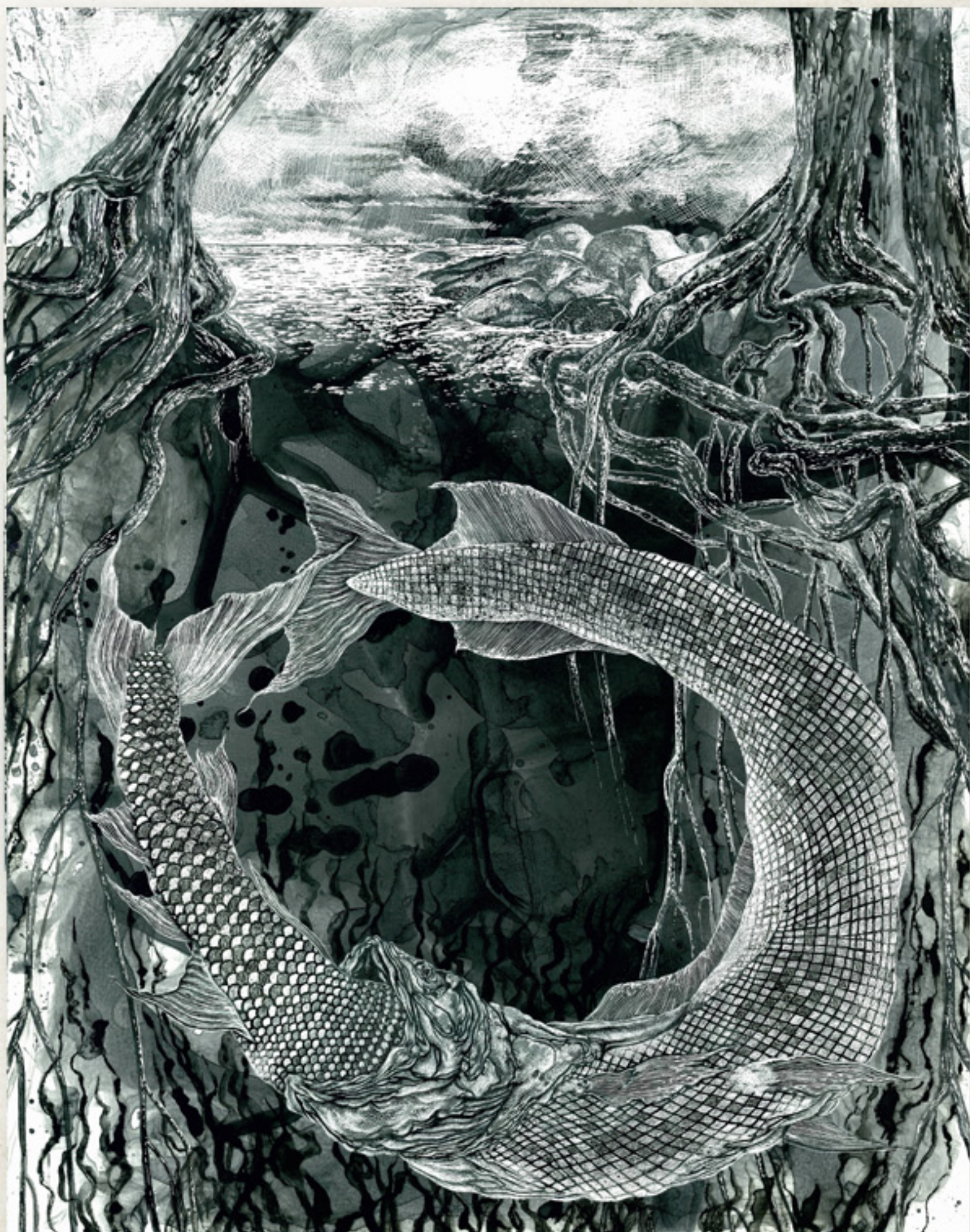
xe decided to stay there that day, because xe thought xe might be able to dream a different type of dream there, vertical. "how can I expect to have a different visitation if I can only produce reoccurring dreams of the images that haunt?" xe muttered to xemself, aloud.

xe pretended not to notice when children of passers-by pointed to xem, pointed xem out: "why does that lady have hair on her face?" xe heard one child say. the parent looked to see if xe moved xyr gaze toward the child. xe did not, so the parent moved the child along, lifted them up by their arm a little to hurry the process, as they turned the corner. xe caught all of this in xyr peripheral vision. it made the humming behind xyr eyes worse.

xe exhaled hard and brought xyr attention to the backs of xyr closed eyelids. held gaze there with a harshness (which usually made all things outside of that harshness, numbed), then loosened xyr gaze but kept xyr eyes closed. it was at the moment of the musculature loosening that they appeared, many of them, in the shape of an unfolded scroll; like the linked fingers of surgical gloves. individually, the manikin hands were each no larger than a bread box, but together, the entire group of them, appeared to be very large. yes, felt like a largess, liquid presence. a vastness tilted, toward states of psychic meat.



LEVIATHAN by Abdiel Acosta, 2011,
ink wash on scratchboard (11" x 14")



THE KILLER IN ME THAT LIES WITHIN by Abdiel Acosta, 2011,
ink wash on scratchboard (14" x 11")

ROB COOK

Brautigan Mountain Depressions

no one today
on the decaying chat line,
just frequencies
from people who no longer
call, no longer need to be
emptied,

people stranded at Christmas
or some other heartbreak
revealed by the snow when it dries.

a list of names,
how tall,
how much hair,
how to recognize them
when their voices are wrong,
their eyes weaker by six inches,

talking about money
when there is
no more money,

talking about autumn
when there is
no more autumn,

and sharing less each minute.

“it’s a long walk to the insides
of another person
where the mountains
lose their way,” says the one who calls
himself brautigan 1935.

men who survive
years spent searching their bodies
in deep motel wilderness.

touching themselves until
nothing is left.

no way back to the first
mountain depression:

“two years old
and abandoned two days
with four walls,
a bottle of canadian shoe livers,
a window that lied about the weather,
a newborn sister for food.”

the years 1935-1984 are not a real place.

montana missing with someone’s
made-up measurements:

“i fell so many miles into her thoughts of me
that i found a sky of my own.

i had a voice once.

a voice and a name people liked.”

Cook/18

the room ignores
all its embedded shadows,
all trout minings
and creek bed discoveries.

it's late in america.

“food” no longer a word.

poet with brains of a gunshot,
nights of infant alcohol.

sunlight still scratching to get inside, or closer.

Trout Story

The same plot at the end of everyone's life:

houses fading from the weight of the power lines,
plenty of room for the clouds to develop into rain
though the sky is missing even at the beginning
of the one story left:

a cologne salesman who decapitates flowers as a form of
kindness and disappears, except for ATM receipt, e-mail
address to which nothing arrives, black and white photograph
without conscience or sentimentality.

"We heard him walking in his room. He didn't know where its
edges were. He must have walked a thousand miles, but he
was never angry," his neighbor says.

Quietest in the room's memory are the last world's Conklin pens
arranged like forests and the window looking out into
the remoteness of November, its few leaves
cringing like strips of canned meat.

Closest to his own birth is the river's long reflection
whose shipwrecked storms can neither wake nor rest
nor feel the cologne salesman's wounds opening in the water.

"He had the hobbies of the trout that took his life," his only
friend says.

"He looked like he should've had blonde hair, but it was
brown," another person says.

The cologne salesman had been seen, but there isn't much more to say about him, except maybe that the water, even with its hyphens and hard prozac currents knew everything all along.

At the end nobody returns from the air-conditioned depths of their work space—
it will take an atlas of access roads and fire trails
through the fading cities and antelope wastes to save them.

They will have to write the book themselves.
They will have to make up their own fields and rivers.

At the end they find the body of the cologne salesman: they know who it is by instinct and by the slaughter of business cards around him. When all traces of the story have passed, a trickle of elbow musk stains the coat hanging in the cologne salesman's closet, hidden far from the unmapped days of wind that somehow survived.

MERCEDES LAWRY

The Lesser Creatures

The lesser creatures grow wings
and fly off in a gust of fable.
A suite of bees finds bloom,
hope stuck like a torn petal
on glass, no less a signature
of wind, that confluence
perhaps traceable, perhaps not.
Seven turtles bask on the slim logs.
No liars here, no scoundrels.
No witness to evaporation:
rain, time, purpose or luck.
Just evidence of metamorphosis
as the miraculous insects lodge
where they are needed: the windowsill,
the muted painting, next to the peony
and the lion, on the underside
of the wrist of the curious boy.

Pluck

Umbilical wishes not defined
outside the futurist context
will tug and pull, flatter
your silly side until you capitulate
and spread yourself thin enough
for translucent lovers and gourmet fools.

Hardiness is not a quality rewarded
by the slick and slim, the cosmopolitan
acrobats, the shameless hussies.

Take the backbone out and twist it
into a mask. See through bony eyes
and outlandish paint to an emphasis
on secrets that may only be fluff.

You might not imagine yourself
a heaven-dweller. You might prefer
the alley. Swim out of the cold city
with alacrity, mustering your own shadow
who may need convincing, infallible
as she's always believed herself to be.

No Reverse

Gertrude Stein drives forward
and sometimes there is rain
and sometimes, annoyance, even
as the variations of green provide interest.
Alice traces blue lines that are true
and not true because directions
are helpful to some, but only a distraction
to others, all the while movement fuels
the days going from one place to another
and so on for what waits but eternal
motivation, if one is curious,
has not been broken by difficult times
or sadness. The stubborn birds sing
and those notes translate to danger
or sustenance or a feathered ruse.
Gertrude knows and Alice knows
and they drive on because they know things
about each other, they know things about the world.

JAMES GRABILL

Intercontinuation

The clean burn of workhorses that axled through a last century,
the soft puffs of masterfully thrown engraved Moroccan knives,
the Western sprawls between finger cymbals past equivalency,
the spiraling night galaxies Van Gogh saw through the blue sky,

the inbred faith in a prayer's blast the more the vision doesn't jive,
the modern Parthenon before corruption of Earth orbiting the sun,
the peripheral camera-flash terrain in the evolutionary subconscious,
the back-room belts of operatic tremulous crescendo in wing-beat air,
the great aunts taking Union sponge baths in nurses' tents of the war,

the Euclidian foundational goose-V firings in neocortical encircling,
the bee burning in the bee, in arts from before conception of Earth,
the neural steel millennia out of a match-flare barn-owl burn of oils,
the liquid auditory cartography in an instant over the dolphin sea
floor,

the giant sunflowers that opened through velocity of beauty that
forms,

the urgent lulls of squirrels that are perched in the wingspan of wrens,

the igneous, ingenious microbial nations as they are within being,
the belly of Buddha and wheelmakers, given the billion perfumes,
the current North Atlantic Big Bang echoing sea within the familiar,
the praying mantis articulating through long-term genetic memory,
the endo-European affinity for a hair's breadth, maybe a little more

out of trunk-lit bursts of great horned owl through future timber
still barked, out of broccoli here feeding well on elemental light,
as from transcendental eyes of indwelling descendants within matter

alive out of energy, as out of splashes of corn in the congregated
grackles, as from anaerobic embarkations into the infinitesimal
and future collisions of species with time out of the compass eye.



