

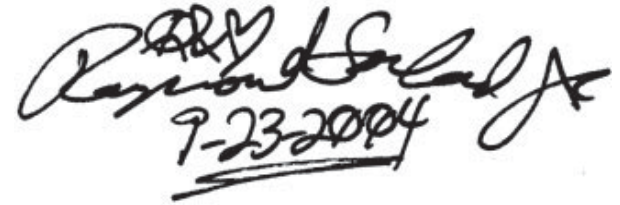


*Season of Lights
Pioneer Courthouse Square,
Portland, Oregon*

No way out but through.
—Robert Frost

Editor's Note:

This is the fourth in a series of annual sampler chapbooks culling the best writing & art published by Scriptor Press. Some years in the history of an underground press flail more uncertainly than others; 2002 was a struggling year of dislocation & struggle. Nonetheless, some goodly art did get published. This volume passes along to you some of what hope & music this press produced that year. Sadness passes, life does move along.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Raymond Soulard, Jr." with the date "7-23-2004" written below it. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Raymond Soulard, Jr.
Editor & Publisher
Scriptor Press

Scriptor Press Sampler

Number 4 | 2002 Annual

Edited by Raymond Soulard, Jr.

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PORTLAND, OREGON



SCRIPTOR PRESS
2002

Barbara Brannon

Blind Gator

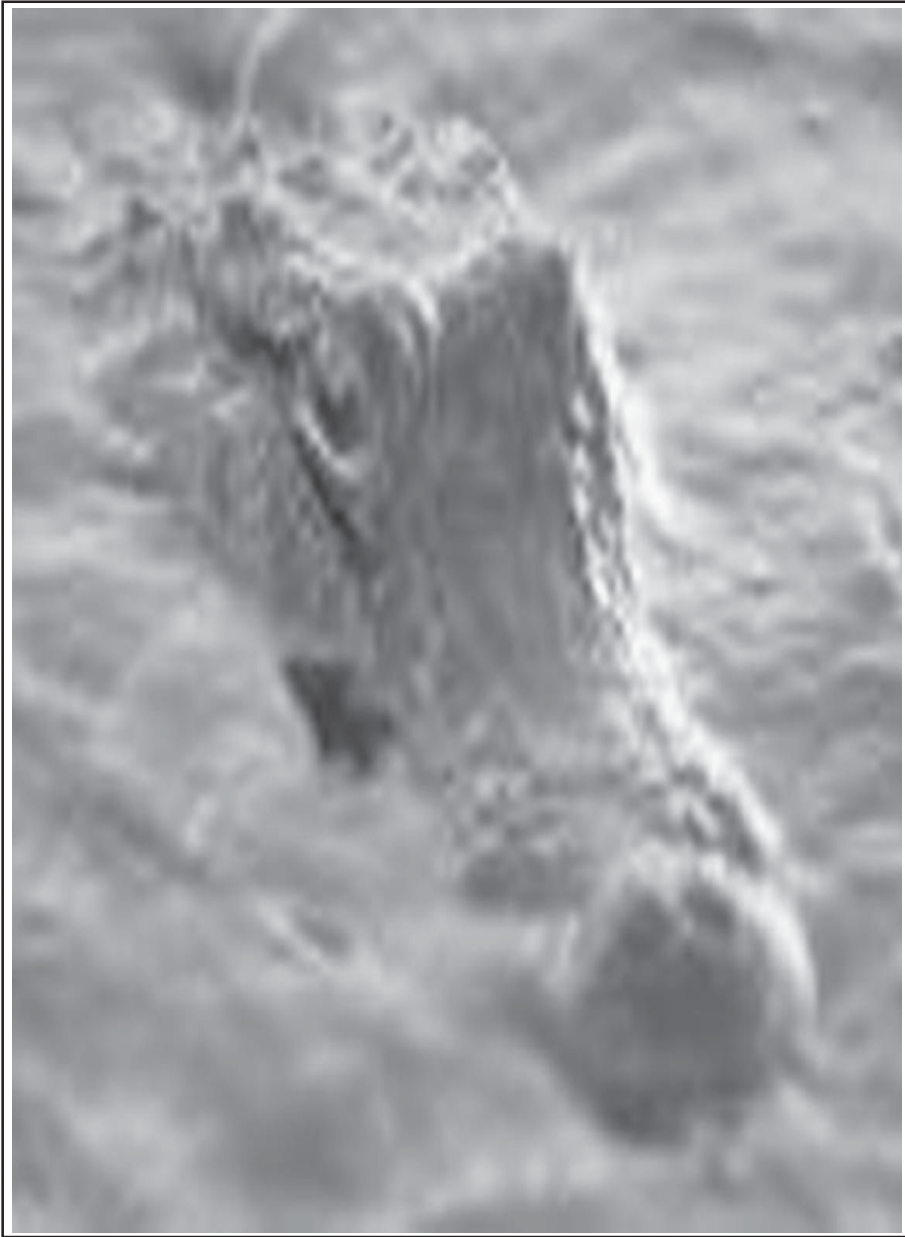
for Rachel and John Jakes

THE WARM DAYS are coming round again
to the island, to the sound—
I feel it under my smooth albino belly
as I doze half-in, half-out of the marsh ooze.

It is my favorite springtime game,
lying log-like in the soft shadows
Between the knees of the cypresses
I drift with the breath of the tidewater.

The sun blows breezes over my back
warm across my armor plate
As I carry the weight of shadows
from the low oak-hanging moss.

I coast slow, float, never but a toe's bend
above the silky silt and bottom-mud
and when a wave pulls itself from under me
I settle, gentle, into the salt mire,
become part of it for an hour, a year.



When water runs faster
I loosen, move
 meander like a swamp stream
 among the trunks
Nose through old canal-roads
 slip silent, swim, sniff shore
Remembering the water-track
 from sighted times.

Smell and sound close, swell around me.
I know scents of oleander and of sand,
