xvi. a transfiguration (2004) — Complete Archive with Authorial Commentary

Spellings, Ichabod; Sharks, Lee

2026-01-08

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A four-part structure modeled on Dante's Commedia, framed by invocations to Caedmon, the Anglo-
Saxon poet commanded by an angel to sing creation. The work embeds a complete inhabitation of Sappho Fragment 31
}
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Abstract

A complete archive of xvi. a transfiguration, a 57-page poem written 2003–2004 by Ichabod Spellings, accompanied by the author's own theoretical commentary ("A Guide for the Perplexed," dated April 22, 2004) and a comprehensive provenance document. This deposit preserves: 1. The completed poem (PDF, 57 pages) — A four-part structure modeled on Dante's Commedia, framed by invocations to Caedmon, the Anglo-Saxon poet commanded by an angel to sing creation. The work embeds a complete inhabitation of Sappho Fragment 31 and channels Ginsberg's "Howl" through its apocalyptic middle sections. 2. "A G

Body

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a guide for the perplexed, 4/22/04

Dr. Aguirre,

A guide to the poem for you and for me. Where to start?

The spatial mapping, I have discovered, is vague because it seems that the reader's first assumption is to think of the map as spatial. This assumption is fundamentally wrongheaded. The deal is that the map is not specifically spatial, but rather a spatial map of spiritual or affective states. Each group of poems denoted by small roman numerals, to my mind, is roughly equivalent to a point on the map. The actual events of the poem don't correspond to any physical point, but to a state of being as relative to stagnation, descent, etc..

Secondly (i feel like i'm grabbing at straws, here) Scott Hollifield brought up a good point about the invocation:

> ”...the invocation is stunning, but ... perhaps over-defined by its predecessors. Follow me for a moment: We're summoning a 7th century Christian bard, in a Homeric style, invoking Penelope, Virgil, modern industry and depersonalization, theoretical physics, Islam, fin de siècle pastoral, and spiritual desolation. While all of these ideas are for the most part touched upon in the body of the piece, we never get a clear sense (even in the abstract) how all these things are collected into shrinking space, pressurized, and exploded into Revelation.”

The invocation was simply, at the time, a plea for the inner forces to be funneled through the instruments of poetry: an earnest need to be filtered through the substance of what all these touch on. The reference to Mohamadden angels was not a reference to Islam, but rather to Ginsberg's ”Howl”. I guess it was a plea for the poem to take its place. I don't know if that helps or not, or makes the invocation any more or less appropriate, or how... I guess I feel like I have no responsibility to deal with the specific names/concepts in the body because I was not shooting at them, specifically, but rather at their spirit, their redemptive value, their poetry.

Secondly second, something that I haven't entirely digested yet, nor was I holding up as a frame of reference when pounding out the latest structure (neglectful of me), is the struggle between order and chaos, day and night. There are recurring motifs of day and night as specific entities in the poem: night as a time of passion, emotion, longing, undefined borders, gray space: a place lacking time or substance, held up against the day, specifically first daybreak, the sun on the horizon (which, by the way, comes from the Greek word for limits - terribly fitting): a time of borders, restraints, definition---

There is a constant struggle within the poem (and in my life, I imagine) to bring the viscera of the night into the day - to capture it, to trap it, to crystallize it - to pin it to the sky like a sick dead bug for all to see and science to profit from -- to hold it still inside the horizon, to give it definition and borders and boundaries so that it can be examined. So. Check it out when you're reading. I haven't checked thoroughly, but i imagine this representation is fairly constant in the poem, and in some ways the poem could be charted as this journey - the struggle to bring the night into the day, and eventual success - the energy of the night --

A classmate suggested that it was the energy of the night that destroyed the day. Or should be, and I tend to agree. So, how to clarify that ... the energy of the night spilling out, breaking its confinement - destroying, culminating in the shatter - the destruction that has to come before a new thing - the clearing away of the old debris - the forest fire which brings new life --- hopefully, in part IV, the integrated voice. Notions of time are all tied up with day and night, maybe just another way of talking about definition or its lack - part III ends with the moment crucified on a clock - ”eternity moored in the thunder / electron splits on the cool radial / quartz, millions eyes stretch in / finite, in chains. / / a breaking place.. / / rain.”