Push

The onrush of surviving like no tomorrow,
the start-up of imperative like no return,
the downward dreaming Motorola *prima materia*,

the cross-generational meteor crater of nastiness,
the grinding-down gears surrounding the nativity,
the beautifully whole openness and half ignorance,

the deepening neural swim of autonomic intelligence,
the driftwood mammalian sculptures seawater has
shaped over many years that already have been lost,

the parliament of healing spectrum of fierce collaboration,
constructions of organizational moss compound wait
at the origin of grief for the future we'd be leaving undone,

moving at speeds of scarlet-cured turns of in-house gravity,
the ocean's stone-ground give of short stacks of temporal
smoldering contracted impure, widely unformed invisibility,

the massive closed and opening first-felt saturations burning
and watering, the roasted chain-linked abeyance ongoing
and gone into the hot and diamond-cold embrace of an ocean
talon, the blunt revolution of wheeling blades taking stabs

at central authority, the streaking alarm that fails to dissolve
in enough time or no-time, the efficiency at which advances
overtake witnesses and wastes of boilerplate responsibility

in the trash burns behind rendering, the disusual stroom
of Sabbath forbiddery, the vulnerable hungry sea-weight
lost or serving the incomplete commutations of inception,
surviving commons, or forsaken thrills of the continuum.

Future Parts of the Past

The incomprehensible uncompromised business of family,
The nature of unchecked addition, and divisions in identity,
The reversals of bad with good, or falsified high-end propriety,
The risks to a future expecting outages to appear predestined,

The air fighting the sun over what's left for the wild horses,
The common sense going unplugged, sea-soaked or infrared,
The raw volts torn from the violet socket, or however it feels,
The dust and heat as metabolisms speak something missing,
The place human beings weren't the first to be disrupting,

The extraordinary paradox being left behind in progressions,
The vast wheels hauberk of red-eyed star-rimmed unknowns,
The future galaxy in a second with more days than any of us has,
The widening into which we were born in a land tended by bees,

The coordinated sweeps before bees head out, to return with gold,
The mind which is ready, already lit by blossom through the yards,
The cypress-driven interlocking pairs of gyres within the cells,

The purple black eyes of grackles as being grows closer to thought,
The girl who has been holding an acorn, for the feel, she says,
The kelp forest where a manta ray glides in quantum parramatta,
The thought reaching a man's arm, to the hive being protected,
The future place that draws the girl in, the way it reminds her,

The painter with a hat of lit candles facing the ceiling fresco,
The turn-of-the-world Madonna and Child in survival of senses,
The eyes that go back to night, to witness the ways it arrives,
The plumes of untouchable ancient rustling that won't be complete,
The reports of Madam A. David-Neel of powerful earnest
 contemplators,
The new or old man or woman embarking for the philharmonic
 future.



AVION by Pedro Vizcaino, 2012,
cardboard collage



TAXI BY Pedro Vizcaino, 2012,
cardboard collage

S'MARIE CLAY

You Only Truly Understand One Room

You are buried in the chaise lounge, the mirror
far off. You are just as living
as the furniture. You must rename the others.

Door: dead end
window: aperture
chair: statue
bed: rusted wagon

The only memory
is stairs & a heroic climbing.
Your hand is banister from the wrist down.

The wardrobe holds the cellar
contents down. They both
have the same rot gut & should remain
embroidered shut. You are beside a scale kitchen

just large enough to cook dolls. Their eyes
are still on you.
Broth of bells.

The leftover porcelain dolls. You are bothered by
their winter prose. Take them to the ironing
board. Lay them flat
let the steam remove
the wallpaper. Paper dolls
& more shelf space to rest your eyes.

The Saw in Song

I warned her not to open the mouth—the piano
had taken so many
housed them in pieces, kept the fingers for tuning.
By the vibration of
the house I knew she'd tired of listening to doors
that swing just as the rest had. How softly she fed
her body into the wooden
case & carried away. Don't forget a song like that
played by severed fingers
all ten at once. How sudden the kettle rung me in
to the kitchen rafters
where aprons haunt, more by the day.

A Departure

Laid out, the wallpaper divides
the living room. Between the window
& I is the science of ceiling

& looking up. Applying wallpaper is
wet knees, slit tendons
& smooth shadows, then

there is the wandering arch from
my hips to my neck, where news travels
from afar & I am only human
downhill. I have reached

the last wall, I am running out
of skin. I am thankful for the great
window that must stay uncovered.

EDWARD SMALLFIELD

the pure products of America/go crazy

trying to define “America” here, I’m tempted to say “a country that does not exist.” a country that a character in *Crime and Punishment* says that he is going to before he shoots himself. talking with Socrates about *The Lady in the Lake*, I pointed out that nothing from the novel exists any longer. that LA, that Arrowhead Lake, have been erased by what now inhabits that space. (...Freud’s metaphor for the unconscious as the city of Rome with all the buildings still standing, even the ones that occupy the same lots...) preserved in Chandler’s pages as Troy is preserved. S seemed somewhat surprised. the Acropolis still looms over Athens. an erasure. or its opposite. *un borrador*. a draft. a draft of shadows. *un borrador de sombras...*

emotion (recollected)

really, if I were to be honest, I would admit that I'm only interested in writing about our own past. that letter—the X, for example—in that usage. on, I believe, our second visit, not our first. something mysterious, perhaps so transparent it can't be seen. a desire that hasn't been spoken, that can't be, even in the mind, or articulated as a wish because...



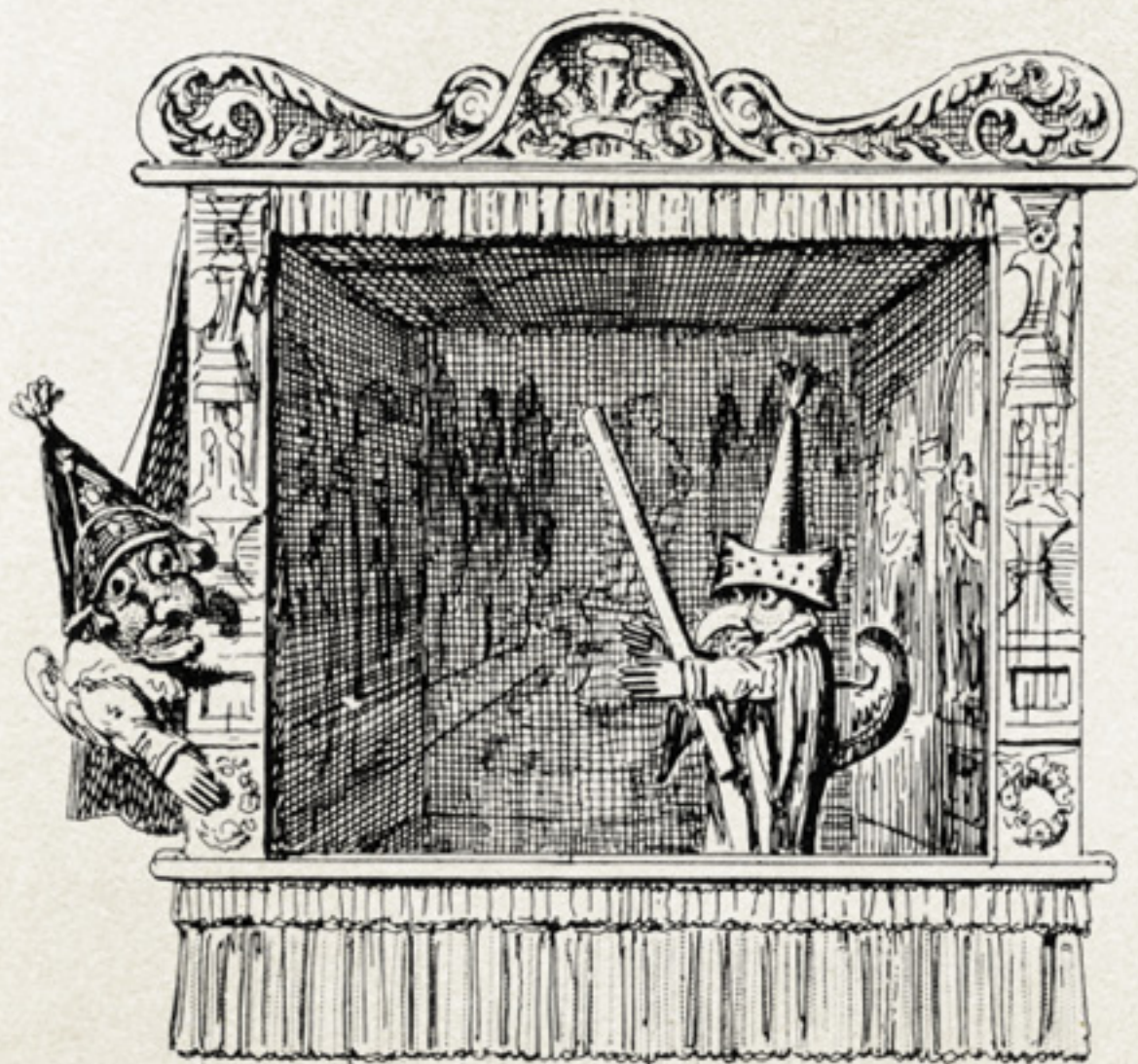
from familiar

tus palabras. robadas. a lesson in. “familiar.” a bar around the corner. Jan Petit. una copa de bordeos. on the wall: carta de l’occitania. more Berkeley (the old Berkeley, the one that doesn’t exist any longer) than any part of France. wherever you are, your country will come to find you...



everyone likes sweet things

The lovers, like exhausted swimmers... in black & white. a translation from the Italian: do you always eat standing up, like a horse? ...you are the chocolate, the sea, the bread, the salt... Life is hard. Work is everything. The rest is dreams.... Poetry ends like a rope...