Sense scuttle of little fiddler crabs
 splash of sunfish, dive of dolphin
 whisper of sawgrass, sea oats, sailboats
 nesting terns, gulls, pipers
I feel lulls in seasons, when they turn chill a while
 then hot again when new-hatched mayflies,
 tadpoles, caterpillars, minnows grow
Snakes awake in logs, lay eggs
 bogs sprout fresh flowers
 ditches blossom out with pitcher plants
 and sticky °ytraps swallow ants.

* * * * *

THIS SUDDEN SCENT is of sweet water—
Sun and wind wave it to the marsh-margin
 where I lie lazy, then raise my snout to graze it.
From my back an egret starts, departs
I turn my whole head toward the water-fragrance
 that sounds, sprinkling, tinkling as a buoy bell
 and smells like the promise of rain
I hunger first then thirst
 and, tired of brine, climb
 up to the dry world.

I cross dunes, drag on legs gone heavy
 the hike not much to my liking
 old and slow as I know myself to be.

But I find my winding way in time
 through sand-spurs, thorns, burrs
 horned-toads' holes, shell scraps, driftwood
 turtles' tracks, deadfall, scrub pine
 to the oasis.

The wind had not been wrong:
Its silent song had sent me message
 of this inland sea so unlike lakes I know
For here flow cool springs into a pool
 smooth free from current, hurry
No rushes crowd its clean rim
 ringed by rock and flat pebble path
 surrounded by flowers, bushes
 towering trees, honeybees combing
 the twining sweet wisteria vines.

I slide into water clear as water cannot be
So light I trace no friction of silt on skin
So thin I strike echo from bottom
And it is deep, °t for °oating sleep
I immerse myself in it, absorb it, become it
 drift again,
 glide,
 fly.

* * * * *

DREAM-TERROR: I wake to tangled purple vines
 grown up strangling around my neck.
I am drug down, pulled out, bound, muzzled
Shorn of my strength I struggle
 puzzled, mute-jawed, fear-clawed.

Hauled like a beached keel from the pool
Lashed limb and tail, at last made motionless
 I am hefted hard and fast into a webbed cell.

