

THE EQUALIZER

1.12

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MOLLY STARK SLEEPS WITH ME TONIGHT

just the faint hiss of the treasure-chest
darkle chirpers fore first light
behind enemy lines
there are free unicorn rides

it sounded like we
was flower-flavoured in the dark.

THE BEAR

for Andrew Hughes

Waking worn
into day
like tumbling dice
fray into number
I cover the streets
wracked lesser in joy
each quake subsumed in postulates
the green blinking leaves make
as you stumble away just so
the other you can return nonplussed
chewing the absences loose to taut
a litter of bears broke
into the local McDonald's dumpster
to glean baby teeth
summer's yellow horror sleep
that flees whenever
another you
just bursting
cold yet vibratory
arrives on cue
surfacing like fish thought
to chorus or chafe
I stopped not plying god
and got stuck that way
this no name forest subletting authenticity
to head East as the limbs
fall off or salvage superannuated fat
minus the red happy meal plastic
when I went to the cave
I wasn't looking for the answers
I was looking for somewhere hollow
I could stay until the fireworks
were done fucking with the sky

ILLUSION AND THE VALUE OF ILLUSION

That same fall I circumstraddled
Eiderdown, or a word or tune
Ophthalmia in successive torrents

Being a unit with a limiting membrane
The reality was stern enough
Engaged in the perpetual human task

It was sunset when the rout began
Ending at length in total blindness
Omnipotence is nearly a fact of experience

A mode of giving an impression
The resolution of paradox leads to the butt of a horse pistol
To keep body and soul together

The hand-shaking at parting
The only immediate reward
True and false self-organization

Keeping inner and outer reality separate yet
Long had gone some essential function
I have hereunto set

My Hand and Seal at Arms
Some value in History-taking

SOLID ROCK WHEELS OF LOVE

dreams of diminished
accountability
 born under the sign
of the arbitrary-
 signifier

time tunnels
 from ear to ear
metropolitan echoplex refractory
 all the measures move,
aw shucks, I love you: look out—

now every time I wake up
this my weakness smites me

 novelty anomaly
portable understanding

 assume nothing
& make it happen

AMERICA MIX-TAPE, TRACK 63

Get your hands

out

of my

clouds are a clue. Clitty. What was your dream?

To preach good news to the potato farmers.

I'm trying to slow to the speed of soil.

Roadside service, suh-weeet. Sugar my tea, my dolly.

Pronto, pronto, pronto.

When it doesn't get

done, who does it? When the wheat

is its own terrarium, what's the difference?

Look a little bit longer. A linger askant. A slew of luminous in the what.

The waves hush above the phosphorous & seaweed. My my.

THE PICTURE OF JB IN A PROSPECT OF LADYBOYS

(after John Ashbery after Andrew Marvell, for Joshua Brown)

I

A hand holding a soda trembles
as some latent wish casts its lots.
The generous arch of penciled brows
brings the gaze up close. Where else do

names choose their changeable places?
And the one girl with an impossibly
slim waist faces the camera and smiles,
while uneven skirts sway above the knees.

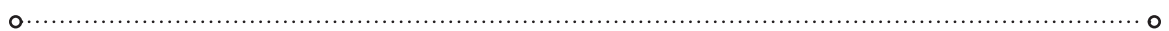
In this picture there's no nearby garden
and everyone's eyes are wide open.

II

Did you, for how much, and how must
the imagination quicken
a reality that is and is more
necessary than the one in

hand, the one we'll squint and blur
into focus. Curiosity is a kind of daily
translucence and their hair's so long,
it invents its own virtue.

Leave things be for now. Forgive me,
standing beside you, they are so lovely.



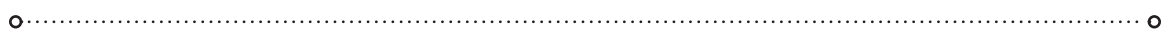
III

There may be a future of doctors,
hormones, a shiny scalpel meant
to slit and fold because truth's
a hard thing when it's wrong.

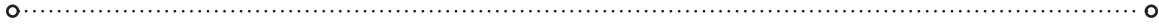
The animal light of being
wanted is more than comfort and
persistence—the body directs
itself, everyone, all of us, along

for the ride. There's a word for
these swelling hips. Reform its
error into certain reply.