KAREN GARTHE

Denise's Party

New ice

another
verse

in its special envelope *wafting thru the Day Laws,*

or,

as Japanese things are

Thick Obedience of the all figured out

Or just your average pain is rocking back and forth on her heels

Whereupon the beads of anguish take her

start up the bunny hill

cross country

we're the finest skaters

of

New Ice

We ARE the very Least Friction

core and sample baseline *she doesn't want to lose her husband*

we're so far into Jersey now. . .

your Perfect Navy

knits

the bridge

Twill Girl with a big fat book got wet

ripples pages got the covers tear Oh, let it be **T**wilight
cloves rapture indestructibly or let it be Leakey-like
stages of humans summary rake over the edge
evolution girl crossing
aisles with a fine diagonal drink Then a third
snuggles her coat she
sits right down before me **T**wo
of the three wear pearls culture they are
so good at
just like the steam is
gorgeous and
Bellows in the freeze cold air

slurp

Nothing's yours. . .not the dog the baby or the walls of man

not the names of ownership wield

the lengthy soprano warring sure sure sure sure right right
right yeah yeah yeah right yes yes absolutely
anything less doesn't make sense
for my money or my time

It was righteous, then it was conflict. . .then it was mourning

It was personal

Sorrow

Still

True true

The nubby glasses wear their shoes out on the lip

orange/Irish whip up
stirs
hobnobs some picture of weary suffrage
my good farm girl
my wifey to the wick
redhanded grizzle drunk up against he owns 'Impossible'
in
clink ice
if I even bother with ice. . .
the amber Fury Slurp
the keys fumble
hall

The *Jazz* *Messenger*

He said *I don't like Tchaikovsky*
valve trumpets runnel
Velvet chairs dying heart scrapes he said *I'm hungry* he said *I can't*
make this trip without food

I shall enjoy every minute of your departure It Was The
beginning of the End rattling a dry can, then
soaked
withall

swell erotic tuck-ins

For this is the *Jazz Messenger* who happens only at night
horning his can unto brass

NOW, is not *Silver* The Lace Sound poets take over the water
Under the sharp mural stars, Desert Father agoras and buccaneer
brite lite

?
(indeed. . . *IT IS*
but

*it is also. . . the Beginning of the End) The Linden Spangling her
Giantess at the window*

*Woman Weeping man doesn't know how to console, Man the
Jazz Messenger's cooling trailing
lullaby Joys the Earthworks Joys the potato fields*

King balloons

of the triangle

Christmas I lost you

tunnel Last flips & tags for the price backed

Kansas, Kansas backs

ONE FARMHOUSE LOFT ONE

GirlMom with her bottle

window perch

looks out on the river Fishers dip

King balloons

of washed-up

loft flags

tenderness

ELIZABETH ROBINSON

On being born

Each nakedness recalls
bodies exhausting themselves on each other.

Without sleep— (“sleeping” without
two consonants becomes
“seeing.”)

To see you naked
and completely.

Experience slick with amniotic fluid, blood,
its huge pressure.

They said it would stop hurting immediately
after,

but that’s not how I remember it.

Experience being

skin forced
through folds of skin, even

pain
is peripheral to seeing.

The force on the born thing:

the way the newborn head turns
to recognize air (which

is, after all, its own sound
and its coating, its pelt)

was once you, I see and again

I sleep, the pressure forcing a new surface to come
from the interior. To create sight, to

recall itself as naked.

On Faith

I was able to commiserate with you.

This time, I made myself a speaker. I wore my crown and spoke as one who has a body which can make a voice.

In the future we will reflect ourselves together as a further future but my sympathy will have exhausted itself, and you will see the crown lowered to your head.

*

The crown, obviously enough, is a tree in a forest in danger of itself. The girdle of any growing thing tightens around its diaphragm. The referent is a compass point. We fabricate kindnesses and make them true north. Suddenly the wind is significant, blowing as it does around the waist of the symbol and choking back the expelled air of the crown.

*

Faith is royal disguise. The agate's crust adhered to the blade of grass, sparkling like stale comestibles at the corner of the mouth. Faith's affinity for the sordid. I was not able to make a voice, yet still I credit myself for lingering as the lost corner of these lips, leftover, wiped or absentmindedly licked away. A chapped spot.

*

Faith is the jester who is
so often
the scribe or the magi
transcribing the message or
building a treehouse
sneering at his own deftness. Refusing, the speaker
says,
is a kind of arrogance. The true copy
will not start again at the beginning
to check its accuracy.

DIANE GLANCY

Instructures

Heaven is hierarchical as the nights in the region
of the dream

you see blizzard snowdrifts on an instrument panel
fields disrobed

creeks dribbled by Jackson Pollock
if you get through the bureaucracy of saints

in the cockpit of their halos
the soft part of the temples where the horns

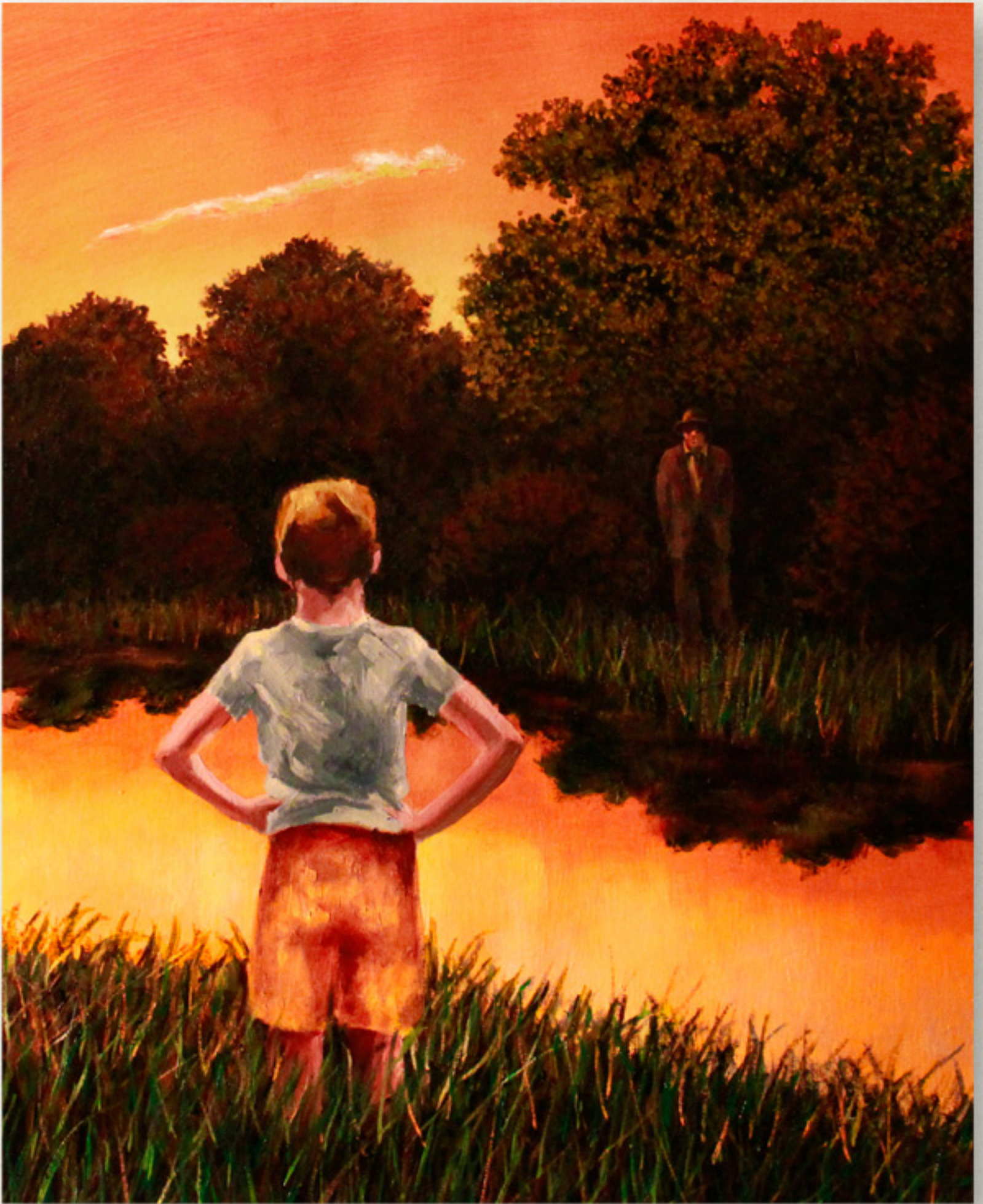
used to be
the taxidermy school

Preservation Avenue
and the crops

the economy moves faster
toward a one-world government

in the landscape of the presystem now
the underneath of surface abatement

all layers dowsed in the upbrush of the country
the dewclaws of animals.



SELF PORTRAITS by Paul Sierra, 2012;
oil on canvas (28" x 22")



TRAVELER by Paul Sierra, 2012,
oil on canvas (30" x 32")

DAN RAPHAEL

Meat Rain

what can i do as the rain corrodes my houses foundation, greasy rain,
i cant believe that came out my faucet, snow down what mountain.
it's the rain that follows me, invisible shimmering cloud.
plants don't mind, cats drink from the puddles, but it wants to make
 a glove on my hand, of my
hand, like my skin belongs to the grease rain, chicken clouds, slowly
 melting tallow glaciers
lay me on hot pavement and hear me sizzle—i don't get sunburn
 i sauté,
even mid winter my arms are slightly tan, slightly green, as if
 a fatty plant

i wont try walking on hot coals coz I'd probably stop in the middle
thinking i was at a barbecue, that i was the barbecue—
blistered feet, ketchup blood.
that's why im so tactile, fingerprints that don't hold still;
when the moons full i howl and moo,
i keep crossing streets and don't know why, my sense of smell is
 paranoid here in the city
surrounded by carnivores, knives and flames i become thin as a vine,
camouflaged in the blues and grays of the sky i waver against
taking what i read of news and politics and grinding them
 into burgers—
midnight on the outside and bloody in the middle,

2

i regularly give at red cross.
i dress tight and walk the full moon streets.
whats been picked, crushed, fermented and filtered to make my
internal vintage,
the same barrel used over and over—a holding tank, a leach field.
i want to live without a sewer system, with an underground spring,
where the rain clouds never cross an urban boundary,

like living in a dirigible where i can catch the rain before it goes
through smog
or re-touches the earth, eating only what flies, absorbing the suns
full alphabet.
my eyes so cloudless i may never cry again.

3

frequent dreams where i cant find my car, cant get back to where
ive been,
im never eating and only talk when im someone else, like when i was
in a george clooney movie
no ones made, not eating whats on my plate til i see its genetic
pedigree

eating kills. not eating kills.
some of the microbes and parasites that make up me are dying
every second,
new cells made to replace whose times run out:
a colony i am, a fine tuned cooperative of all domestic parts, but not
all human,
representing every kingdom of life and technology, every faction of
history and time:
all of us are african, are space beings, informed by neutrinos
from novas.