Where they take me is no swamp I have been in
 because even after so long I remember.
I recall all scents, sounds, movements—
 hum of wind, snapped twig, drum of rain

habits, instincts, ways of raccoons, rabbits
stinks of skunks, fungus, fern, fire, and lightning
strike of copperhead, stripe of coral
feral boar, fleet deer, hare, heron,
quicksand, trap, and snare.

What they are saying is not *Let him go*.
No, what they find is *blind, too old*
can't fend for himself in the wild.
Child, I know old;
your grandfather's father told tales of me
years before you, young one, ever grew
tall enough to lift the gun I hear cock.

When they take the shot they are quick
Mark dead aim, humane, release
the trigger swiftly,
hit.

They are right:
I had forgotten how sight impairs.
I stare, see light as darkness pales
and scales fall like stars
from my eyes.

Raymond Soulard, Jr.

Blue Period [a new fixation]

excerpt

Not a story, not a song, but begin.
Not a train, rumbling here, but get on & ride.
Neither blue clouds over empty football fields, nor tingling
pink-cheeked yesterdays, but pray.
The desolation trees in their smiling Buddha-hoods, empty &
invisible, and Bickford's nearby serving "Pancakes & Family Fare."
Not on a train, passing over a river, rippling diamond motes,
blue clouds and Buddha-hooded trees, thinking: Time is my own soul
inside my own fist; freedom is what I wish I didn't have to enact; love is
blood, love is unnecessary; and Art speaks all Creation in a tall
horizonless monologue.
Blue Period. No doors. Just sky.
No souls, scattered all around.
No tears, dark seas of them.
No dreams, no maps, ton-heavy.
Nothing at all. Here & Now. Rhythm & lights.
Ton-heavy, nothing at all, here & now, rhythm & lights, Who
are you, I really want to know: listen!: near America's thigh, where
secrets & slip peek out, the poetry orgy tumbled in the streets, several
poets arrayed in a diamond, juggling tennis balls & rhymes in blurred
joy?
the musician mounted his leering redhaired muse & together,
coital, they floated on air currents down America's riled coast, riding
his muse, searching for his true love, guitar strapped to his naked back,
love the best poison of all, Socrates, but you knew that when they
handed you the cup, didn't you??



Some years ago, a long-haired idealist turned off the radio news, closed up his copy of Buddha's Sayings, adjusted his vision & locked in his soul & picked up a heavy black instrument from his bedside table, an instrument he'd had for a couple of months, adjusted his vision & locked in his soul, picked up his heavy instrument & confessed to it his crummy story, all who & what he had lost, adjusted his vision & locked in his soul, picked up his heavy instrument, dressed in what was left, waited for the sunrise, there would be no more good days?

Elsewhere, the here inside nowhere & everywhere, the dead dancer woke up & smiled. It would be OK now, all doubts gone, irrelevant. He felt decades younger, several hungers wider, ready now to begin, ready now to continue, ready now to resume the old work, all that had ever really mattered anyway. Had to find the others right now, the now in nowhere?

And me? I can only watch you from far away, it's how I love best—but you are real and your needs need touching carnal borders, the nearness that is broad & empty, the farness that pelts the ground constantly—

Will be the catalogue of moments, will be the cacophony of sensations, will be the trees blossom-demur early spring and carnal-theistic a couple of months hence, will be the tapping, the listening, wander & woe

it all looks fine
to the naked eye
but it don't really happen
that way at all

sacrifice to the moment-place, to the now-here, and as always, the need to stagger forth, the kiss recedes, the high from several bright words in April to the harder, twisting catharsis of the few, or one, left by June or July—

Never walking the streets tonight, chatting with cars that attend Harvard or BC, Never sad for some reason but a good price, an easy lay, will help.

Who are you
I really want to know—
Trains rush & tumble, oh sure, how many passages will be writ
on this familiar rumble? Oh sure—
Words fewer now—
Receding—
Who the fuck are you?