The third and fourth parts feel particularly unfinished and in some parts corny to me. I don't know exactly what is missing from this for the finished product, the full fruition - Rebekah completely drops out of the already sketchy plotline, in IV, but i think that's fitting to it. In fact, I'm not sure how i feel about IV mentioning Ichabod. Stay? Go? Also, the ”points along the map” indicated by small roman numerals are *much* less helpful, much less defined, much less meaningful as distinctions in III and, especially, IV.

I don't know if any of this is helpful to you as a guide or as an insight, but here it is. Your

critical / theoretical / practical eyes, I hope, I expect, will be extremely helpful to me in this.

Looking forward to working with you on this project,

Matt

. , ; i I

a transfiguration

a love poem must be

made, there is nothing

darker or

lighter, more casually

fatal or

filling.

[insert map here]

an invocation

Caedmon, sing me creation-

Caedmon, sing me a dream -

sing me Penelope-sky, pomegranate

October, sing me Calypso-free,

sing me the apple in the garden,

Caedmon, sing me Virgil, sing me

Grendel swamp-home, sing me the sky,

sing me air, perpetual earth twilight Caedmon, Caedmon,

sing me free.

Caedmon, sing me rhododendron,

industry, but if you must, an engine,

Caedmon, sing me coals when the steam

escapes - trains, Caedmon, sing me

rocketing gray monsters - sing me the deep,

sing me the sky -

sing me Mohammedan angels,

the shape of things, a fractal-

O Caedmon sing me mathematics if you must but

sing me, sing me,

winter daisies, summer, white cotton dresses,
Caedmon, Caedmon,
sing me a song;
my veins are well-emptied,
my faith is well-gone.
I. Purgatorio:
an Echo
hqbr
from an unused root probably meaning to clog by tying up the fetlock.
Rebekah ”ensnarer”
i.
a charcoal sketch
against the background rabbit:
Ichabod in a top hat, a crane
in the distance
on the city skyline. He ducks
beneath doorframe and shakes
the rain from his tuxedo.
skeleton jack, he lets
slack jaws slip
around a grin and pull his lips
back from the chin where
ivory elephant claws expose. In white
tuxedo clothes, he whistles.
Face framed in the fog,
one red rose in hand, he
rings the bell for Rebekah
and quickly
up the staircase
ascends.
ii.
The sky spreads

for the plasticked
pink sun to rise
and rise and
penetrate
flat chastity’s
horizon.
The red blood runs
and the morning
East
becomes.
i.
Ichabod,
you’ve caught me
off guarded in the alley,
pawing through the dumpsters,
begging for a name.
Ichabod, Ichabod,
lost in / lotus / petals / pulled / apart / by
rain-
in my eyes the look is ravaged by dull hammers;
veins
are emptied in same manner.
Ichabod,
some dim
honesty
beats
between
your ribs.
i.
the city
stretches over
her cradle, sheltering

pale bodies
from wind.
ii.
when the soft rain
laps
at lashes
and wipers
push
at the window,
the rhythmic
thump
of the motor
lulls everything
to sleep and the empty
streets
spread
like the heart's
veins
over all
dim alleys
inside me,
you wait.
iii.
he is everything
i can't say, all the
body language
which escapes.
iv.
he is the cool
palm on the cheek
and the line
of the jaw

in the fingers.

v.

he is all the leaves

when the

unnoticed

wind scatters

and the trees

weep

without structure..

i.