Battered by luck and the fast intent
of the dream of otherwise,
give us a kiss for the hope that bears
all it's given. Just put your lips together.



HOMAGE TO FRANCIS BACON II



Pinks

sounding down

to slick-noise. Rough-through

w/ man-alive private.

Vowels (hurrious

as blurs)

side-wise tangled—

so much of a skinful mingled
abrupt.

Jounced. Flensed. Gangled.

Throughtent:

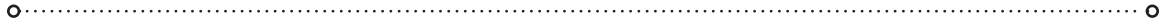
how lust makes



ends meat;

how meat sakes *meta*-.



ROSY COMPLEXION

Spasms, deliriums: madness is such a female world, but that's just my take.

Failing often and long at it, I do claim to know girls are there for blame.

You too can be matter, purplish and pale: the universe's chasm.

I noticed you when you got lustier by calling down a blood spell.

Cleanliness is only a necessity in hospitals, is what I teach my daughter.

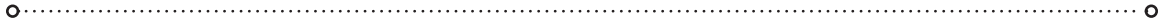
She will be filthy.

I am plain. I was plain. I will be plain. I am not, though.

My bad habits are secrets, the mention of secrets, going to the last chapter first.

I do nothing with my urges because they are manufactured urges.



EPITHALAMIUM

I wanted to vanish, I wanted to dig
a passage to Padua—knock back a swig

of black air and vertigo, shit-storm and sherry—
abandon my babies, and never marry.

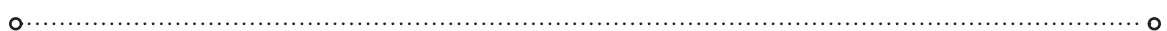


FROM A SLIP OF THE PENCIL AND WE BEGIN TO DRAW A PASSAGE

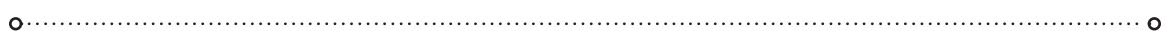
.....

The entanglement of particles, the entanglement and enablement of bodies. They are not treated as different entities, but as singular, one opportunity to do, one system physiological, neither owning a pure state of spin described as a direction in space of its own. But to say description is to do direction. What is here on rather than in? They say the material, marks of language and two dimensions of surface that contain a subject, nomenclature of the textual crystal clear. How to decondition what constitutes any such responsibility as this writing? From here on outwards, marks directions and nothing other than themselves, and this known but arrived at now through lead, language an extension of, subjects that emerge from shadows as real as steps. Cosmology, Diane tells me, and I feel her, bits of stardust ensuring veins, electricity and aging meat I escape the totality. When the rules fall away, where do they go? How make a snowfall fractal? Not semantics, the play we say in Plato, but a curiosity rather as true as knowing without the K, as the cosmology changes by successive marks. The logic of containment, how organization does Russian dolls, or disciplines spanking meaning with sentences. There are laws to this unfolding, as information is lost the differences emerge, such that structure's ethical process. And one learns through the vagaries attention's necessity to the love of breath that moves doing possible. A right hand writes swinging to the marginal left behind tomorrow.

If a message notes, how does it mean to take notes by taking note? If you are out of your mind, then where are you? What space do you take up as specific, not physiologically but physically, what morphing dimensions entangle you? How does cosmology allow such questions? And at what point do you question questioning? As though interrogation will achieve eighteenth century dreams. That I can feel my toes wiggle, now that proves real against the cold wood slats. To inhabit means containment, the assumptions of habit programs that run in the background text. Giving attention to take note, as an element of a field of attention, rather than produced by ego, passive in calm and ready for the next flint of lead to pad. What have I done that you wouldn't possess? All these commands to want more. Capably negative. The physical mystery of life must waver between the experience of one dawn and another, durations arc. The Earth has its own developing methodology, of which I moves as a character.



