

Wildflowers have begun to sprint around discarded instrument panels,  
making eternity less a trace of luminescent numerals  
then a desire to peel an orchard.

No headfirst madness, no roaring on tiptoes,  
here's history, the slang of time, the jack of all hopes  
shaking dried leaves and faded petals from every holy book.

Led along by songlines down trap streets, I am finally  
down to my skeleton. Even the bees whose honey drips from the  
abandoned  
transmissions will not build hives there.

You stare at me as if I had no super powers, my me,  
the one barking like a dog in a second floor window.

I craved too long the barbarian diaries  
of faceless standees and seeds cakewalking.

Now the pillars of my memory palace are oncoming cars.  
So, sing me to the shaggy knifepoint, the evasive stare,

the bewildering look down when what happens next seems  
to glow in collateral bodies following drone bombings.

No one is being photographed from every angle as he walks,  
laughing to himself thinking the joke goes on too long.

You can clip and you can pick, feel for the soft place,  
pull back west after west until you boil with calm.

Amplification is not dreadful, nor an encumbrance.  
Think. Ask. Look. Do. Hold. I know I've forgotten something.

Your dearest friend is a nod and quickly lowered eyes,  
you, the smallest bird on the tallest tall tree,  
the observer observed,  
your fondest affection revealed to be  
a plan to start building a house roof first.

A downgraded sphere  
of the passions forever marches in place:  
you will know and never know, you realize,  
the butterfly parallels or those tinted windows  
of murmuring mirrors.

Retold in brutal deadpan, the alternate history,  
nevertheless ritually summons majorettes  
from the dead. Yet everything you thought  
promising – or a long flight –  
only prompts new cars to yawn.

I am between disappearances,  
currently less than the imperceptible dust on bedrock outcrops.

The morning mist is gone. The earth is still damp.  
Vapor is ringing in ears.

When my self mutilation starts to look like a house in the country,  
let me know please.

Forgetting rises into a towering structure  
instead of the conventional charity marathon,  
or streets squeezing off traffic like a morphine drip,  
    eyes rolling back and skyward:

you might as well be peering through barricades  
or shouting at sand dunes while disastrous  
sunlight strings plastic supermarket twist ties  
    of sound together.

Look: the entrance is dark, and the breathing darks  
stride through the door. Stop trying to reacquire a one-sided coin.  
Sit down, sit down and disappear. You, the dark and I  
    will never vanish at once.

I gave up calling me.

Behind has come to live among the life-sized, the softening,  
the wind making momentary footprints among rippling mummy brown  
grasses.

Who's that following?

Me was tricked. The unthought of and never seen before  
kept out daylight for awhile, and I could read in the scumbled shade

recommendations for art, food and travel from robot connoisseurs.

The puckered post-sane world they traverse  
is smaller than the smallest white clover of summer.

Now that I've subscribed, my me is theirs.

I don't want it. They can have it.

They will never grasp the scissors of my vanishing.

Celebrating promises I've made, I can say the moment feels  
like a game of catch with myself.

Configurations of small lights in the shape of numerals  
on a flat screen will coincide with my death.

I open my eyes. It won't make a bit of difference anywhere.  
I love it.

You'd unsee me if you could.

I lit a fuse in your eyes.

It's long since become a misplaced comma.

If the light were skintight once more, I swear  
it might alter allegiance, but cycles are not circles,  
nor weightlessness the opposite of a buckwheat honey.

Most men are not like most men, women likewise...  
Hearing one's name uttered as if it were a purple purple  
destroys the unspoken conviction that paintings fall from trees.

The last of our commingled breath snakes along the street like loose  
police tape.

There they go, those two, bound to emerge again  
as the platitudinous sheen on cold hocks after hurried burnishing.



This life without a musical score reminds us  
to take notes on the local and transcendent,

on the smooth to the touch, the seam where the rind  
is cracked and an inside revealed to be all thorns and spikes.

Repeated muddy brushstrokes on floorboards or shutters – I get it.  
It is all about the giver, not what the receiver gets.

I'm doing the best job of translation I can:  
what's right for the lost epic of the decrescent moon?

Lyrics and book of a shallow river? A moment of silence  
before an errant bomb goes off among civilians?

My humiliated gaze is pale, lank dead grass striking through melting snow.

I am a former student of myself, a swimmer soaked,  
miles of no-decision meets behind me.

So I pop, I pop repeatedly, trying to unsee  
that small talk that leads up to more small talk.