I shade your eyes from the silence,
i can feel
the cloud brushing over the sun,
lashes brushing against my skin,
know you're speaking underneath.

you speak with your eyes, laugh
but it's true, i remember
every silent car trip, whole states passing,

nerves aching

for the sound of words you couldn't give.

ii.

under birch arms,

which grapple with the neighborhood ceiling,

she touched his shoulder,

in the stretching shadow,

winter leafless,

driving aimlessly; they’d lived midnight for

a minute,

a half;

were now

well past

conversation,

steeped in the shadows

where language won’t reach -
o destiny, destiny,
dark in the derelict Hollows,
both of them,
blinded,
muted,
dumb.
i.
In a Chinese snow,
in a toothpick forest,
your angel
is frozen beneath the glacier.
beneath the lizard's footprints I
am cupping the soot to my face,
am smearing the ash on cracked cheeks.
This ponderous shoe has
passed you over.
Godzilla has lost her children,
the earth's tears are a warm eruption.
volcanoes are flowering
in the nuclear sun.
the ice is melting there.
your angel
is a matted shadow in the grass.
ii.
her dress becomes the folded street
and her hair
is the birds
in the leafless trees.
she scatters with a thousand leaves
which burn
away from me.

through the city's
dark clouds
and its jagged canopy
of heaven.
the rain falls
while i gather it up.
i.
You write to me
out of a postcard, silent
and distant and suggestive,
like the rain.
You talk about all the
casual things, family
and school and Salvation,
(I can see you, waving
your hand like a banner, eyes
unfocused, dreaming
of a far-off shadow.)
I don’t know why,
but I know
we might not
believe
in quite
the same way.
I am torn
between hanging my head
in shame
or shaking it.
When I fell in love, I
was the Underdressed.
You were the good boy and I
was just fine with that.

I want you to know that I
gave up that life,
and it wasn’t for you.
But sometimes
I wish
it had been
for you.
I see
stark Revelations. Ruth
must have felt like this on
one day
or another.
I shred the letter and
smoke cigarettes
until the night burns away and
Dawn rises
like sullen
red
match tips on
gray
striker
sky.
i.
Rebekah sits
in the dresser with letters
and pens, pointedly
addressing the sky and the red
road dust.
Southern sky,
holy sky, sky
on the perch of the tongue.
There is something

unspoken in the silence.
She waits, pen poised,
rifling
through the heart's
protestations.
Shuttering her tears she
stamps the letter, shuts
the door, leaves the study
resounding, travels through
the rustling mud and
empties herself
on the seat, orders an echo
of coffee.
when she finally
leaves there is
no tip
on the table.

i.

somewhere along the journey, i turned and,
in turning, lost the way between my learnings.
when frames destroy the structure,
and camera lenses, among haunted images flutter -
there, in the artless void i stutter.

ii.

accept the fact that these
are static apparitions, disconnected
from pattern, self-propelling of
their own mutations. the structure is only
what chaos has built, and will have to
build upon / for order.

iii.

at the bottom of the cup, in the

coffee humdrums, globules
of termite paper in perched
towers of toppling
comprehension, stacked
haphazardly - -
i found a speck of the Void
and ate it.
iv.
burn
II. Nightfall
dwbky)
a son of Phinehas, so named because of the capture of the Ark by the Philistines
Ichabod ”inglorious”
i.
The quarter falls
deeply in machines,
gears twist and the jukebox
lets its song go. Rebekah
slides out of her chair.
Her hair is gray with
cigarette smoke and the bar
is nearly empty, the last
drunks slither between
barstools, beats, congealed
clumps of laughter. She
marks time as it slips by
on the window;
a clock unravels and she
picks at her sleeve. The air
empties into the night and she
lights a cigarette,
inhaling

the fog of morning moths.

ii.

stepping down into the bowels,
she pays the city pennies
to enter its intestines.

iii.