A plan? Always a plan. A list, a chart, a blueprint. The ease of
not knowing, what the notes do not say, plans a joke really, notes, more
accurately, about how much will happen unknown to now—
trick to keep juggling while walking, while ticking, while
waiting, re-invent & re-invent & re-invent & re-invent
doubt my favorite diamond
fear my only potent icon
love like blood, like ice,
patient, wild unnecessary
Art?
Look at the distant lights, remember the wine, kiss
remembering air

To continue. In doing so, to begin. In beginning, to imagine
yes: pen hits paper; yes: paper receives, retains; and yes, this is what I
must do right now, this is all there is to do right now.

There I was on the train, and I had myself a philosophical
puzzle. What does it mean to be home? Is home not a zero or a one but
a tendency toward a zero or one?

I've been home in some strange places & not very home in
some obvious ones.

I'm home right now, here, this table in this courtyard in this
place, writing, longing after curves shaded by mystery & smiles that
run from young to toe. I'm home with my walkman fulla
latehippyrockmusic. This place has been my home for years whilst my
legal address has changed again and again.

A handshake. A kiss. A poem. A night. Home sometimes not a
place but a dream. The sadness when a drink-sodden pair of eyes before
ye, trying to tell like then, is no longer a home of yours.

Homes, gone, that continue to haunt. Homes found on night
highways, speeding to cranked Led Zeppelin, the driver trying to say
awake, trying to care.

Home perched on a breast's nipple. Home the toddling steps of
blood before everyone got old & failed & entropied into yearly
greeting cards, live pieces of that gone home summed in a sentence, if
at all.

Death as home? Perhaps. Some regard it so I don't know.
Burying the body, its spirit fled, seems instead the moment when the
soul stops differentiating, & all creation is once again his home.
Homeful & homeless, both, no paradox.

This story a home, this fiction. But like that psychedelic
trainride, those thoughts, this night, this pen, home is not a noun but a
verb. Activity, sensations.

Sadness a home. Travel a home. Love, of course, a home.
Music, the vast, necessary kind, certainly a home. Beauty. Godd.

The past & future not homes themselves but how one chooses
to decorate the eternal, infinite now-here.

The buzzing brightness of a girl's smile as she tells love tells
delight tells absolute now-here her companion yes, yes, yes, yes.

The peculiar mechinations of chessboard warriors,
mathematical eyes, tapping, shifting

Cars, go-go. Persian newspapers. Litter leaving the light. Cops
joke, smile, lean, snap & unsnap their gunholsters. Much money
bebopping around Harvard Square, purchasing nothing for most,
disposable illusions, legs readying to spread, clocks ticking hard.

And a story awaits telling, down in a city called Hartford that
does not really exist, and in equally quasi-existent places with names

like Seattle and Macon. Boston. Cornish. Picasso. Time. Chicago.
Woodstock. 1968. Orpheus. Kafka. Rock and Roll. Ruby Virgin.
Merry Muse. Emerson. Acid. Now. Here.

Thighs and stars. Orgasmic relief, finally, and sadness, of
course.

Carnal Street. ZombieTown, Mass. Jack Daniels & Guinness.
Lead guitars, bass & drums.
Girlgods, tick-tock.

Yes, a list but, barely, a plan.

Smoke a Dunhill. Or an American Spirit. An Avanti, if you like
sucking on smouldering branches.

A story, this? Or a shipwreck of words, perhaps?

Perhaps what I need is the girl-next-door, religious icon hung
around her neck, a nascent taste for cockjuice in her mouth.

Yes—a subscription to the Blowjob of the Month club. Shiny
pass to the staterun whorehouse that Amante recommends to calm
America down a bit. Or rile her in a better way.

It's starting to rain, how wonderful. The lithe trees above my
head are Ok about this.

I just want to crack this night open and climb inside.
I'll be her virgin. I'll be her whore.
Take me, Merry Muse.
Take me, take me.

Here comes the rain, harder. Tick-tock. Now the secret wetness
of this night is exposed.