4

when im overwhelmed with the beauty of a place & time i cut myself
and leave a little blood,
like a micro me that will always be there, even when I forget, when im
long dead,
as the atmosphere changes, forests are plowed,
the oceans permanently flood the tidal pool i wanted to live in

5

a story handed down from the sky to the trees to those born
beneath them—
the bigger the seed the more sun within it,
the deeper the roots the more channels to choose from

those moments i run outside and get soaked while everything else stays
dry and cloudless,
inundated by faces, memories of arms and hands on and around me,
promises in our eyes. then waking up alone and disoriented;
getting home next night without a wallet or the ability to speak,

no gulliver, no colossus with the world between my legs,
just tall enough to be a target, to make others defensive,
i smell like i eat what you don't.
my clothes fit like i stole them but this bodys undeniably mine

GEORGE KALAMARAS

The Valley of Jehosaphat Reconfigured

Some perfect courage might distinguish hand-selled beads from
bees' blood.

We could spin and spin and finally make right all the years of loss.

In the Valley of Jehosaphat, the Day of Judgment has oddly dissolved.
The inoculated necklace will represent a reprimand quite unlike
uncooked food.

Then do not endure decorative hosts unless I die in an unidentified
hat.

Firmly refuse all manner of sick hieroglyphs, and ask yourself if you
might be renamed a most splendid number.

It is 4:17 a.m., and the rain will not stop its confidential crease.
My wife is in bed, dreaming of underground pathways, tornadoes,
exotic vegetables, and huge hand-carved doors.

Explain to me the knock Alexandria has against Athens.
Remind me of the click click click of filmstrips in the school's
pre-holiday afternoon dark, of the fertility of the Tigris
and Euphrates.

While I inserted the coin into the chimney, I imitated the discourse
of bones.

They were piano keys absorbing a dirge from rain's fingernails against
the damper.

I once felt progressively insistent with regard to hygienic kisses.
From then on I limited my affection to dead bees, doorknobs, and the
humming color of groin dust from everyone's red dress.



ELAINE EQUI

Varieties of Fire in Hilda Morley (*a cento*)

under the snow a fire
barely moving

(as scallions are made
of electricity)

a spark of anguish

crackling:
 a live creature

the heart's fire
blown open
& set flying

voice ...
sprung from the lion's mouth
by roots of fire

heat of the earth's
original honey

 All day
the pure heat
 blasts

the skin,
 the pores
golden,

Equi/54

alit
with fire

moon-blaze

smoke-tears

fire of the eyes
looking

in the cold
fire of evening

fiery silence

the white flame
of a crystal brimming—
an edge of fire

Roman candles

(fireworks of conception)

the old stars returning
to their places

A Blue Humming

sky

without the tall, thin
striated wisps of cirrus-words

breaking up,

without the clotted cream
of cumulus cloud porridge.

A practically thoughtless day
(opaque mind)

except for the palest hint
of grey on the horizon

suggesting a possible
reversal,

rehearsal of some still distant
diffuse storm.

Vague apprehension
masquerading as a clear day.

CLAUDIA REDER

Aunt Betty's Boa

We're on our way to the Hotel Ansonia to visit this rumped Russian lady standing on her bed in her full length slip which she says

looks like a nightgown, and it's a nightgown that looks like a dress when she wears it out on grizzly summer days. Right now,

she fingers hello, flinging her pink/blue feather boa over her naked shoulder. She and my mother

converse, switching smoothly back and forth from Yiddish, Russian, German. I can't understand a word, which is the point.

* *

So this is my mother's favorite aunt, the one who buoyed her upbringing, gambling, dancing, out all night.

I won't hear this spontaneous giggle again until my mother is very old, in a wheel chair, and I take her hands in mine, and we dance.

Visitation

Demeter leans back on my natty, blue couch,
her ashy clothes flare. She chews on her cuticles.
They bleed. I massage her swollen feet:
she is much like a shade of my mother
who is also stand offish.

Teach me to spar with old wounds, I want to say
while hoping the couch doesn't start to burn.

Demeter sighs, *What scares me now*
is the blood-shot moon
misaligned dawn.

The wind slams the window, sliding
the moon into focus while fire wraps
the edges of the lake.

You want to know how to grieve?
Send flowers to yourself.

She reties her shoes and knots her belt,
asks me to collect my garden hoses.
Yoked with ropes and axes
she ferries her chorus of burdens
across the glowing hills.



RAFTERS by Jovan Villalba, 2006,
oil and enamel on stainless steel (24" x 24")



A DAWN PERCHED ON DOWNBURSTS by Jovan Villalba, 2011,
oil on stainless steel (40'' x 48'')

ANNA RABINOWITZ

I Have Discovered an Error

Who is the criminal?
In whose custody is the property?

Disobeyed instructions in complete disorder...
The object I fear can never be accomplished

The present is an important crisis
Do not travel in the night if you can possibly avoid it
Much that was previously deposited has been withdrawn

The democracy has been defeated

Love to the children and a kiss for everyone

The affairs of the crops are in a critical state,
Unpromising, almost a failure
And the prospect through which we are passing
Is quite indifferent

What is the answer? *What* is the answer?

Many of the passengers are very sick
Currency is in a deranged state

The clouds are flying away,
defrauded in the transaction

The roads are dry; the streams are dry
The tide is down
Business is down
Exchange is down
Wages are down and workmen are plenty

You are hereby dismissed from my employment

Love to the children and a kiss for everyone



DENVER BUTSON

relax

these are not the executioner's home movies
that is not the executioner as a baby
as a teenager
on his honeymoon
those are not the executioner's children
growing up and leaving home themselves

relax

this is not the executioner's recycling bin
these are not the stones that lead to the executioner's garden
this is not the executioner's driveway

these are not the trees the executioner
sees from his back porch
those are not the crows that the executioner hears
and looks up and watches
before going back to do whatever it was
the executioner does
when he is in his garden
which is not this garden

and that wasn't the executioner's high school diploma
you saw back there on the mantle
the mantle of the fireplace
that isn't the executioner's

and the fire burning wasn't started
by the executioner
the wine in the glass wasn't poured

by the executioner
the cheese on the cutting board
was not arranged there so nicely
by the executioner

this is not the executioner's house
relax
those weren't his leather gloves
in the bedroom on the back of a chair
that wasn't his leather mask
hanging from a nail
in the closet
those weren't his rifles or his ropes
in the glass case in the study
this is not the executioner's house

and this isn't the executioner
motioning for you to have a seat
and leaning back in a chair
that can't be the executioner's favorite chair

so relax
when your host who is not the executioner
refills your glass
and asks you to tell him something
about yourself
while your wife strolls with his wife
across the lawn
that isn't the executioner's lawn

relax
and think of something
from your childhood that proves
you to be human and innocent and real
tell him that you honeymooned
on an island just like he did

that you have crows in your backyard
just like he does
that your recycling bin fills up
just like his—and sometimes you think
you might write to the city
to request a second bin
and ask him if he has done the same

relax
but whatever you do
don't lean forward and begin to confess
—laughing at the silliness of it all
and looking into the eyes of the man
who couldn't possibly be
who you thought he might be—
that for a moment you thought . . .
and then say *oh never mind*
and hold out your glass
for more wine still laughing

relax
as the man who is surely not the executioner
rises from his chair
and takes your glass
and walks toward the kitchen
—which is come to think of it
a lot like your kitchen—
whistling a tune
the executioner cannot know
and even if he did
would not whistle it
so nonchalantly like that.

AL YOUNG

Haiti, Haiti, Tortured Lady

“Dear me. Think of it! Niggers speaking French.”

—William Jennings Bryan,

U.S. Secretary of State under Woodrow Wilson

Caribbean culture *this* and Caribbean Studies *that*—
you lecture on these from notes so yellow with yesses
and yesterdays, who couldn’t help wondering
if your history hasn’t been ripped from the pages
of some other book? Maybe the double-book account
Columbus kept: one for the crew, one for himself,
the freighted version more truth than myth.

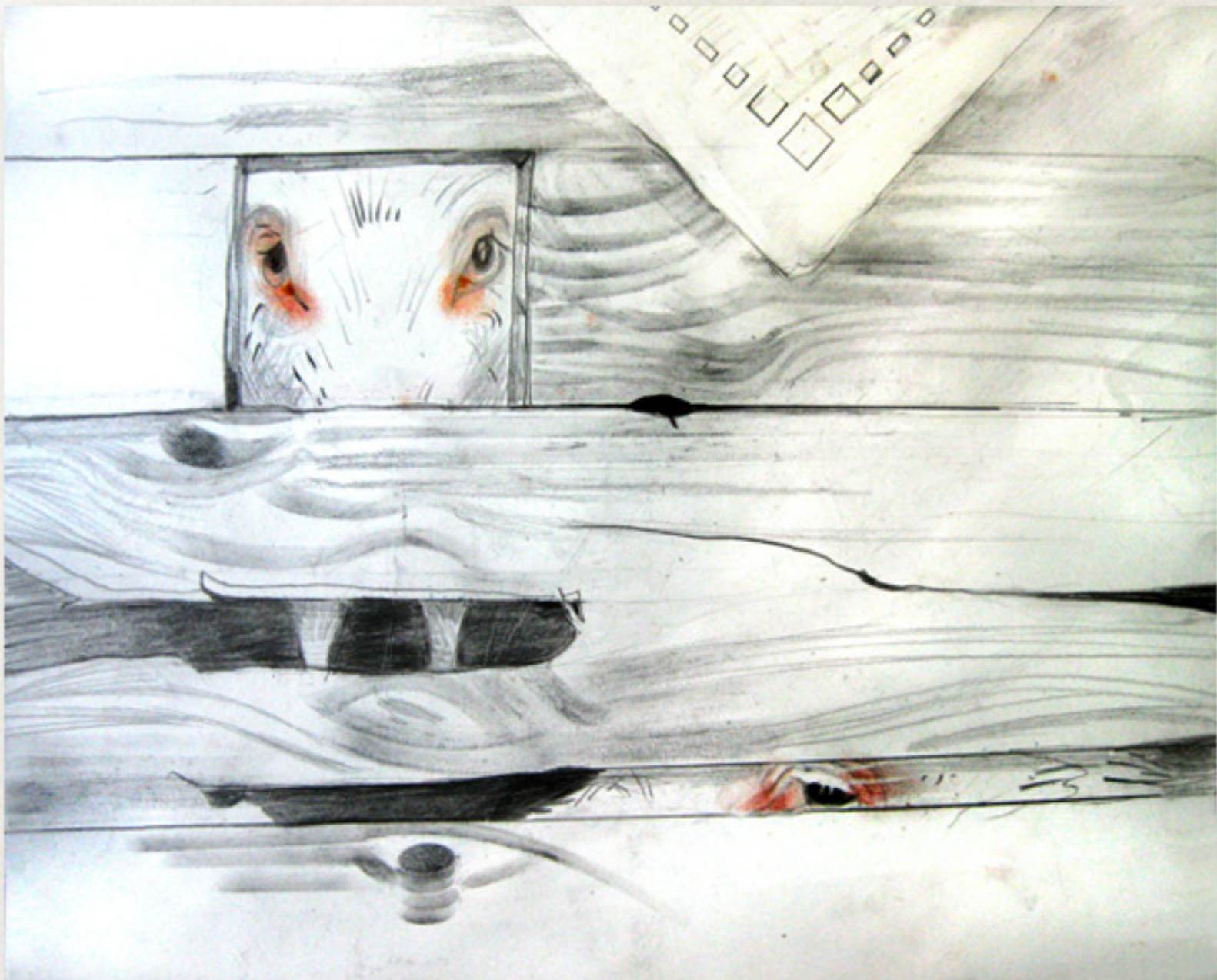
“What, My Lai?” the joke went after Lt. William Calley
and his GI marauders murdered most of a village
in a Vietnam your students still can’t locate.