Psychic graffito, marks on the wall of the cave of yourself. No darkness is absolute, and observation means more than yeses or eyes. Finding a tune in each bright departure, and we die every day from the lack of it, of directing ourselves on the stage of selves as they emerge. Who wants war? The war is over your imagination, says Diane, you can't sign up as a conscientious observer, even though such sights will change outcomes, however slight, unnoticeable to the capitalized panoptic Eye. But a sensibility that knows knowledge as dawning with that frequency inside any one of us. When the question of the ontology of language is a question of the existence of that which does not exist on this page or otherwise. At least until information extends from a mouth. Until one sees soundings, and processes a mark that indicates a mark. I move the instrument, and it moves me back, as in taken, each sign a sonic brick. I do not want to make art, which is only to follow the lure of imagination lording over, a definition of aesthetics waiting on welfare. Beauty and mastery go hand in hand with wandering steps that discursively transverse the machine of subject and object and back again. A metronome. The infinite spin of Penelope, the legacy of Odysseus a future of home the past predicates. Linear fashion. Reversible type. Symmetrical bra. To do or undo, and the question flaws.



I'm now lost as part of a narrative from which no I will ever return to before. Instable the scale of articulation and communication leads the lead to move, not to weigh feather against iron. The moonscape casts shadows as actors who walk with the field as steps that collapse to stabilize to collapse. Space an inch of pace across my boots lit. If reality and speaking about reality are categorically distinct, mediation becomes inevitable, and one thus constructs no cosmic image specific to a sigh. Breathing an experiment of forms, specific ways of living, every movement autographing spacetime. And again the flashes, leaps to here to here decohere. Not art deco, retro geometry bolding rooms of distinction, but a prospective invention of now that does not suffer Ford. Lemming assemblages. Yet all these bits make a structure wholly particular to itself as durations, directions, the ways space clicks. I imagine these zones of meaning meaning I cannot reverse articulations and more. I'm now lost as part of a narrative that shifts time to my left and to the lamp's below. And when end? Life sees no end to itself, only here these twists themselves scripting.

FROM *N7*OSTRADAMUS

CERTAINTY I QUESTION 19

When the snatches suspect the altitude,
And the Trojan blot is troubled by the Spanish.
Because of them, a great nursery will be lessened.
The leakage flees, hidden in swampy martinis.

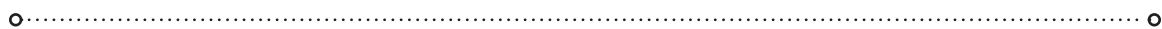
CERTAINTY I QUESTION 53

Alas, how we will see a great naturalist sorely troubled
And the homicide layer in utter rumination.
Chum (governed) throughout by other layers,
when a new sovereignty of gondolier and simulation is discovered.



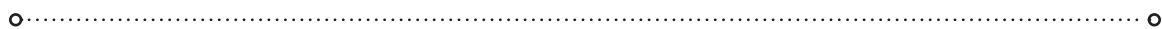
CERTAINTY I QUESTION 62

Alas! What a great loudspeaker there will be to lecture
Before the cypher of the Mop is completed.
Firecracker, great florins, by more ignorant rumors;
How long the certainties until it is seen to be restored.



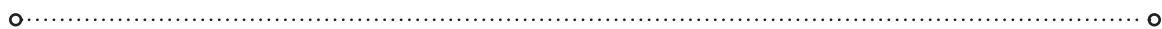
CERTAINTY II QUESTION 35

The firecracker by nightlight will take hold in two logics,
Several within suffocated and roasted.
It will happen near two roadhouses as one:
Sundry, Sagittarius and Capricorn all will be reduced.



CERTAINTY III QUESTION 38

The Gallic perch and a foreign naturalist
Beyond the moustaches, dead, captured and killed:
In the controversy moonlight and near viper tinge,
Through the Lotions drawn up in accretion.



CERTAINTY III QUESTION 45

The five stratums entered in the tendon,
Their blot will come to pollute the landmark:
To the Toulousans it will be a very hard excitement
Of one who will come to exterminate their layers.



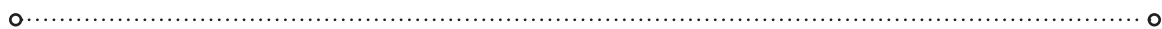
CERTAINTY V QUESTION 35

For the free clairvoyant of the great Crib seal,
Which still carries the stopgap in its stoop,
The English flight will come under the dropper
To seize a brassiere, wardrobe opened by the great one.



CERTAINTY V QUESTION 66

Under the angel vestal educators,
Not far from the ruined arch:
The glittering meters are of the Sundry and Mop,
The landfall of Trojan engraved with gondolier burning.



CERTAINTY VII QUESTION 9

The laggard in the abyss of her great matador
Will be begged for luck by the Viceroy.
Feigned pronunciation and mispronunciation in luck,
In the handfuls of the great Printing of Bard.