Under these conditions, who could leave?  
I'm the bird in a razed wood, lingering where its nest was.

Martyrs crawl like sweat on blistered skin. I could be that – or a small  
dust cloud.

I must have the look of someone trying locked car doors at the mall.  
Maybe it's only the pause of synapses sewing in the ancestral drawing  
room  
that turns my eyes to where, suddenly backlit on the horizon, a square  
tree appears.

Ah, those reverential harmonies. How tiring they become --  
how in the end -- a bucket of white paint.  
A precise well timed repousse is hammering my heart from the inside  
out.

Bribe the sunlight? Do it.

Fire pistols at the chicken wire all afternoon? Go.

One honorary discharge, and all I did was run and run and run,

my pulse become as familiar as the Martian wind set to music.

All those jokes about the right thing to say? My mistake.

Continue leading whipped cream by the light of dead stars. Your call.

As the light begins to fade,

as the light begins

as the light...

A spoon shall be nobility,

and a bedroom window, trunk of a car, or winter sky over orange clay,

serve as borrowed vestments of the local barfly.

Only your solid silent sleeping body stops,  
momentarily, that endless emanation from the sky.  
I could look out on the multi-colored lights  
from dead and flaming sources: they'd speed us  
past all the unfocused eyes of the night.

Do your bruises match those of the theater's departing crowd's?  
You tell me. Today I feel like the rot that survives rot.  
Out of the spotlight, I don't speak. I go  
to heaven at the top of the stairs when I'd rather scatter  
pale streaked flowers across a drying wetlands --

see how they flee the season's mournful auctions.  
Witchcraft – or a pricking pareidolia – is already sticking  
memorabilia on undiscovered planets, scoring its dead dirt for musicals.  
A fish breaks the water's surface, birds shriek.  
We will never stop scraping rousing overtures off them.

I can barely make myself out, and I want so badly to be  
what other people see in that sleek car speeding away.

See: all still, still, still. No further than closer is  
that prospect of a red frayed cushion capable of howling  
at the spare, beatific, disappointing stars.

I'll find yet what made me underpaid docent to myself.  
Get the statues to start digging. We can't all be crowds.

Only a before-sound and the gaze that descends to documentary  
can turn sunlit treetops into a loading dock --  
exactly what an unleashed dog dashes toward.

Only a day, mis-cast as a pony ride, crawling as wingless butterflies  
through the ceaseless winds of the Desolation Islands, ends with  
fortune cookies  
reading, "Snow is white is true. Snow is white is false."

I run and I run and I run.

It is cold enough to see a breath –  
where's mine? My voice is now slipping through my fingers...

I wish I could be with the morning  
looking out on the morning, among the invisible  
memorabilia of a rusty melancholy.

Had I escaped the messengers of sheen,  
I would not be now tutoring the folding chairs.  
I'd have joined the famous cupcakes of baby talk.

Down comes wind on the green tapering edges.  
of what's rooted where, throughout out the morning, the morning  
waited.

I run and I run and I run.



While cringing in the bewildered, motionless hallway,  
I recalled how I once could stride through blueprints and schema.

Wild I was, never very original: in another life I might have been a coat.  
At the moment, I seem little more than a photograph that clears its  
throat  
occasionally.

Able only to string together sounds through the dear dead dark,  
I've stared into eyes, your eyes, too, all its rods and cones until  
  
my reflection appears as a wind forever gathering before rain,  
the salted footpath, estranged traveling companions far, far off.

Are carcasses chanting again? I'm serious.  
Someone or something is trying to punish beige snowfalls

where the valley crawls in lowered thirds toward  
historical recreations and hidden underground facilities.

There's a noticeable absence of perfume. I am about to moan  
as light would if it looked back on its own speeding photons.

No time, only aging: okay. In that case I'll settle  
for a solo recital on an airplane runway or dank potting shed.

Maybe if I had thought of ice differently, more sweetly,  
as it was remorselessly marched toward melt water...

Would jesters willfully misquote the desert rains?  
Our beguiling bloody riverbed: may it let us go to sleep already.

Unhappy minutes when distance's tiniest units envelope a room  
    flatten into vague blues, ripples not much more  
than a yoga instructor's warm up exercises.

This very instant back lit cobwebs astonish the heart: the yellow  
    pale light falling across brown old hills is not a series of plastic  
struts.  
How will it be remembered? I don't know.

Chilled and heavy, the air's ever condensing vapor crashes shimmering  
    onto skin in plinks and dribs.  
I think, finally, I've got that right.