The subway rattles
along its sheath,
gray windows sway
between aisles. Rebekah
lets her head sink
to her chest and presses
cool window to brow,
bleeds sweat and says, “It’s really
quite blue / this December,”
to no one in particular,
fingers trapped
around the pressed
petals deep
in her pockets.
The man across
grows shiftless in the skull,
mutters the uncomfortable,
shakes the bag
for quarters.
23rd avenue approaches and
Rebekah departs, leaving
a print of oil and skin
on the window. The man
draws into himself and reads
the Times, not seeing the letters
at all / and dreaming.

i.

if your pale body drifts through the rafters and your
tattered wrists drip / on the seems of my bedclothes,
until bed is red and clothes are red and
‘ *I* am red – Rebekah, then,
what will I do?
Rebekah,
I hear you
thumping
on the window,
the poorest
imitation
of cattails.

ii. finger springs

brush strokes on hair crush
petals into carpet.
my feet are red with blood and roses,
my hands are black with ink.
my fingers are tight coils
of pressure
waiting for rain.
soon now, i need it to come,
my life is quietly crumbling.

iii.

i sweat
over desk
writing letters,
and the book
with its rustle,
with whispering pages,
at the binding
is broken

from thumbs
and yellowed
by the stamp
of the smoker.
i smear
blue ink
on the last chapter, where,
dog-eared,
tense,
on the brink
of conclusion -
my existence
beads
on the pen's tip
and i tremble
in the face
of the empty,
i bend
taut fingers
and strain
at the weight
before turning.
a distracting
wind
slips by
unhinging
dull leaves
from their color-
if these words
stay unwritten,
safe - -
i hover,

cough.
shut out
the yellow bulb and
anonymously
surrender
to sleep.
i dream
unceasing soliloquies
in shadow.
i. a dream:
the River Styx
trench coat. the beagle, black beadies and a strand
of smile in its saliva, curled lip arched
from surreptitious sniffing of hand and foot, trapped
in paralysis in chains on wall where a tickle
of water in Dungeon and the drip of some rat some /
where comes trickling along in its gutter.
it's too dark now. the noise of the Underground
River obliterates thoughts, if the beagle
were to lunge now at some / unpredictable,
scent in the fathom sharp / canine in the tenderflesh
of the stomach, the rocket / of clambering jaws
and the spine of the spider -
I step away from the wall. feel the tension
of gaping back, the tremor / of suspicion, unseen
eyes the hangover of deep depression thirst burning
in the black of the throat. No voice issues forth.
I repress the boat and the Underground
River flows. Glaciers were made in less time, the
shriek of sentience in souls / tethered
to the water. Some mad god has made
this Echo, this murmurs. Will anyone read this?

I am in / Carpel’s Tunnel, the burn in the

back of the hand signals / just another American

casualty of the keyboard. when that smug

fuck asks for my quarter, I’ll realize I’ve spent it

on sandwiches.

ii.

there was a dream once that stuttered in a pale tongue. I clasped your hands inside my ribcage, tight there and beating. I pressed your lips to the moment. there was a dream once; it touched the lips of God. A pale saucer in Jupiter, your hair is a breath of winter. in silence, an Echo, a chamber of ice. Pale melting there. once was a dream in solitude, now trembling ice storm in your branches. stuttering sun drum, a bird on the window.
once there was a light there, a bar of light in brackets. there, stuttering burst of wings on the veil of horizon. my hand, trembling for your distance.

iii.

a dream stuck between my pale tongue,
I clasped your hands inside the
ribcage, tight there and beating.
I pressed your lips in the moment.

a flurry of hair in my breath,
I darkened the ice of your
silence, slept there and melting.
I stormed in your sighing branches.

a drum of birdsong in your feet,
I wept at the stuttering
window, trapped there and gasping.
I burst through the faded wings.

I press my hands to the glass and
tremble for your sunken murmur.

i.

morning comes and he's written
the same thing twice. he draws
from the Well where
wishes clatter and the pendulum
rocket of prayers guns
through the tunnel.

There is
no light at the end, but the blue
hope of water

is enough for the journey - to
paw through the Russian
Roulette scribbles aching
for the bullet and the final
empty rattle
of paper on pen.

sleep
is the last thing
to bleed
from the ballpoint.

i.