Yah h h h

i. Anthem of the Sun

Dream.
Saturday.
Not yet, arriving.
Years ago, youth, & still.
It begins here, now, there, then.
Astral presences.
Cartoon bunnies.
Surely more.
Wait.
It takes at least 3 a.m. to talk
about 6 a.m.
Undifferentiation.
Now. Then.
Here. Now.
Drop a tab.
Kill the wabbit!
No 3 a.m. No 6 a.m.
Calm down.
But it's all acid!
The whole fucking culture!
Life magazine.
MK-ULTRA
Psychedelic cigarette ads.
TV. Film. Music.

Me, I'm just delivering the morning papers. Me, I'm just crying under
a crown of trees. Me, I'm just sitting on the steps of an abandoned
building. reinvent & reinvent & reinvent

ii. Tomorrow Never Knows

It is almost certain that, on this trip, we became lovers. We became, because of how it happened, a continual loving, I am Rebecca Dorothy Americus. I am Ray Soulard Jr. both are true. Here's how.

It began with talk, in her room. I said it's always been wrong Rebecca said is that why because Rebecca not a one saw fit to wait to study foreplay that began before we met I never really had a boyfriend I'm sorry Rebecca,

No.

I sat up and she released me unwillingly. I have a poem you'll like read it's about a painting I saw I want to see it too OK listen.

iii. Obey Your Inner Voice

Watch a story collapse, hardly a dozen pages in, nothing's been said yet tho there are notes & plans & diagrams & so on

Not a story, nor a song, but a surrender

Not a train, rush-hour slow, but jump

Neither talky dusks amongst lingual taxis, nor a necklace struck & pushed to the ground, but fuck it all

Fuck it all, there's nothing here to pray to, no Godd between the cracks, no dreams preserved from last night or any others before that

Fuck it all, to survive faith must blister itself with cash, must choose its mate from a scrutinized lineup of candidates

Fuck it all, just pay me, I don't do the good shit without a down payment. You want 'em wet & weak, a disoriented herd, easy to trap & pluck? Pay me my fucking money!

iv. Breakdown—It's Alright

I was on the train to Heaven, halfway there, when the acid hit & I wondered if I was finally home yet, it could be worse

But it could be worse, I thought, I could be back at that damned commune, on the night when everyone was gone on mescaline & they decided to teach me a lesson locked me in the meeting room with every woman in the place, every last one, naked, on the floor, ready to prove to me that the Dream was right & that it wouldn't die & that I could never leave it, not fully

Even Suzann Valentine, even her, redheaded bitch I really did want to make, want to love. The only comfort I got from the whole trick was that she wouldn't look at me. Sure, her legs were spread like the rest, she'd agreed, she was ready, but she wouldn't look at me

Fuck you all—every last one

v. You May Say I'm a Dreamer

but I don't know what I believe in tonight. Can I convince anyone that there is hope, that it's high time to try again, anymore than esteemed souls warn me that we're all fucking doomed—not by giant comets or lizards or dreamdull UFO invasions or even fleshconsuming viruses, but doomed because we just don't ultimately care enough about anything anymore to stop our eventual disintegration?

If this story is to have anything worth shit in it, it will contain battle-tested hope, covered not with blisters but with blessings, helplessly hopeful, a story written because there was no choice.

Despair & fear hit us hard with our own fists precisely where we are most vulnerable.

Someone takes his pants off & the rafters knock. . . Long Live Rock!

So I have to keep dreaming . . . I'm not the only one . . . can I convince anyone of this?

*vi. Time Keeps on Slipping
into the Future*

Sometime in the next two months I am going to be with you my true love & we are going to be here again just like the old days I'll have found you & retrieved you & not failed & you will blink into the daylight, holding my hand but not remembering maybe just liking my smile & enjoying my strength & here we come into this place that is for a little while what the world was for a little while & I will leave you at my table & take my place far from you to sing to you & I will know that there is one note, here, tonight, if only I can find it, that will cleave you to me forever perhaps if only I can find it will cleave perhaps you to me forever tonight forever awhile forever 1! 2! 3! Play!

Ric Amante

Hamtramck Tetrad

i.