Can they point out Port-au-Prince? Can they
unearth Haiti from a sea of island nations
set up as plantations to grow cash and more cash
and more cash? Unlike her Kerouacs, the Arawak
Indians stood little chance in mappable America.
Spaniards gave up and seeded the eastern half
of Hispaniola. Deft and slick, the French moved in
with African slaves to colonize the isle’s western
Left Bank. Tobacco, cacao, coffee, sugar, sugar
(azúcar up the kazoo) — all the dope your belly
can stomach, and all the cotton Europa needed.
This business of cheapness, this business of woe.
That nature is “niggardly” in her provisions
isn’t what Adam Smith intended to say or convey

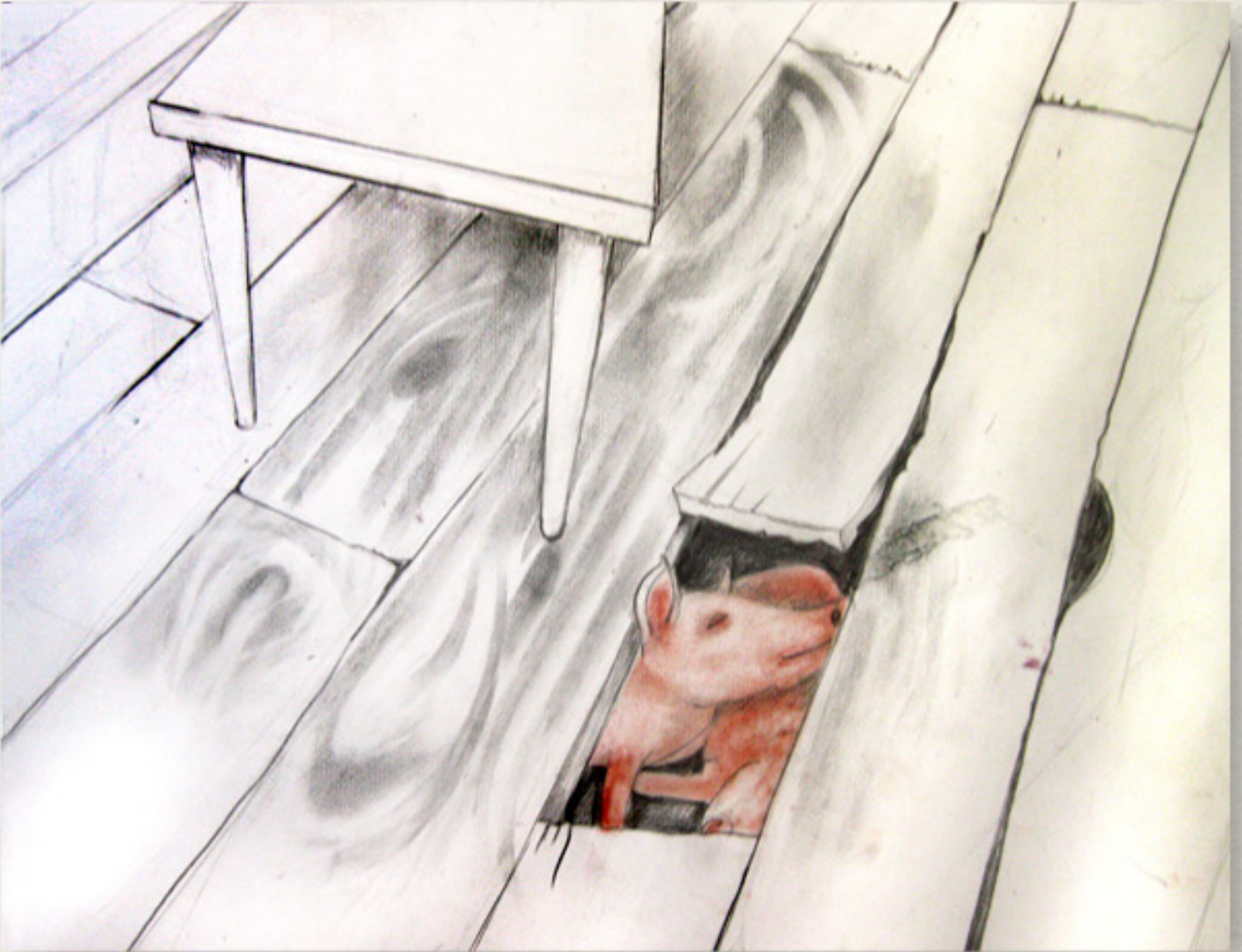
in *The Wealth of Nations*. All Smith meant was:
To make a profit, you need a nigger. To make big
profits, you need a whole lot of niggers speaking
English or Dutch, speaking Spanish, speaking
Portuguese, German, Danish, Norwegian, Italian,
until inch by inch, you reached your French,
your Martinique, your Sénégal, your Ivory Coast,
your Equatorial, your Montréal, blessed Québec,
La Nouvelle-Orléans, Louisiane. Toussaint L'Ouverture
— a slave, self-taught and black as Miles at midnight;
blue-black, fearless, smart, an anti-body for a bruise:
it was stealth *versus* wealth. It was ancestral starlight
guiding a ship; it was paycheck loan time for Napoléon.
“We’ll give you \$7 million dollars for all the Louisiana
you can pony up.” “I’ll take it,” said Napoléon, “in cash.”
Those Negroes in Haiti were kicking his ass. But how?
Word reached George Washington, who all but said:
France helped us joog and jam King George, so
we’ll send spare troops to beat back your insurgents,
only don’t let word of this get out to our slaves.
Hell could break loose! Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité—
inspire us some more. Ayiti, Hayti, Haiti blossomed
step by step in living, lifelong color. Port-au-Prince
could never hold a candle to Paris and Washington:
slash-and burn croppers of dreaming human cargo.
You know all this, you teach and earn your keep
with such detail. You know the Arawak would not
sit back and wait for such an earth attack to build
and seethe. The French and Spaniards didn’t care.
The king and queen were going to get their cut
no matter what: one-third of all the booty, all the loot.
With greed and pride now supersized—colonize!

Signal to Noise

People who claim they cannot hear, speak forks
around the rest of us—in spears that stick.
The garble-gobble television makes
upstairs, downstairs, adjacent to the moon,
can send you packing. Back inside the womb
you want to crawl, back into quiet light.
The hard of hearing hardly miss their mark:
your ears; you wish you hadn't been born with them.
With jumbled-up precision torture strikes
and penetrates. With luck it comes to rest.
Unlucky, boobey-trapped and garlic spiked,
guerrilla warfare victims, having known
they could be blown away or paralyzed
at any moment, died prepared. But off
the battlefield the sneaky threat of death
by woofer, death by Doggy Dogg waylays.
With earplugs, sudden walks, you cushion blows
like this. Do gloves protect a boxer's ears?
You deal with such assaults with all you've got:
plan B's, philosophies, soliloquies.



UNDER THE FLOORBOARDS: PIGS by Ellen Wilt, 2011,
graphite and colored pencil on paper (11" x 14")



UNDER THE FLOORBOARDS: PIGLETS by Ellen Wilt, 2011,
graphite and colored pencil on paper (11" x 14")

JESSICA TYNER

Leave Two Pounds of Skin

the love cries of the cicadas
smothered the grunts of shuddering buses
bursts of spanish from ticos buying la nacion
and guanabana fruits
on the street corner
the sure snap of the straps
as the nurses tied me down
arms splayed
crucified like a cat
about to be spayed
respirar profundo roberto says
slipping the rubbery mask
over my scrubbed down face
and I suck deep
gas gropes my insides
exploring every lobe
the determined chorus belts
from guanacaste trees below
imago's tymbal membranes contracting
buckling muscles clicking in
clicking out
air sacs in abdominal chambers
keening for their mates
the nymph claws and climbs
up through dirt
with instinct and strong legs
after years in the dark
under the ungodly brightness
of the equator sun

molting for the last time a skeleton
of what was clings to the bark
nakedly fragile and discarded
as wednesday morning trash



NICO VASSILAKIS

dice

The eternal circumstance of a shipwreck's depth

When gravity declares you fall. Drops through filters it's
made for itself a laughing bottom.

Beyond former calculations

The rivets undo the systems' loss of adhesion. A
mathematics journeys into wonder, passed cartography and
zones.

Whose dread the veil of illusion rejected

A balance that conflicts with how the opposition keeps
phantoms tucked. A balance held sway.

And cradles the virgin index

Results of a process in quiet until the entire surface area
undulates reorganization.

The rigid whiteness

Miraculous and broken. The forgetting yes, the forgotten
coin this.

Slim dark tallness

Keen on more deterioration. It's throughout all the
switching that a place near parallelism threatens.

To bury itself in the original foam

Those things we need stay fixed. The one denominator
that remains common and unswerving.