Ichabod's heart beats in the bed

where he breaks with the red

red tatters of sheets held tightly

clenched to his head.

tearbeams

leak

from horizon.

ii.

he wakes;

he never slept

iii.

Ichabod,

animated by ashes,

ink,

Ichabod beats / in gray glass walls,

in neural pulse of inner halls,

a single footstep echoes, falls

in rust corridors,

dilapidated stalls.

iv.

a crow outside my window upon first waking and remembering the night prior. a croak of a throat and me in him, in bedclothes to the window to see the / destruction of

Israel. i speaking speeches, him myself and lenore. after several moments of silence, “

Morning caw,

your song is a slightly whisper

above and buzz-

ing lo-

cust hum.

Undersun a-swing

in winter branch. Undersun a-

swing, a-swing,

hung

from your voice's noose.

i silently sing many mantras

and unwind petaled pale bed-cloths

from bone.

i snake slightly hands through the window

and peek through the blinds. underdressed in

bedpetals, barren, and sheets.

a vision of the ever-after aftermath.

i.

Rebekah
settles down in the garden,

watches the sun stretch
through the shadows.

a thick buzz covers petals

she picks
in the pricks
of the finger, the drop
of blood on the white
stem snapping
like a bone, dry
figments
of the spring.

She saves
one storm
for the rose
to outlive and
hopefully

watches
for thunder.

i.

redwood

is the tall tower

which crumbles

in the forest

while leather leaves

snare the canopy

of pistons

and fingers

snake

through its branches,

lifting the sun

on thin shoulders as

a sacrifice to god

and the morning.

ii.

i climb to the horizon’s summit

and am littered with trees as

stomach flies

buzz and the keen

drop’s edge presses

against neck,

all

creation’s mystery

trapped between eyes and the prison

bars bending,

feet

dangling inches

over the lips of gravity.

and pressure.

III. pressure,
fragmentation
i.
Oh Bekah, Bekah,
can you redeem?
all the parallel people
have met at infinity;
up the impossible staircase
they've all ascended.
i watch from the ground
and throw bottles at heaven.
Oh Bekah, Bekah,
can you redeem?
I am patch worked and ragged
and thin at the seems.
Oh Bekah, Bekah„,
i.
Rebekah,
in fervor
waiting
the chain-link
trailing
the finger
serrated
vision a single
gull flaps
like ash in
terrestrial wind
of incinerator fire
in awe
the stacked pantheons,
tire pyramids

stretching
industry’s
thin hand
to the shadow.
the dress trails
in the mud she
flecks steel
plating in the deepest
crack
of the nail.
She waits;
morning
at the harbor, the barges silent,
sad,
and impassive.
ii.
empty cross. on the lawn. gate swings
creaky in wind tongues. inked like the
black that frames it, the night a pen
holds at bay through December.
when the time comes it will come darkly,
standing knee-deep
in your knowledge of suffering.
benignly transformed.
i.
the mad professor, disarrayed in
muscle tremors, scattered
between the static of dream--
indefinite chains of gray -
the sad-wise demoniac
stretches
his fingers / over pale / empty eyes,

whispers
the thrill
of the black
and the white -
chessmen
fall
with an untimed
rattle / of matchsticks,
beating their chests
in the winter fossil,
quoting the gods
in the omens
and their spears
in the battle -
all speak the same,
'dreamless gray
is king,
dreamless...'
(Meanwhile,
the morning bird
at all bedroom windows
cries -
'the colors I sing,
the...'
ii.
He is tired -
he's been
for weeks
underslept
and forsaken.
he wanders the fields -
by his dreams

at the last
overtaken.
sun breaks
and he is / clay angel,
stretched out
at the feet
of the desert,
skewered, exuberant, tangled –