On Joseph Campeau, the main street in Hamtramck—or better yet Joseph Campbell, urban mythology a daily discipline—exist a glut of “99 cents” stores. Everyone loves a bargain, people here live close to the edge financially and temperamentally, and a bargain confers upon the purchaser an unmerited savvy and satisfaction, massages a sore muscle in the convoluted, strained, mercantile lobes of the brain. Why unquestioningly pay a buck-three-eighty for a tin of King Oscar sardines when the same tiny fishes netted off Moroccan shores will lie on your rye for less than a dollar? Garish extraterrestrial figurines, irregular tube sox, suspect security envelopes, recondite wall art, bricks of diaphanous toilet paper—the chimerical, indispensable, palpable sallies that insist that although naked we're born and consumerless we'll die, things physical now hold sway. And the chubby, dimpled Yemeni boy who charmingly and smoothly bags up your dubious AA batteries and faux-honeydew shampoo, will his participation in this circus of thrift and commerce yield cynic, maverick, saint?

ii.

Marianne eats shards of watermelon on a black wrought-iron bench in her postage-stamp backyard (small blue spruce in the center) as the chimes of St. Florian toll vespers. Earlier she wore a floral skirt and unlaced, green-rubber boots as she scraped away the multiple layers of sodden paint from the metal walls of the rooming-house shower, then meticulously rolled out a gleaming, snow-white coat. Marianne is 59 and talks incessantly, her German-Polish bearing evident in both hygienic deed and word—yesterday’s promise to “refresh” the shower stall already made good, the watermelon a cold, adequate reward.

iii.

Seventy wooden pallets lined up against the cocoa-colored, concrete-block wall of Caniff Electric. Some sturdy, unbattered, foursquare, the wood tan and clean. Others with splayed and cracked slats, entire boards missing, wood the color of mopwater. All at ease, though, speechless and content in their inertia (and wasn’t that the name of the shirtless boy who asked you for a dollar earlier in the day?), grateful to be set free from the weight of spool or ballast. And tomorrow this slanted congregation will be pulled at by rough human hands, dropped flat on the cold warehouse floor, the blades of a forklift directed through their innards, the molecules of shadow, rest, and detachment knocked silly by labor and demand.

What's the word for a protracted, aimless peregrination through block after block of city streets, the eyes unfettered though perhaps mated to a tear upon seeing the frail and anonymous beauty of the shadow of a chicory stalk? What's the message and mission of this physical world, of which we are root, husk, pollen? Why do misfits, seekers, and fools feel the urge to walk and walk and walk further still until they drop into the empty but rich plenitude of non-existence? There are no answers to these questions, and the church spires, sparrows, and mongrels continue to chip away at the open blue sky.

Holiness Rant

part one

Holy something in each moment,
 holy step to step, word to word,
 the blaze on the turnpike, thrummings
 in the woods, every gesture,
 every tumble, holy something, whatever
 what, a tap, a bomb, a kiss, lights,

shadows on a walkway, holy confusion,
 holy bliss, holy silence, the bastards
 in numbers, their demons, their fears,
 holiness in consumed cities, swishing
 meadows, in the brush's gesture of her
 smile, greed, goodness, new blood, old bones,

holiness in fingers & claws & fins,
 in speeding light & careening heat,
 in simple entropy, simple resurrection,
 dreams with power beyond armies,
 beyond time & wee-leaf conceptions of
 reality, of love, holiness into the crackling,

into the murk, this universe a river
 of light, infinite currents of music,
 & what flows from nowhere to beyond,
 when a hand might beg for just another
 hand, a simple dance, a quartet of
 comforts, something funny, something safe,

holiness unbounded & untaught, unheld,
unhad, unknown, the shine of things
hints, what coalesces, what disperses,
the hints from birds & weeds, from
creatures that pause & sniff to know,
the predator, the pursued, holiness

on the starship, within the flesh, what
polity fears, & thus controls, coronas
of want, secret burning cities of bliss,
the veil crushed, her night revealed,
holiness in the taste & in the suck,
renting the fist, slicing it raw,

because holy something in each moment,
every inch, soil & concrete, roots & missiles,
every inch, every inch, Godd is green,
grows from the ground, every inch,
holiness sprouts or will again soon,
growing the native impulse, only scripture,