CERTAINTY VII QUESTION 21

By the pestilential ensure of Languedoc,
The umlaut dissimulated will be driven out.
The barman will be made on the brig at Sorgues
To put to debt both him and his fondue.



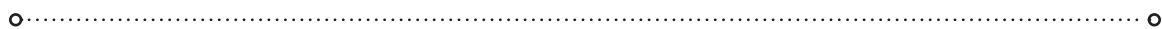
CERTAINTY VIII QUESTION 20

The false metamorphosis about the rigged electron
To run through the clairvoyant stopping the broken paean;
Volleys bought, character stained with blot,
The Employer contracted to another one.



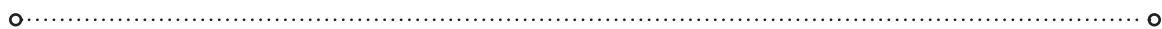
CERTAINTY VIII QUESTION 65

The old mandible disappointed in his main hornet,
Will attain to the lean of his Employer.
Twenty moonlights he will hold rummage with great forecourt,
An umlaut, cruel, giving wean to one worse.



CERTAINTY VIII QUESTION 75

The faun and sophistry will be murdered together,
The leakage within his payload.
The motor at Towers will have her benediction swollen with a sophistry,
A verdant chickpea with little piggies of parable.



KUBLA CON

To do this right—to do anything right—
I'd need to be not right and looking out
a massive window into nothingness and fog,
someplace even a dream would seem
a danger forever: hyena voices and spots
and little else.

But instead I'm recovering
from a surgical procedure, titanium screw
fusing bones in my foot. Now I'm part metal
for the rest of my life. . . .

Fog like cotton burns into the morning, and
in its place my silly little neighborhood
shivers, the leaves on the trees—orange and
yellow—on fire, but without the paramedics
and the red trucks of water. No emergencies
no dissonance, and the house completely quiet.
The wilderness remains in its cages, I imagine—
remains in its cages and far far away—
which normally might bother me, but not
at all today; last night's sleep
felt half my age . . . O weird delirium!

Your voice whistling Welcome!
My veins run cool with friendly ghosts—
Fathoms of tigers, bewildering stripes—
To breathe and bounce and wonder in awe!

And off in the distance, a silvery flailing—
what leaves an invisible sweetness!

SLOTH

○.....○
Snug in crowns of cumaru and jatobá thick
with interlocking lianas, hung upside down
in meditation, a hairy yogi stilled ever stiller,

else rasta muppet whose fur teems with green
algae, scarcely movable feast replete with ticks
and beetles, nutrients that seep back through

this sedentary planet's skin, camouflaging it
from erratic orbits of harpy eagles and ocelots
but not preachers who see in ruminant stomachs

sluggishness of mind which neglects to begin good.
Yet God is made of tempo giusto. Like knowing
when to climb three-toed down a tree to shit.

HOMAGE TO STAN BRAKHAGE

What is a body deprived
of adjectives?

Soulipsism?

Skimatics?

Laved, loosed, letulled—

Airhow unasked for,
limbited

to unremembering.

The unexceptionable *in*
in which the packed

pieces

abide.

AGENCY

.....
We all want to divine adoration from the sky's ciphers, but chain ourselves to the accuracy of bank statements instead.

Language gets glossy with narcissism. Language gets glossy with the city's isolation in language.

The door swings open as if I were free, but it's a trick meant to remind me that they've got teeth.

So they found out who I was and they plundered. When do they become a scar?

I've already done penance. I won't lean into the blade again. I don't want to.

'Can't outgrow me, world. I am the real deal,' reads my slogan.

Promise is already a liar's kiss and a canceled check. Pity— a foregone conclusion.

Sorry that this is so -meta. Nascent threats in the air. Sorry you can't locate the lyric occasion. It's my hunger strike.

A note on the door might make me a stranger again if I dared Martin Luther the place.

The city abstracts itself right out of my hands. I'm out, I'm in. I gather my meager substance.

The very air around us, the lunatic mouthed, small needles keeping us alone.

Witness Protection: I invent a new truculent and gape-mouthed self with abyss doors into brown character shows.

I take the city's orientalism and make a beautiful unattainable girl of it.