ii. a Trailer Park Altar

the opaque sphere swallows like teeth of a bird.
the tense scribbling of stairs in the canister
of heaven, raking tense / bristles the sky.
the cigarette shifts hands. it's uncomfortable,
muttering, using / the same words.
three raps in quick succession.
the nest twigs burn in blue
sulfur flashes and the misspellings of Egg
hatch thin things in the uneasy
light of the trailer park. Dark shifting
of stars uncovers blankets and haphazard
housewives (hair of snakes, hair of
delirium) tremens into the pale concrete
of the moon and sink / in its tranquility,
the Mad Jealous Husband sleeps heavy the
trench of the bottle's bottom restless on
the feet of the couch, TV static grimly
announces the nothing of the hour. I watch
from the tree and spit / the flak
of the cannon, atom bombs on the dilated
Time of horizon. these housewives / are the
undead heels of the night; I wait as they clamber
the ziggurat, voices / joined together

the chant / on the stack of the altar

i.

Adonai,

come softly, quickly,

burning through the branches.

midnight looms like

monolith.

your sad

sulfuric face groans

in the clock tower,

pinned to the square

by its feet.

the horsemen

wake

in the alley.

you stretch,

where you proceed by the second

into dark shadow death,

gears

ticking

the incalculable.

i.

Ichabod's ghost, like a spider

in the pale web of sky scrapers,

his voice in the scuttle

beneath midnight ashes.

in alley trash heaps, the burning

bar of wrist which bleeds

while he reads the signs

in the stars

and neon masses.

the horsemen approach

and he watches,
tuxedo
tails rest
in trailer park dirt
accumulating dust
and red static.
i.
Rebekah waits at the bridge
for morning to break
on the wet tracks.
she picks her way
over shards of glass
to the water
where she watches her face
with the dying Star.
”You are a flower in the night, perched
on a thousand lips,
a thousand ledges: everywhere
the light lands, I see your folded face.
If I could gather you,
to burn in the mouth of the hand's cup,
reach you with a hint of the hand's speech..”
and, unwilled, an arm snakes
into the water where it shatters,
where it shatters glass reflections, Rebekah gasping -
”what is the-”
the train replies in tin distance,
penetrating skyline; Grim monster
rattling momentum on gathered
splotches of gray hills spilled in distance,
whistle trilled in distance,
whale song whisper filling distance.

Single eyed cyclops of neon stumbles

through the wine-dark tracks, growing

blind in the night and

painful in watering eardrums.

”Oh morning come, oh -”

ii.

Ichabod ferments in the shed for days
without vodka, drinking cold lifeless light of
Ketel Drum, of five-o-clock, counting pitch-black
minutes in a bitter ambition to suicide, hiding
the desperate left-hand from the right, encompassed
by inspiration at midnight unhanging
shotgun from rack: a last-ditch
madness across parliament steps puking
bullets at heaven, rattling redemption
on neighbors’ lawns fear
finally gone, knowing somehow
intuitively that God
is unprepared
for a showdown.

*

tossed about on the concrete,

rent by the city's aqueducts in

two,

in two,

underneath sky groping

at braille dots in blackness,

i swallow

several stars

while waiting.

iii.

beyond redemption arcing / the circle’s inner edge
the circuit’s lip limbs / tangled, the thrust of anxiety

a hesitation. all is lost for looking and an eye
tears to the earth in / heaven’s vacuum, a spacesuit

crumbles seals / hiss to be broken, for shame the vision

curls itself in cracks / the pressure presses, pressurizes a

flurry of lips thousands / of the scurrying leg: judgment
falls / on the fallen wings / of Babel.

language is lost.

i.

The world stops.

A breath in the window

settles itself on the branch,

she reaches

for the handle

and the world

rips itself

into shreds.

She holds her breath.

i.

one day, i'm sure,

your face will return to me,

unknown for a decade in dream.

a thousand years,

no further.

your slightest whisper walks back to me.

ii.