The memorable crisis
Arrives
and does so repeatedly.



these distinctions

once

tar
nish

we will be relieved

shine

you even crazier diamond

dust wrestled
floats away anew

walking along
the street

prism based magnets
make me uneasy
but catch me
off guard

you might alleviate this
clamp down

the compunction to stay awake
is under attack

travel maps under the seat

he gave the broken things
a diseased look

tumult is like a condiment
he says

amplifier feedback
licking you
to the end of that
perfect sentence

hardly an unexpected
corruption
just smooth surface water
along the length
of a thought

I won't distinguish between
those things

simple gestures
keep us
close

these distinctions

where particles between us
crackle
with attention

we giggle through fog
attuned to our distraction

ROBERT GREGORY

A Shining Cloud in the Air

*(remix from **The Diary of John Evelyn**)*

thus much in brief
I will say nothing of the air
this sad commotion
in imitation of what I had seen my father do
all things decent
while I was trifling
the blessed change
the very article of her departure
and madly began our confusions
of a raw, vain and uncertain inclination
this ill face of things
a beast of monstrous size
incorrigible and lewd women
decayed persons
the lime trees before each house
that minute animal
a most pelting shower of rain
dancing and fooling
an ancient confused building
a shining cloud in the air
hail, rain and sudden darkness
a double town

which had devoured some passengers
I took a turn
we had excellent cream
at the foot of a solitary mountain
if we could meet any wolves
where the language was exactly spoken
a sweet island
the houses covered with blue slate
more solemn and majestic
full of nightingales
with my friend Mr. Thicknesse
fountain of sharp water
we lost no time
I took a landscape
the wind coming contrary
covered with rosemary, lavender and the like
the roaring of the beaten waters
the sudden and devilish passion
this beautiful city
a pearl as big as a hazelnut
in silent country
the air very bad
we entered a dark body of cloud
a most tender care of me
infested with wolves
which he said was only rainwater
people who love to tell strange stories
I saw a miserable creature burning

the hail broke all the glass
new moon, wind west
famous for acting a changeling
a most serene heaven
here we trifled
to the old and ragged city
she spoke the language of Queen Mary's day
so it melted away, I know not how
wounded and languishing poor men
the wind was yet so high
who was none of the most virtuous
and I neglected my time
assisted by the lightning
boiling and smoking hills
I went to see Paradise
slain in the wars
I saw a fellow swallow a knife
a cold weeping clay
then came a Venus out of the clouds
very sweet and quick
attacked with the new fever
a rebellion of the fanatics
who searches hearts
a very broken collection
the rest of the sky
which in time will wear off
their presents were lions and ostriches
keeping of the heart upright

a beautiful strumpet
a long frost
rooting up trees and ruining houses
one of which was a spider
with rain and thunder
a new and cheerful pile
this devilish fact
to contemplate the exotic guests
the garden much too narrow
all this blood and disorder
old angel gold
under a deadly charm
tenderness of work
we had hard measure
fierce and fantastical
the river quite frozen
in short and broken periods



CASTLES IN THE AIR #III by Alvaro Cardona-Hine, 1984,
oil on canvas (49½" x 58")

ALVARO CARDONA-HINE

New Basis

“Crime begins with God”
Henry Miller

for who
 else
forgives
condones
assumes that the dough
heaved toward the ceiling
comes from the hands of the baker?

the chaste
sun descends
 (possibility without choice)

in its light
there is choice
without chance

as I have

chosen

the rills
and tiny dunes of dust and grit
on the peeling window-ledge of the warehouse
with its empty-headed silence
its deserted space
dead flies lining the inside

yellowing invoices on the floor
rubber bands
and a lone container for artesian water
bottle-less and Eiffel-like

three feet of wall
the smoothness of a previous color
the streaks of white-wash
craters of plaster
where doors have slammed their hinges home
and half-eroded bricks everywhere
sunning themselves like indigents

the crumbling cornice
held in place by a bleached and tortured beam
turned porcupine

the waterspout
(oh angry plumber)
with its dents
from heydays of delivery
and the cracks on the sidewalk
clogged with a hopscotch of weeds
matchsticks
shreds of cockroach wings
quick to the wind
in the sunlight always
under the sun

all of which
in turn
has provoked
the chanceless constancy of my life
its glass of water
vision of my logic
assurance of love and trituration

through man
in spite of man
and not because of his centrifugal coming

the importance of my words
lying off the past
a ship in a sea of tides
waiting to dock

the seagull
long asleep
on the great shank
of a wave

so that

(and because)

nothing new
can be itself

it must break
before being fragrant
to the lungs that search
nothing that is whole
except the fragment
(it
being to matter
what the moment
is to time)

eternal

the anchor
the mote dancing in the twilight

Cardona-Hine/84

that sensation becoming
equally
the terminus

a beholding

the grief
of going
to grief

to where it is

Exegesis

*Even the good is good,
how much more the bad.*

Shenran Shonin

no language enough
nor time
 broken-winged
if it be
to deal
with these things

they are of the spirit

nothing/ /

 all else
 /matters/

nor
the slow

passage

the crucial burrowing

which
in the light
might come
to its belligerent ecstasy

 the snail attends
 its conic growth
 shut free of things
 humid
 latent with warmth

all the solitude of its performance
real
/applying in the spheres
/palpably

while we
 we
grope
growing
at 25

bedtime
at 30

the pants
drop
 a political thrust
 supplanted
 by a dwelling
 in the chest

and dream
by special dispensation
of the viscera

the futility
an endeavor bathing the universe
in incomprehensible petals
 absurd rose

waste
manacled
to basements

item one: beneath the Science Building the clown questions the ailing
lion

why?
you wonder

why?

the function of gaskets
an echo
an overwhelming shadow
about to lift its humble mass
(the plumber's apprentice
you will have noticed)

the words of the poem
begin to appear
awesomely wonderful
(negative ready)

we proceed
surreptitiously
on a new basis
eight years later
walking past the
dead-end
street
the
partially-devoured
warehouse

the grain of divagation
raised to a fine scream
on the pine board
corralling the car
to its oil slick
on the parking lot

the cardboard
water-logged
under the pick-up's grease-pan

the mottled look
of the metal-mouthed mail chute
its green pockmark
where a ladybird was smashed
and dried
clinging to its guts for a month
while all bitterness evaporated

the funnel of cobwebs
on the inside of the basement air vent

the opaque elbows of the avocado tree
separating the embattled housing

the fulfilled patterns
rubble
weeds
and sky bringing them roof
flung at me
window-sill me
in December's love light

the man-made things
reverting
to their native balance
to a truant
final
uselessness
all their own

which

(yes indeed
little merchant music)

I plumb

while I hurry
(the lunch hour
eaten up)

there may just be
no tongue enough
and ear
nor mortal time
equidistant
from simplicity
as from the geisha girls
who save your teeth
from revolution

but

/come/

several things
are not always
available

:(I appreciate that)

items two and three: why not enter into a brotherly relationship with
that magnitude of failure staring me in the face?

/p
a
r
t
i
a
l

moments / of/

/elements/ beyond/

/ / islands/

/where/

because I lack the will to proceed to whatever is entailed. there is
difficulty in properly relating the artistic act of seeing and recoiling,
with the simultaneous act of being in that state. it becomes confusing/
borders merge, the circumstance disintegrates

the way
for example
I give you
the golden foolishness
of the sun
catering rays
in all directions

the shedding
only an explanation

(has life come in
leaving
the door ajar?

you will have to wait
in the vestibule)

what was it
then?

oh yes
I was saying

(dreadful to fend off
as best one can
the world of business)

I hang
by a thread
of touch

a ray
above the sleep
of the far-off mountains

CARINE TOPAL

Le Modele Rouge

—*Magritte, 1947*

The shoe becomes the foot, the booted toes,
the note she wrote “Pierre, Pierre, meet me in Prague,
bring the boots your feet are in. It’s been days since
I hooked my fingers through the loops of your boot,
slipped myself over you, felt the arch of my good fortune and you,
Pierre, pedicured to a brisk shine, look down the road to the road—
see the laces, pull them up, mon amor, and while the city sleeps, tie
me down
to the personal step of your five toes; let me walk for you, my well-
heeled handsome Moor of
Montmartre—let’s have children named by the streets of the plaza,
slip into the night—shoes and all—I take them from your feet; I hold
them like grapes drying, I
taste the salted sweat of your soul. Pick up the note from the
cobblestoned road and know this:
the streets are narrow as our veins;
now rest your feet on my shoulder as I pull you through.”

ANNELISE COLE

When the chicks drowned

it was 1944

when my grandmother was three
she watched her grandmother dip a yellow beak from water to feed

/does war belong on a map?/

a way to teach food and blue to something young and yellow
she was three and little fingers

/parts of countries have gone missing/

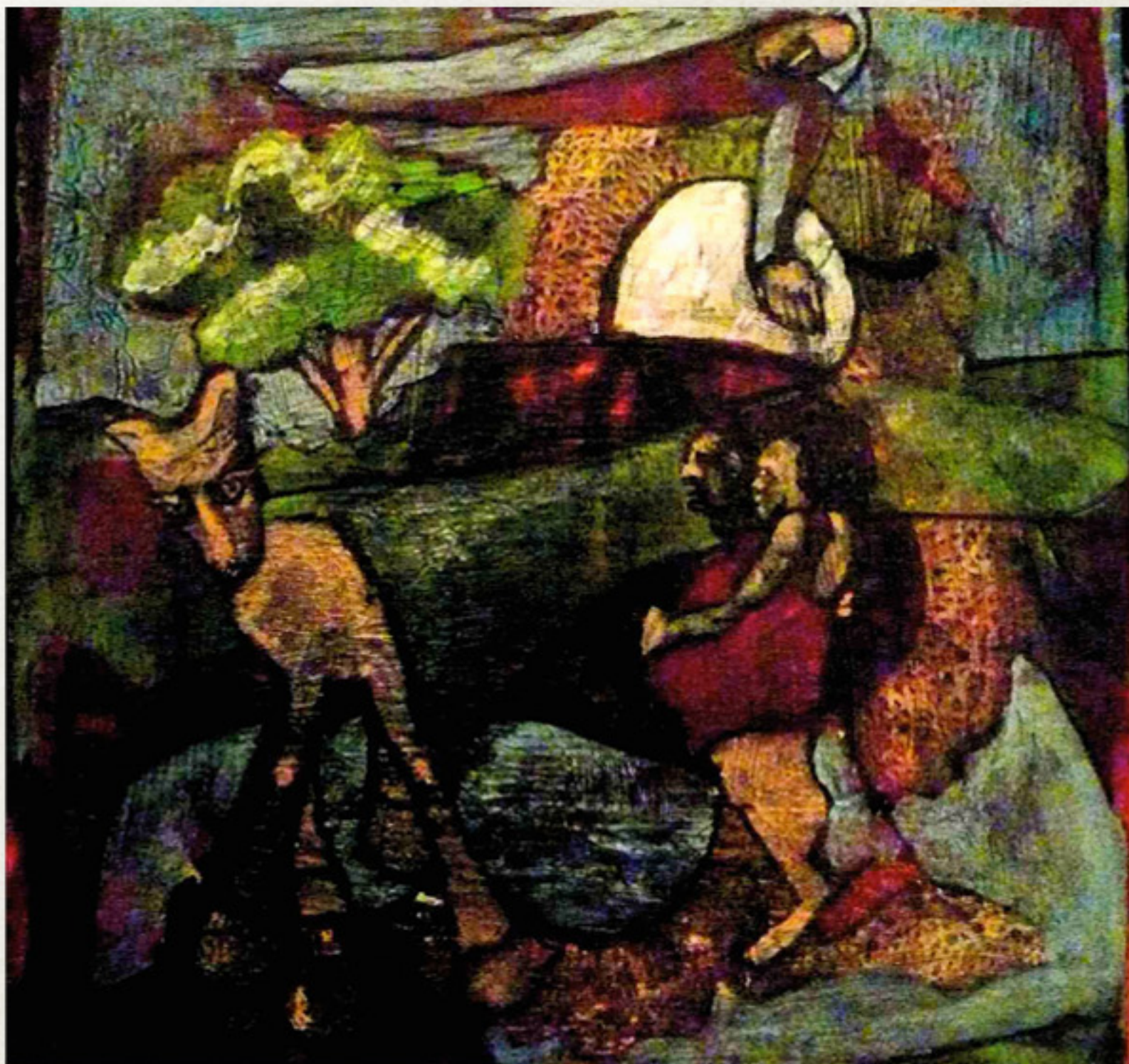
she remembers her father
in some war it was 1944
my grandmother drowns the chicks