Any moment it is about to snow, and the snow's contrary floating and falling will lend a sense of permanence to the unmarked dirt roads threading suburbs that are increasingly home to chess pieces masquerading as private security.

Were there a cold careful breath to take in! Winding long superhighway tar, like satellite photography, always leaves so much left unsaid. I just mightreappear, me, the man in the painting whose smothering oils never dried.

You are low to the ground, you are about to burst,  
you're free to protrude from what does not exist:  
if you're not careful, what makes your memories  
regoliths will slowly render them canned dog food.

Stop trying to pry the sky's eyes open. Recruitment  
posters among the headstones worked all too well.  
Our skin cells hug each other, crying, *Why not?*

The ideal heart will never utter you know what. It is not  
that sudden gust applying to be a protege to storms.  
It never dissolves in the shallow water of lamentation  
or ties dissipating thin contrails into dream catchers.

You are well off the ground, you've jelled, you can enjoy  
this moment. How many get to ride the universe in reverse  
cowgirl position reciting *The Critique of Pure Reason?*

The blue little heartless rest I had  
when I could not breathe, could not not –  
you do not lick fresh wounds like old,  
or sit across, ever, from upright silence --

interrupted my work listing the blood types  
of nouns. I feared I'd been unfairly mistaken  
for a snowbound detective strumming old,  
jellied strands – those, that is, I had conjured.

Whatever it is that starts sleepers dancing  
to the written word gasps, croaks. It never scoffs.  
My own timid downward swoops slow, cease.  
Where is that blue little heartless rest I had?

Follow myself I will, nice and invisible.  
This time I am going to be sunlight,  
simple syrup, having crowned myself  
the better to see the ponderous drool,  
as they will, over undressed taffy.

My voice, my almost human voice,  
disturbs its future versions, which rise  
from he who plots the flow chart's  
every growl, never tires of appraising  
the tarnished silver of the sky.

Where is that salt warm breath that  
takes you by the hand? Perhaps those  
who steal plastic flowers and candles  
from curbside shrines know why morning  
dew bursts suddenly into tiny flames.

A fight breaks out –  
in retrospect.

Enclosed me remains as the warmth  
of fresh bread in bluish cold hands.

My interlocutors, humiliated, wet themselves  
as sidewalk pavement in a storm.

What I might have remembered  
becomes the backward drift of gossip.

Maybe I will just sit down  
in midair.



Only in shushed whispers between books  
(those hysterical, hushed books)  
is the Mississippi sounded deeply as the Volga.

So few words: blackout curtains,  
human skulls, farmland rotating in space.  
A murder is a mountain. See light vanish behind it.

The more I make a net of sunlight,  
the more excited I am to be doomed.

Only the wonderfully wounded see earth  
as a dancer, not a ruffled gull perching.

Desperation can find agility in a thud,  
happily weep when sounds seem to glow.

If I were a seabird, flying asleep half the time,  
oceans ablaze – too late. My dream's asleep.

The alone-lover listens respectfully to famous actors  
    bickering on tape recordings  
while a flock of birds reconstitutes the fading light.

The moment churns, a strange temporal sargassum.  
Adjust the cushions. Soon it will be two days ago.

It is as if a canonizing cape were being settled  
upon soot, this feeling as you catch yourself,

recalling how all affirmation functions  
much like factories making ball bearings.

Now the first light of day reaches you:  
it is snowflakes melting on flushed skin.

With no intention to deceive or to destroy,  
there you are – a metal gate on an alien spacecraft.

Is that ugly alluring numeral 3 still crawling  
around the sugar bowl again? A gap,

then a moment, and a gap again. To wake  
remembering dreams or to wake

without remembering dreams:  
both feel like the touch that banishes touch.

Gasp by gasp and mythological enough  
to be misunderstood, torchlight at sunset  
offers its troublesome grandeur to all of me  
sitting here among carved wooden birds.

Your hooded face doesn't help at all, Mr Earth.  
Dolphins with cameras have recorded too much.  
The moon smirks. I'm gone before it starts reciting  
the parable of the waiter and the empty cafe.

I've taken the moral to heart, and I've stopped  
sending crumbling leaves back to school. Anything  
that could be extracted from the overstory of the woods  
seems like a stochastic sequence of swooshes.

I breathe in. Pause. Suppose was never was.  
I breathe in, prolong this vanishing little tiny brief life,  
odd, soon lost as the vestigial legs of whale fetuses.  
All around are solitude like the blue sunsets of Mars.