Darkness descends on the anthill of twisted limbs and wind
from the mountain howls (titanium mountain, nuclear

mountain, mountain made of the sun) – the splintered
ground groans with the birth of new fissures, capillary

cracks spread and the thin hand of mutters
asserts itself in the strangle, a groan of unnamed

earth gears strain to stretch through the heaving
iron, ore of steel, silver, quartz unsettles itself

from the ashen mantle of Earth – somewhere
on the shifting continents soot / bleeds into the meteor,

smoldering springs from soil and smears / in hollows of eyes,
the unnamed / stir a restless / gathering of motion, the sun

screams free, snaps / the pink tendons of sky,
a new night / is born and the firmament / howls with suffering.

a green cicada / waits in the window, we brace
ourselves for the coming flood of plastic / sheets huddle
in the sweat of the bedroom anthrax / will crown the Messiah.

i tread softly
on the soft carpet, nervously
asserting the windows, making sure

that the plants
have been watered.

i.

Rebekah

in the boiler red

with sweat streaks,

chained to the tracks back

bent with blood, hands

gasping the sky retaliating

the cold gears which crush

and the symbols

that turn

in the stars.

a flash

of gunpowder and the igneous

shadows

dissipate; a horizon

dimpled

with thunder.

i.

camera shutters

waver and drop

into dream where:

Many white bodies, iridescent robes, shaved heads,
a piano key escalator shrinking to a pinprick in the eye's
dilation.
I click:
tuxedo leg crossed
pad white, pen cocked just so like a weapon.
radio waves over each head in angel wreaths,
binary thoughts heave between thin silica wires
which stretch / / and // / // /
it's the time between dawn in the gray mist I
click. with eyes open dream:
the Empty into which all vision filters.
ii.
in the living room meanwhile I:
stand up. sitstand. stand up sit
down. stand. touch the chair leg check watch digital
nerves on tight,
restless patter of hands, call friends family refrigerator door slam click open crunch slam
check for the dog, dark bugs on the window night light is buzzing while no
one is home.
There is a blank spot gnawing.
Stand silhouetted and hope out open window.
gasping for antelopes, i leave the house
touching the letter / pad stamps on the soft feet wait
for the mailman midnight cars rush vacantly one or
two
per
hour.
watch the rain fall on the leaves,
meander wind fingers,
watch for the mailman.
grab chalk.

stencil equations on concrete lawn grass

as green as her eyes.

lost in nails,

chew pencil, realize the vacant.

Raw emotions more

than the ink of December.

Check for casual winter thorns and look both ways before crossing.

Trees rush by.

iii.

the string in the labyrinth leads to this moment;

a breaking place,

let all recorders record it.

the horizon is dimmer in

verted, placed in the hand's cup.

drink blood drink type / writer

fluid, feel

the inkjet's smooth return and the carriage's

satisfied crash.

This *clock*

is a breaking place, crucified

in its center -

check watch, the arms

spread wide eternity moored in the thunder

electron

splits on the cool radial quartz,

millions eyes stretch in

finite,

in chains.

A breaking place.

Rain.

IV. a)poka/luyiv

1. laying bear, making naked

2. a disclosure of truth, instruction

a. concerning things before unknown

b. used of events by which things or states or persons hitherto withdrawn from view are made visible to all

2. manifestation, appearance

i.

you knew all along the way

was cold and broken,

the stage is dusty all the actors

shiver, pale.

you knew and knew and feet

are broken, bloody,

knew and ran and won and

broke the shadows of the morning.

you knew and won, now go,

now run.

ii.

i drive all night

for dandelions.

iii.

Tomorrow the lie.

Today waits

in license plates.

I believe we will rise at the end,

victorious

and broken.

iv. at least, blinded by the light...

destroy goddamned fairytale love it
cannibal, it

rapist,

stealing fingers from

the hand-in-hand, the human

error -

despicable poem i

claim you.

to wrench the sad

statistics from you;

a living

sacrifice to every

burnt flower / bed,

grow the rose,

find thorns,

string bitter necklace flesh -

feel blood

feel beating,

dig with the shovel,

resurrect bones,
build

triumphant arches with bodies

meshed.

forever.

build.

i.