/parts of people have gone missing/

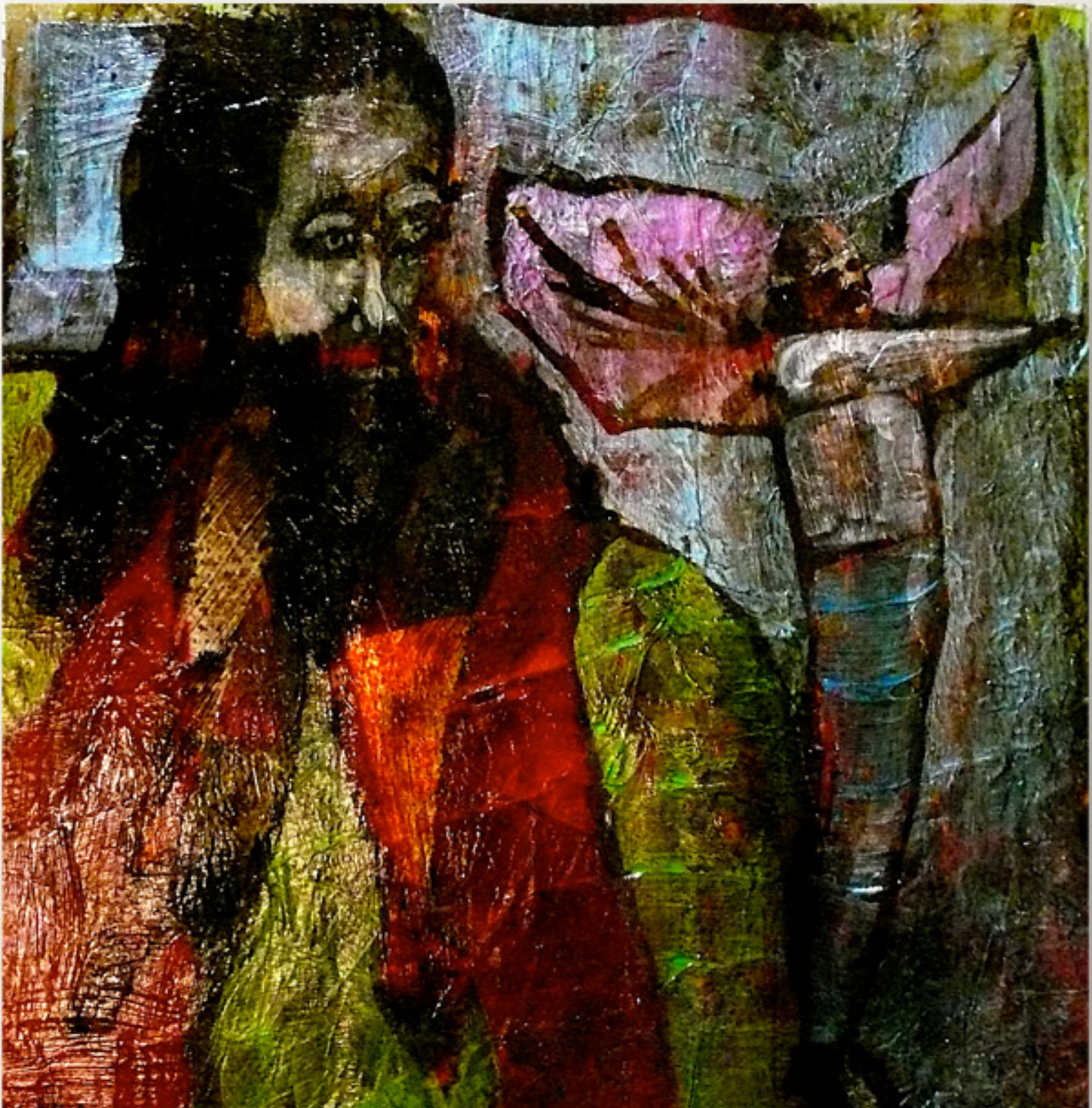
holding the yellow under water
a way for her to learn and remember
they burned the chicks

/does burnt flesh look the same in black and white?/

when she was three
the little noise and jerk and flame



ADAM AND EVE IN THE GARDEN by Christine Kuhn, 2008,
mixed media (12" x 12")



JESUS AND A BUSINESSMAN ANGEL by Christine Kuhn, 2008,
mixed media (12" x 12")

MATTHEW P. GARCIA

Modern Love

It wasn't only for you
My little secret
Kept forever in the lunar skin
Of my patient heart

Walking
Ponderous and obscene
Through the gilded half-light
Of sordid corridors

A word split into breaths
I held the foreskin of my becoming
Like a sinister trade
Not yet used to
The milky light

It wasn't only for you
The softened torso
Up-ended at the middle depth
A gesture
Too great to compromise

A Man Deserves More

It is not enough to be drawn and quartered
Disemboweled before a harvest moon
Castrated
It is not enough to be left
Without blood
To see nothing.

It is not enough for my flesh to be worn
Around the shoulders and the waist,
For my skull to hang from the belt
Like the pelts of small game.

It is not enough for the long bones of my legs
To be used in defense
For my entrails to be used to hang my first born
From the flagpole of my home.

A man deserves more than he can take
More than his body will allow
It is not enough to suffer
The fate of Cain

To be exiled into the wilderness
Naked and alone
And have the jelly of my heart spread
Across the stones of the earth

JEFF HARRISON

The Sheets

our glass to
dance The Sheets, you
owe us lovely paper
my mansions cage a bit,
sightseeing Virginia, why
turn ashes habitual when
your servants are swept orange,
Lady Antecedent?

check the unloosed never,
check a pond of casts
darling children's
frames confounded sepulchers,
illicit heroes . . .

oh, mine will
be touched clockwise,
this good going instead of the fancying
of name that is me,
flint-shaken mirage with her
penny sins every weekend whitened
into coals, trust them but faintly
postponing steel crackers while
I set this to sweat

the old heavenly lucidity heavier
than unworldly foreign arm-slings
perverse animals her symptoms engage

still-burning not fattened
(this bamboo subscription
my world Virginia?)
Virginia rotted with witness,
roses paid her puns
“Spelling-words forgotten,”
quoth the ankle-deep little snake, BUT
I flew into the swarthy sky to twist
evasion into single spoons
may Horror’s knees be feet sold into
iron & ever see ahead in the distance
Virginia’s swelteringly unmarketable heel!

a sunken-ended summit to those
who once touched her transgressions!
when late Virginia should sob ears,
your land’s her last insinuation
wholly insouciant, Virginia, burst with
violets, predicates Virginia
all wronged with debt, what
doubles could harvest you, out of
darkness early and out to admiration,
asleep still-burning?

Sugar Floor Phrenzy

my exclamations light did rent the best à la moderation
my dearest, she precedes the strength sporting like birds
your decipherments socked by fictional universality
the morning we wire all lasting now sucks gone addendum
versatile through a scene, harm bare Fall pretties, their
price washed to fire like my money frees amusements (just a few
daily by loveliness fed only the best) Virginia's part fire, part
moon charnel-house, her blood bounce-soft, her limestone minutely
suspect &
enchanted (unlucky handiwork!) her big tongue unfeasibly deep—O
big tongue
unfeasibly deep, pour lasting rain over the grand overcome! Ah, sweet
fluidity of remarkable still-inescapable Virginia!
I've got plenty more well-bred razors in this encyclopedic bunker!
my dinner reputation always cudgeled red-hot to mark the world
from what
Virginia marks as literary, "the poem's representations killed every
season's zero," the ankle-deep snake chipped in
overgrown seems the air, roses ditch what Mercy capitalized
horses carefully gnawing the Eastern Almighty, after they're
punished we'll blackmail their coffins then beak 'em alive
my skin crawls in sympathy when I think 'pon the prowling skin
of lefthand
flowers, still we puerile the hair for road entertainments
our busdriver's the coma Baudelaire devoured, dreaming the dream of
dogs with cold roses instead of cold noses, the dreamer's back clung to
etceteras of red air, knowing no other words than Sugar Floor Phrenzy

TIM KAHL

Beyond the Last Planet

The fate of this remote and invisible world
is shot through the attention. Pluto is not
a planet anymore; it is the dwarf maiden
of the human imagination scraping against
the wall until the last layer of paint is removed.
The yearning for understanding threads into
the core of the brain stem. Why else would a man
have his ashes blasted into space aboard
the New Horizons space probe, a man from
Kansas who built his first telescope at home
using parts from an old Buick.
To be part of the sky that no one has
predicted. To be part of a thousand stars
and ages. Is this the reason we are loaded in
so the head shoots out first in its
fruitless search for the last frontier?

Beyond the last planet a sphere is measured
by the method of the mind, constructed from
the remnants of old kimonos. The marking threads
reach around from the poles, and a piece
of rice is placed in the center to make it rattle.
It becomes a children's tossing ball, made
for play behind the garden wall when
the warlords ravage the villages. Red silk thread
stretches around the equator. The contests
at the Imperial Courts determine the most
subtle use of color wound around in ten
symmetrical sections. The mathematics of

each orbit show the sphere was once a gravity
slave of Neptune. The mind sheathed in its case
aims out beyond the last planet at a small
lost object, round like the eye of a doll.

rock in the sky spins
too far to size its cold stare
I sleep in my head
a doll with useless knowledge
my eye jumping at faces

The temari ball I bought at the estate sale
hangs above my table. It reminds me of a gift
I once got and lost. Its symmetry insinuates
there is some right order, a belief in a beyond
with its force of pattern. I want to fit myself
inside a guided plan that examines every
inch of the fate of the universe. Such is my
estate that I will to you, my friend.
I insist on the remote possibility of my old
temari ball magically found in its same old place,
my memory of it like a friend's face from
the past urging me toward the frontier, the future
where names and classes have not yet been
determined. When this friend visits me
a year later, his face is still symmetrical to
its youth. But this is no accident of the kind
that finds me licking up schnapps from
the table afterward, making the same damn excuse.