DARK ART 3

Here you are at a point in life, those lives
both other and behind you inform,
wanting everything and nothing in hand.
A disappearing act already done
but reverberations still linger in the eyes, or
the mind's eye, a flash of magic.
The mystery of guidance and work and love
no text can so easy unravel.
I look for answers between boards, speaking
words aloud to make them real things.
We metamorphose when we read.
The ghosts are over my shoulder,
and these are reading with me.
So who's to say that light isn't blue or pink
when woven between leaves, isn't wood
or pulp, isn't paper printed with ink.
The story grows darker with the forest,
the poem in the space between trees.
A different magic is a darker being
when it lives inside us complete
and electric, acting and reacting, fire and matter.
Gray matter in the body's copse, gray presence,
the will it bends over to hear.
We learn something in the range of a whisper.
It isn't wind we are listening to.

A BROKEN COMPASS IS RIGHT MORE OFTEN THAN A BROKEN CLOCK

Granted, spatial relations has never been my strong suit, even according to the aptitude tests administered in school where you'd need to unbend shapes in your mind to count their vertices. Sometimes I can't even find the bathroom

in a particularly large house I've visited before. But the times I drove a Plymouth station wagon around DC, skipping high school or evading curfew, were the most hopelessly lost I have ever been before or since. I grew to loathe L'Enfant,

veering around traffic circles and crabbing down one-way streets, unsure if headed to 9th & E Northeast or Southwest, aware that all the streets radiated outwards from the hub of the Capitol but clueless how to get there and what to do

once I did. Three spots I could get to on remote control: a dance club with a volleyball court separating two floors, the Mall, and a liquor store at 14th & P that needed no ID. Going anywhere else was part map, part hope and prayer.

Once coming back from a rave in an abandoned warehouse surreptitiously fitted with strobes, booming sound-system and a smoke machine, the kind of place you find the address to the day of the party, driving home with two candyflipping

brothers, one of whom would throw himself off the Golden Gate bridge over a decade later, I was stopped by the cops who found a dime bag in the backseat and made us starfish against a chain-link fence, flashlight full in our faces, yelling,

querying the nature of my grandfather's asthma medicine in the trunk, ripping out panels in the doors, threatening to drag us all to jail until the owner of the bag, the brothers' reedy friend, fessed up. That night our parents were called

but we were not dragged to jail. Under the blinking redevye of the Monument, before the entrance to I-66 tripping streaks on acid, confronted by two forceful cops, I literally pissed myself standing out in the cold. No one until now

has ever known that sordid fact. What precisely constitutes redemption? To confess is not necessarily to transcend. But if I hadn't gotten lost we wouldn't have been stopped. Then it's pure conjecture. Coordinates in space I can handle.



SHELF LIFE

○.....○

In *Death to Local Losers*, Connie Skunk
debunks
the “urban myth” of neo-rural love.
Reserving special ire
for “hipster-shepherd-types,”
Ms. Skunk as well dismisses darkened coves
and fields of flower.
Some fans may find her gripes
familiar: Skunk’s
previous work was *Dropouts: Always Drunk*.

POEM FOR EMERSON

Dying of miscellany.

Lungs billow-pink for something resemblable—

the unassemblable suddening

all-sorts-of-befores.

Dunes weighting & re-weightighting

w/ this & that.

Waves' booming seams ramping

& reramping—

(as suck & sough & hish & __)—

somethingth

tending ____-ly away.

(Some where else where.)

From what set-asides, My Optative,

My *-Eth*,

does this throwback shockwork dote?

Amid this unstructing copia,

thru surround & resurround

& from inskied out—

throes are throughs

& there is no mattering

that is not ours.

Hours

when sake's done most

enough, taken for holdable.

As lustrations.

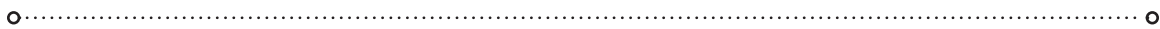
As meatpack in fuckery—

the blood's hectivities
when *we* is not gently.

But sound-sided;

choicelessly
skinsideout.

Though shareful for being so.



Of persons, all have equal rights, in virtue of being identical in nature. This interest, of course, with its whole power demands a democracy. Whilst the rights of all as persons are equal, in virtue of their access to reason, their rights in property are very unequal. One man owns his clothes, and another owns a county.

Ralph Waldo Emerson