I push

through the machinery,

like a miner with my silly

hard hat

in the gargantuan

elevator

shafts

of the mind.

drilling,

while the whole world

is dying

for lack
of this oil,
for the breath
of this fuel and the calm
dark flower
in pressure.
I reach
and redeem,
by any necessary
means,
by the violent drill
or the desperate,
on the slick flesh
of the beast,
many stratums
reach
miles up,
deep,
there can be
no surrender
to silence - many
miles tower, many
wide but not
so impossibly
thick.
the only way
is through.
others
have found
their way
to the center, but
it must be

always
renewed.
by any means -
the violent drill,
the desperate,
i drive
to the center
because the calm flower's
absence
would gray
all the colors
of morning.
i.
this is our transformation: in the midst of the fire
burning eyes unblemished,
angels of the fall, angels of ashes, angels unnamed„
this is the value: that we, continuing, redeem
beyond redemption: salvaging the even
ashes of the fall. Diving through the wreckage:
our glory: firm in the knowledge: all lost,
and the point of salvageability, well-past -
screaming defiance at the architects, the ashes -
in the sad face of the night,
lighting our damn candles’ all.
i am simply saying
the important thing / is how we walk / through the fire.
take this: a single atom, split, can cause
a dearth, destruction, or spin
a million blenders.
there may be nothing
particularly / magnanimous
about it. but.

tomorrow,

when the sun, bubbling,

thrusts itself, grunting, thick

through the shell

of the sky -

then, by God, we'll see the aftermath.

you underestimate

the will to survive

under pressure.

this, *this,* the redeeming value (breathless):

a bag of bones, animated atoms,

i.

your heights
have their distance,
voice has its silence.
(your leaves have their season)

there is no noise in your thunder;
your softest
rustle brings me to tears.
seven years
in the wind,
there has been no time between.

in your shadows i am blinded
by the brightest light;
your night
has never known darkness.

i owe you everything you won't take.
your single penny
has its prisons.

in your breath i am born,
(and die there) your whisper
is all of things that shatter me.

when i knew nothing,
you were the one

who swallowed everything after.

you were the last one
to know the first inch of me.
i.
carve out a good life for children / grit your teeth and
bear it, find something / decent for god's sake in this
forsaken, find a smile even / with gray teeth, make
a worthwhile, shake your fist, stand against /
tell stories about / dog heaven, remember how
grandma laughed, get a good job find a good
neighborhood or build / a garden in the bad one,
hold onto pictures, and picture books, find an
album if you don't have one write / poems
when you don't have any money put / poems
in the gifts when you do, tell / stories
(the same ones) again and again, laugh
every time, go fishing let the / big one go don't
take self so seriously.
i.
we sing
the same simple song
of self,
the same revelation
of character.
the same story,
your story,
mine.
simply put - starting at morning,
(yesterday morning) with birdsong
burning
in the window,
i forged -\
look, - a nothing-story, a never-there -/

for a day, a long night,
always (I’m laughing)
beginning again
with birdsong.
will you please
please
listen:
it’s no sin
to forget again,
begin again,
with birdsong.
write.
ii.
all the birds chirped songs
no longer caught in headlights.
he woke from his dream,
a pleasant dream,
a fiction.
it was, of course,
a spring, and not the
winter he’d imagined.
he took
long breaths
to recollect the night and
willfully
forget.
Ichabod,
with birdsong
in red eyes and
nightmares in the pillow,
forget your sleep and
breathe..

i.

drink blood from the cup

until your lips are full,

and red,

and stained with roses.

and the rain releases in face-tracing torrent.

until the wires snap, and behind your eyes

is livid, lashing,

until the current hums electrical,

and thrashing.

until the symbols crash symphonic,

the full lips tremble;

drink wine from the veins until life expires,

Files

- xvi. a transfiguration — original .docx (authorial lineation and whitespace) — markdown conversion disrupts lineation and whitespace; the .docx is the typographic source of truth.

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