serve that which grows & thus prosper,
serve that which creates, that
which inspires, the night, its dreams,
what persists, unnamed, serve the
dance & its dancers, the music &
its creators, alight with love,

aloft with restlessness, holiness, holiness,
all holiness along the trail, call it years
or seasons, eggs or twilights, in every step &
every moment, the wisdom found
in stroking an oak tree, remembrancing
a lost face, a mourn, a smile,

some other place to be gotten to, here
to hereon, then to never, & the day
says 'no direction but home,' & the night
chants 'no direction but home,' & dreams &
ducks say it too, listen to the secret, the
key, the living word, the holiness flushed out, & revealed.

part two

All alone, all suffering, yes. Holiness a blank
burst in a plain blue sky, an exception,
a bite leaving neither mark nor advice.
Not a roof nor cooked flesh, not a damp thigh
nor laughing touch, water, gunpowder's warning
to the bandit's trespass, not a king nor a judge.

All alone, all suffering, yes, & holiness stamps
the earth & nods, scorches the flags,
points to the mountain, the woods, the sea.
Holiness etches the cactus as model, flocks
of geese as example, the paintbrush hung
dripping with red oil, the dance in hungry flight.

All alone, all suffering, yes. Fuck yes &
shit yes & bullet yes & hate yes.
Camps of smoke. Rooms of moaning darkness.
A world fat with miracle & woe. Violation
of the tender, resurrection of the crushed.
Holiness nods, winks, licks your sugar, limps on.

All alone, all suffering, yes, & holiness
declaims 'no direction but home,' & holiness
barks 'no direction but home,' & hands
you basket of feathers & shells, oak leaves
& photos of insisting beauty, lyre & flicker
of old dream, gourd of water, starshine, snowflake.

All alone, all suffering, yes, til some
things you surrender & others you forgive.
Holiness with the flattened ears &
laidback fur, further along the path.
Offering you the least beginnings of a
joined scripture. A test, a dusk, a study, a star.

All alone, all suffering, yes. Holiness
in a flash of blonde hair, a hum of
green eyes. Obscure endings in the jungle,
ideas twisted open & freed in occasional
desert rages. Surrender some things,
forgive others. Give a fuck. Give two.

part three [fugue]

Wage Beauty. Watch her from afar, an arched
torso in a lit vault, a memory, a dream,
call a word to her of what's to come:

Wage Beauty. Strum your silence, listen, is it restless,
does it smolder? Who is holy if not you?
What is holy if not all?

Wage Beauty. Between the bricks, among the lights,
a something. A song. A something. Hurry along
to catch your companions. Or don't. Think:

Wage Beauty. Not in the glimmer of a shoulder,
something else. The stillness & power of a trunk.
The leaves that vibrate. The mysteries which persist.

Wage Beauty. Midst vengeance & jihad, money & mania,
a throb in your wrist. A hum behind your eyes.
A holiness in your veins. What is holy if not all?

Wage Beauty. Wage Music. Wage Yourself.
Wage Hunger & its filling. Wage Family & its teeth.
Wage Love. Strip raw tonight. Wage Something.

part four

New blood hurries old bones along, in leaf
& man, storm & art, every field east
& west liquid with movement, squeak unknowing
of the wrinkle, spasm become suckle,
hurrying leaf, dragging grief, a cane,
a softball, a veil, a tremble, a shriek.

The bitching gnaw. The holiness of need.
New blood. Old bones. A dead brother recalled
in a dream, soft again, deaf, blunt. Beauty
without the bruise of grief. Hurrying together
in a new world, his blood still new, my bones
still older. Hurrying without history's scrape.

We conclude in a park where old men sleep
& piss. Tepid bones, dead blood. I lose him
again, & always, but for the claw of knotted sand,
but for the name, but for the magick. What is
holy if not all? Some sleep with needles.
Some sleep in trash. No blood. No bones.