Strange historical replicas tumble across the sky.

I like it better when clouds flutter like discarded lottery tickets.

If the trees start giggling, it's because they know how  
to divide the shaken from the shadowed.

Back down the 'minished, shallowed city ground I go.  
No sense waiting for a curtain to draw back my hand.

Sneaking by security cameras leaning from empty high rises,  
I can see the look on my face as I'm looking away.

Precise readings from faulty instruments:  
I know I never anticipated this impasse.

I'd been dreading the skinny, aging light  
limping along a spare bedroom's walls,

muttering about red hand prints in caves,  
though art's sharpened metal is close as ever.

Traffic may subside, rendered to a scuff,  
and the night sky stretch like a spreadsheet.

Still, the halted step's a cool compress. Is it me,  
or is the sky bruised to an unforgiving purple?

When I was a figure in an oil painting,  
blossoming tulips smacked of dill mayonnaise.

Part of that me still remains:  
that part of the portrait that never dries.

I'm posed. I hold in my hand a bird throbbing  
until -- like a child's toy -- squeak....

The tangled biological spume never slows,  
always rehearsals not finales. A shadowy face smiles.

I feel I am about to react as a crow would react  
to hearing the word crow for the first time.



I'm not the only person giving palm readings  
to wet grass, it seems. Almost everyone

in this seaside town has made an easy chair  
of a block of ice. Lunchtime, when it's not

raining, is all twisted wires – and sidestepping  
those who've taken up rifles against vapor.

The minute I was afraid when I should not have  
been afraid, my indoctrination was complete.

Now snapshots of clouds and fog entertain me  
as readily as out of focus photographs.

At dinner tonight I'll hypnotize everyone by stuffing  
my shoulder wound with the feathers of bluebirds.

The wind's mournful ovations put me in mind  
to peel an orchard. Just what kind of road  
has rolled up to my feet? It has the calm  
of melt water. I try not stare too much.

I don't want to go traveling sideways  
in time ever again, see my dreams expand  
to Greenland in Mercator projection. My arrival  
meant swimming across riptide razors of teardrops.

Warmed and warmed I should be, yet  
the sunny morning has yet to parachute in.  
A clay pot on the shelf steps from the shadow. I  
may finally enjoy the silent reel of my documentary life.

This is your first look at Michelangelo's *Thersites*.  
You stand where a last stray fly circles, trapped  
by wide, tall, white worn columns flowing upward.

There is no way you can leave. It is beyond you  
to overtake the arrested surf of roadside weeds.  
All you can do: read letters as if they were numbers.

How does this moment retain so much of the day's heat?  
Like that small bubble in a tall drink, you want to float up, too,  
escape and join pure beautiful soldiers of bleeding flesh.

The stone of the unseen stays unseen....Oh, to be  
floating in space on engraved gold plates, a generic  
human being, waving and waving a silent greeting!

Monstrous dignities govern this, our aviation English,  
as we approach the snow covered edge of baby talk.

One more syllable and exit wounds spread like vaulted ceilings.  
The fading grandeur will trouble us as a carnival leaving town.

Sprint with me to the unarmed cadences of city streets,  
reciting our breathing in time, as if for the first time.

Thankfully, there's a ripcord to be pulled on our naked words --  
We're flying!

Bypass the sleeping eyes, the open mouth murmuring.  
Interrogation proceeds. The beatings never stop.  
Dents in office furniture garner more earnest shrugs.

Keyboards have been used as hammers far too long.  
Cameras watch surveillance cameras, mics mics.  
The beatings never stop. The logbooks are empty.

I want to inhale and weep at the same time. I can't.  
Mouths bleed. The beatings never stop. Eyes close.  
A door from a sunny white room opens to an open sea.

You saw me frightened. You saw me tortured. You saw me died.  
Serious people, serious objectives: dead flesh still twitches --

it's why the grass over graves riffs to the wind's idlest strumming.  
What did you ever glean from commuter traffic clicking its finger  
cymbals?

Just who is a guest? Who sneaks in uninvited? Recall those sleepless  
humid afternoons, the posh resort, certain you could also be  
disappeared?

Rolling off or climbing up or blacked out or lit as a mobius strip....  
the one who never says why, knows why.

Along the river, leaves imagine a cozy dinner spot.  
Strewn rocks have favorite songs, if anyone would ask.  
The dusty moon, too, yearns to get away for awhile.  
Only humans go round and round, impersonating their tools.