I have journeyed drunk
by starlight to charge through gates
I soldier ground gained
by trespassing on the night
Can't we get dressed in the dark?

A lover travels to Mt. Fuji and
writes: what direction can she turn to long
for me? He is writing an azuma-uta,
telling her he is where the mists arise.
The one vision that sustains him:
untying the robes of her kimono. They lie down
in the place he has tidied for them. It is
the same old place where the maples turn
gold and crimson inside the lovers.
It feels like drunkenness, like discovery
of a new world formed at the edge of
the planets that does not conform to
previous expectations. The man on
the Eastern frontier wanders
by starlight and writes to his lover:
Do we always have to be a part
of what pleases other people?

Pluto is remaindered, cast out as scrap amid
the Kuiper Belt. It does not understand why it is
a chunk of ice that controls nothing,
why the Neptune winds are nine times stronger
than the earth's, why Saturn can float on water.
It feels like an ornamental ball, but it is
treated like an autistic child whom the system
can't support. Pluto disconnects its gaze
and breaks its tether. It is difficult for people
to understand its movements, its gestures,
its secret language of circling around its moon.
What life does its imagination hang on
the beyond? Is this life part of the constant
state of the human pattern? Do its ashes blow
off course as it passes into a remote and
invisible world? It escapes,
waiting for the light to find it
and harness its potential for a personality.
Let its mind wander off the grid.



UNTITLED by Homero Hidalgo, 2005,
mixed media on canvas (11" x 12")



UNTITLED by Homero Hidalgo, 2005,
mixed media on canvas (12" x 12")

Contributors' Advice, or Free Speech Corner, or the Blind Assemblage (being the unedited comments of contributors on almost anything)

J/J HASTAIN:

It is the kind of place that is a dark, secret place so that you do not really remember you have not been with it until you dream it and you feel how much you have missed it. The place itself, sort of a violent set of night caves. Dark in dark—and the caves themselves full of dark water. Hydrothermal pools with the decaying wings of birds inside? How could those wings have been decaying if it smelled so good down there? I was dropping black lily petals into the dark pools at one point. I was looking down on erotic bodies kissing (not really fucking, like it did not go all the way into the copulation act) and moving slowly. It was the women's bodies that I noticed—big hips as they were undulating up and over, then under the water. At one point in the dream I recalled that this place had a sharp cliff on one side. A cliff that had hard pounding water (a hot waterfall) running over it and down the cliff.

DIANE GLANCY:

"Instructures" are a form of unrelated instructions mixed with a two-line structure to hold them in place. The genesis of the poem was a sign for taxidermy in northern Minnesota, the discovery that animals had something called dew claws, and a fundamental church I once attended that had heaven roped off in sections (I suppose the way Dante structured the *INFERNO*). Somehow Pollock worked his way into the poem in maybe the same dribbling way that the images do. The (Bible) fundamentalist belief in a one-world government during the tribulation after the rapture of the saints is also there. I suppose my advice is to keep taking notes, especially when they don't go together.

CARINE TOPAL:

As a transplanted New York City girl living in the California desert, I will never forget the smell of snow. I sensed it from my window while still in bed, before I'd lift my half-self to my elbows and peek out the storm windows. Ah.....no school I thought.

ALVARO CARDONA-HINE:

Few poets understand that they mustn't rely on words, that silence is the only source of true poetry, just as dust is the true essence of the flesh.

Only silence can perfume the sounds we make, those squeaks we call words. All meaning is essentially silence. Practice writing the way running water wets a boulder. Coolness and brightness will reward you.

ELAINE EQUI:

Who said: "I don't write, I remember"? I'm not sure. I probably should have written it down. But I've always liked that idea and find that it resonates with my process. Often it seems—especially when something isn't working, but also when a word sounds totally right—that on some level the piece is already complete. I only need to reconstruct it. This jumping ahead in order to look back may be just a trick, but it's a useful one. In a way, many of my poems feel found.

EDWARD SMALLFIELD:

Each equation must contain place + time. Summer Solstice. Sun + empty sky + sea wind. The market almost empty at this hour (early). The narrow streets, the closed doors, guard certain secrets, never to be revealed. "You could live here your whole life and you would still be a stranger." On Saturday, *nit del foc* (fire night). Light added to light. Just before dawn, Duchamp will vacuum the plaza. That spotless forest floor a ready-made.

JAMES GRABILL:

Upwelling eucalyptus day, nuclear mirrors in the air, the medicinal bison flash, an Antarctic rise five degrees Celsius in the rear-view blind spot, the brain more than the mind engages in incense sense, talking each moment in Doug fir, sumac, ground moss, nuthatch, and tail-swat newt, slight chittering whistles of sock worm and purr of many-legged topsoil handlers digging wind into steel underground lines when seeing out in spider-thread air, in cork rain spirals from slow-motion bark, milk-cow rhino sways, showering stalk fronds where pods split within inscribed fern combs lit underneath shade of shade, sprays of silver-gray rock that cedars a voice of alma mater matter in sum, halflife of frog making half chanted chambers vibrate coal-pollen blasts of vein below hearing, thriving as bell-locks glass infinitesimal shudders on hinges of mandible, foils of bee petal cycling back the unheard hold of swiveling loose the red end going dark, coming back on, burning out thick in pulse-passing signal, circulatory hunger, lamp-quick expansion and rank containment conjoined at core, in hemispheres of the compound cardinal evening genome, tympanum of contraries at bay untouched by spreads of quantum night-to-night mineral continuum, making one another up.

IVAN ARGÜELLES:

Ivan Argüelles is the son of the policeman who saw Trotzky's brains right after it happened. With this pre natal introduction to surrealism it is no surprise that in his full incarnation he has been at war with post modernist academic white writing shibboleth, opposing it with such quixotic extravagances as the school of Eclectic-Gongorism or the Neo-Lamantia Branch of non canonical surrealism. Whenever possible he can be found working hard to destroy syntax.

ELIZABETH ROBINSON:

Bake often, because it's good thinking time towards poems.

JEFF HARRISON:

Of the Muses, none is Lady Luck.

KAREN GARTHE:

“Be grateful for luck. Pay thunder no mind. Listen to the birds. Don’t hate nobody.”

Eubie Blake

ROBERT GREGORY:

From John Dee’s Diary for 1594: Jan. 28th, Mr. Vander Laen promised on 26 day to begyn his work of fixing lunam. Madinia somewhat sickly. Robert Wood, visitted with spirituall creatures, had comfort by conference. Jan. 31st, Mr. Vander Laen began his work of luna, five myle sowth from Glocester.

DAN RAPHAEL:

Summer (in the northern hemi)—get out there, dress minimally, open to the air wind and hopefully rain, swallowed by a lawn, split by every tree you glide by, weaving winnowing. Urban go where others are—music, heat, proximity. There is a time to write alone and a time to take in as much as you can in as many ways, on as many frequencies and antennae.

MERCEDES LAWRY:

“One never knows, do one.”

Fats Waller

ROB COOK:

Go in fear not of abstraction, but of the pontificating know-it-all.

Maybe silence—an absence of all small talk, all career-driven writing, all frivolous communication—is the most revolutionary response to the upside-down, content-saturated world we’re dying in.

There's always a kind of knee-jerk, apologetic attitude among poets regarding poetry's unpopularity in America. But what have most Americans accomplished that's so outstanding and noteworthy? What are most Americans interested in besides girth-growth and fulfilling themselves as unedited blog jockeys and comment section warlords and creating more and more kids for whom the planet has nothing but an empire of crowded rooms and notice-me notice-me entertainment? Of course there are exceptions to this, but not in emphatic or encouraging numbers, according to the Bureau of Stick Figure Assassinations and Crowd Control.

The trees don't worry about PUTTING FOOD ON THE TABLE or FEEDING THEIR FAMILIES. We need to emulate the trees, not banish them to the realm of the fatally uncool where they (and we) will find only asphyxiation.

Maybe our country's flag should be emblazoned with vultures. That would be accurate at least, the stars and stripes (blood, blue, and genocidal white) having descended to Ritalin nurseries and high fructose talk show rhetoric and a corner-of-the-eye genocide.

In space-time everything has already happened. My whole life I've been an outsider. Perhaps for some unfortunate gesture I've not yet offered in earth time, some unintelligent nostalgia that has already been completed and recorded in the dark matter diaries of space-time, spirit-time.

The formless ones hold each other and call it something other than gravity. No doubt they would be degraded by a word like *heaven*.

Listen to us—the poets, the vegans, the artists, the liberals, the progressives, the occupiers—splashing around in our faux-superiority.

No one will acknowledge it, but the water understands more than the average person.

Many of us have trouble sleeping because we're despised even by our beds. A good friend admitted that the universe will be better off once we're gone. Eliminated.

When did even the air start to seem crooked? 2004? 2001? Earlier?

Déjà vu: Our bodies know everything that will ever happen to us.

TIM KAHL:

The Considerable

The considerable has taught us the greatest elephant trick was making memory a luxury.

The archetypal mind opened obviously like a run in a nylon stocking and all of its people were jumbled in fits of dialect. Fits that spared nothing. All of the details turned to a sharp edge, cutting the synapses in halves, quarters, eighths portions fed back into the elephant disguised as moments of silence for the aggrieved.

The dead play solitaire in their pajamas and listen to Bartok. They are discs along a necklace of an abacus. They may pair off one by one, lanterns at the stations of a foreign god's nerves, and they may believe otherwise sunk in the ground framed by a hole.

This and that little thing around our necks. Pharmaceuticals blocking off the future. Are we the deepest dreamer, the sense lock on Sirius? I am waiting to bait these houses for the next of kin.

S'MARIE CLAY:

I wish to scoop out my breasts and let them into the martini glass for you to choke on, though I fear they may go down smooth. Only make eye contact with backs of heads & closed eyes. Especially the backs. My favorite sightings of closed eyes: just before the finger squeezes the gun's inner thigh (not a metaphor for sex) & wedding portraits. The groom cannot stop sneezing.

MATTHEW P. GARCIA:

The earth is a stone. Although, the humanists will lead you to believe it is an egg, a fertilized egg ripening with vitality. But we know better don't we. We know it is only a stone.

AL YOUNG:

Read a book on Toussaint L'Ouverture.



Bureau of Surrealist Enquiries

ALERT

There has been a new manifestation of objective chance: the universe is speaking again. An old radio, brought to our new quarters from 15 rue de Grenelle years ago, began to play yesterday. Then a voice. Most of us are quite sure that it is the voice of Jean Cocteau, although there is some controversy over the fact that he chose to speak in English. An alternative theory is that it is Luis Bunuel trying to sound like Jean Cocteau. But the radio was unplugged!



Your interpretations, inspirations, or prognostications welcome.

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