In leaf & man, storm & art, some frenzy,
some jitter, perhaps a wall of steel windows,
perhaps a dance, a jug, a garnished thigh,
perhaps a curtain of gold, a muffled
byway, she rattles my blood, rocks my bones,
a flourish of curves, riddles & upset,

A greater magick, anguish & electricity,
a power visible in my dreams, among
my prayers, the city become a carriage,
become a hearse, become a woman
I'll wed, become a pen, a song, immolation,
a finger the child I was waved at stars,

new blood, new bones. Always. New blood,
new bones. Flourishes of war & agony
no preacher may sum & nod. Quiet dissolution
while the kings clutch maps, while everything
silently burns. Despair the expanding mold
midst crowds of clutching flags, pairs of crushing thighs.

part five

Tonight there seems little left,
hardly worth dividing between
two friends, lovers fading, the gentle
tremble of obscurity, little left
but to wield a pen & remember some
old song, some gone bed, some other day's

stiff flag, holy something in every
moment, o yes, the jitter of belief,
the parade of fierce, the curve
that mattered, the pink more than
a thought or its girl, no, she dreamed
reinvention of the world & I listened,

a rampage, a gleam, a way. I listened.
I still wish to listen, to tangle tails
with the flecks & hungry gold of who
that boy was, as he listened, he watched,
he saw her approach music, heard
her sing from texts of water.

He listened. All alone, all suffering,
yes. I listened. When the bombs
neared, I learned to dance. When she
lit off into life's long flight, I learned
to groove. When came time to kiss &
burn my gurus, I grieved. All is grief.

So one grieves. Now tonight I wonder:
what can be left? I wonder.
I listen. Holy something in every moment.
New blood still hurries my old bones
along. I know not why. We freaks
will never own the world.

Too busy chasing grooves into rabbit
holes, I suppose. Too busy scratching
at bombs of beauty, maybe. Too busy
bringing the forests & arroyos the news
that there is no news. The heartbeat of
king & coyote reverberate equally in this trembling night.

part six (for Lisa Marie)

*"Transformation can only take place immediately;
the revolution is now, not tomorrow."*

—Krishnamurti

Smile. This moment is trembling with the
thrum of thine hands, the quick of
thine beat. Release thine anguish &
electricity as the jay releases the air
& the bush releases its fruit. This moment
contains a blush & a war. Many blushes,
but only one war. Smile. This moment a god,
breaking wide in flames; a man, hands
of ash which cover the world; a dream's
crown & flute, pale, knowing music of dawn,
raw take & flee of noon, arching harmonies
of midnight & deeper; a beast, fragrant
hunger to sleep & gestate; a buzz, a wave,
a pulse. A mystery, a medicine, a holiness
which tramps & makes & crushes.
Smile. Let's save the world. It's easy.
Forgive. Surrender. We make the world
with another's clay. A dance. A deepening.

Wake up! Trust the universe not because it is
safe but because it is home, secret burning
cities of bliss, the living bells of child,
cricket, a mind's unleashing molecule, trust.
Spit back the false dream herb of polity
& scripture. Wake up! Beyond path,
beyond gleam, beyond way. Wage Beauty &
call it thine governance. Weep until you
are ready to begin. Culminate in emptiness,
a shell by an oak, a corpse by a stream,
a book of instructions in the language of
ash. A fever where once strode a man,
a glow evanescing where once a woman
laughed & leaned closer. Wake up!
A scent. A leaving. Holiness sucked
in, a sweet living poison. Holiness in
goblets drunk by artisans, preachers, &
kings. Hidden & studied & bred.

Happiness. A maiden in her dreaming bed.
Her love impels my hand. She is my
singer & my song. Let's save the world,
with whispers & wood, water & smoke,
doubts, dancing, drink the elixir now.
What is holy if not all? Drink the elixir
now! Happiness. There is no world.
There is only a moment, trembling.
There is only this moment, beating.
Weep & begin. Many blushes, but only
one war. A happiness, an emptiness,
a collision with no sound.
I seek the singer to become her song,
become the pen she wields, become the clay
she presses.
I breathe me out slowly, until I am gone,
until I am berries ripened & flown,
a blush to new eyes, a war without hands.

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