



ANEMONE SIDECAR

CHAPTER 13
of
THE
ANEMONE SIDECAR

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a chapbook by Jane Joritz-Nakagawa
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The Anemone Sidecar, Chapter Thirteen, 2011,
built on the work of select multitudes.
Cover image by Daniel Boyer.

Phylinda Moore: *Good Woman*

If I am a good woman
the hands will take back time and give me something else to count
beans or cornchips or gravel
Then I can sit patiently
transferring the rocks from one side of my body to the other
soon the stack on my right will be reach high into air
if I'm industrious enough

I can dive into the pile
send a cascade into the sea
the melodic dripping of thousands of pebbles falling over each
other
I can see how this would occupy me more than time

Josh Pearce: *Unfolded Their Sails*

unfolded their sails
clean
round as the moon

orchid ships

trail their anchor
roots beneath them

and with little puffs of pollen
they battle each other
for plots of the darkest sea foam

whale worms sing
and dig among their chains
every

once in a while ivy vine
sea serpents rise up
from the emptiest patches of
soil
grab ships with their thorns
pull them underwater

J. R. Salling: *Scandal Exposed in Portraiture, ca. 1968*

The daily paper awaits at the doorstep, beside a sweaty flask of milk. This is but a preliminary sketch.

In the first, regrettable state, the congressman stands stiff, confident, and defies the disastrous news with hyperbolic glare. Please note, amid the chiaroscuro, the inert expression of his nude companion as she blurs a handful of currency.

A still life in its final composition: the table dresses for breakfast, now the merciless gazette alone, folded, in a mocking italic font. Through an open window, our subject, relegated to the background, flees from a confident stroke of storm cloud.

Doug Draime: two poems

William Blake At The Zoo

William Blake looks in the mirror
at William Blake looking at himself in the
mirror while William Blake watches it all
looking at himself in the mirror and smiling

For hours he would sit at the kitchen table
playing with cold fried eggs with his fork with
his fork playing with cold fried eggs for hours
at the kitchen table playing with cold fried eggs
he would sit for hours

Morning as the sun shined through the kitchen
lace curtains on the mess he made on the mess he
made the mess he made light on the mess he
made in the morning the sun shined through the
lace curtains on the mess he made light dancing
dancing dancing on the mess he made

William Blake said I AM WILLIAM BLAKE from over on
Bugle Street & my angels are true from over on
Bugle Street & my angels are true I AM WILLIAM BLAKE
& my angels are true William Blake said

William Blake feeds the lions at the zoo is what
the story said feeding the lions at the zoo in a
black frock coat in a black frock coat wearing a black

frock coat feeding lions at the zoo is what the story said
in a black frock coat William Blake & the lions

William Blake in the morning writing down the
words writing down the words in the morning
with only him & her knowing with only him &
her knowing writing down the words in the morning
with only him & her knowing

Walked out of the house he just walked out of
the house leaving the door wide open walked out of
the house leaving the door wide open his wife said
smiling walked out of the house leaving the door
wide open said his smiling wife she knew nothing about
the zoo just walked out of the house leaving the
door wide open said his wife smiling she knew nothing
about the zoo

Adventures In Cosmological Research

12. a thing must be

21. our chips off
the id, as bloody
as Able

33. in the morning,
curves in time

Todd Seabrook: *The Deaths of*
J. Robert Oppenheimer

J. Robert Oppenheimer died a number of times, a trait not unusual among geniuses.

In 1965 he died of throat cancer. At the end he was eating bowlfuls of cobalt gamma rays, and mixing the chemotherapy chemicals with his coffee. During this time he published twelve papers, mathematically proving the health benefits of tobacco.

In 1944 he (died) thrown from his horse in New Mexico while scouting bomb sights. He crushed his neck and crumpled his spine, but still finished the excursion, having, for most of his life, no knowledge of how his body was supposed to work. The Nazi's killed six million people just like him.

(Despite being dead for quite some time, a)lot of (him) died when his daughter, Toni, hung herself in their Caribbean house.

In 1954 he died at the hands of Lewis Strauss, although some claim that he was the only one that walked out of that courtroom alive.

He died at Trinity, of course. Then he perfected the bomb, and died more perfectly at Hiroshima, his eulogy delivered later at Nagasaki.

M. Rather, Jr: *Road Vision I—Incantation*

*All roads lead from and to the womb
leaving placenta oil slicks
between Little Rock and Texarkana.*

*On the shoulder I see crows eat
remains and entrails,*

*and think I can read the signs
in chewed bone like some
old rattle-handed mystic*

*I pull over the plastic
car and startle feathers,*

*find myself again in femur
and intestine, remember rusted
trailer homes where father*

*and I sat under a thin awning
and I inhaled his Reds.*

*We counted storks
dropping water balloon children
on the roads.*

*His mushmouth mumbles, my womb
is inside the tin can, bone-white trailer.*

Inside there, I know air

*as humid as stale milk.
There is nothing after there*

*but a gravel birth canal.
On the other side of Hope, Arkansas*

*I remind myself of miles to go
and that the water balloon bursting
unto roadkill sidewalks*

*happened long ago. That my real mother
is in the crow's dancing.*

*Her swamp blood thickens in southern sun.
Her form, rocking and fat laughs
behind the trailer's screen door*

*and the trailer's tires are flat, dead as her legs
after her shift at the convenience store.*

Alison Barker: *Chapter One*

(from her novel, "Bears Wearing Clothes")

When I'm nervous, I picture a tiny village made up of porcelain figurines. There is a fire station, a main street with boutiques and single-product artisan stores: bakery, a butcher, produce-seller. There are houses and second-story apartments over storefronts. There are cars—because though my village is antiquated in its commercial activity, transportation is state-of-the-art.

If you recall, Cyndi Lauper clutches a shiny, glass dog while lying in twin-sized bed in her 1984 "Time After Time" video. This material is what my village is made of. In my mind's eye, the village rattles a little because the whole contraption is set on top of a table with a wobbly leg. So I picture that and then in my head I chant, *wanker village* over and over again. Just like the news headlines running underneath the flat screen displays in Times Square, over and over again. As Cyndi Lauper says, if this world makes you crazy.

In high school, it was much worse. When I was nervous I would picture myself on my knees, sucking on the person's penis that was making me nervous. It was usually men in the middle of their lives who made me nervous. As in, my guidance counselor Mr. Reginald. I sat in his office and tried to think of things to ask, but I had no questions and he had no answers. Family photos, senior portraits, cards, and assorted tokens of gratification papered his office walls. I scanned the soft-focus Glamour Shots of girls who had passed through his office for decades, asking myself if I could join the ranks of the Beautiful and Appreciative in that county hanging on the edge of the nation's capitol, old Prince George's County, Maryland, Land of Mary.

I for one crave enclosed space, which is why living in L.L.A. should help me finally kick this scrapbooking habit and help me just go with the flow. As soon as I learned to read, I pored over Prince George's County real estate listings, comparing variables such as square feet and access to sunlight. All the houses for sale in our neighborhood were tract ranch-style houses that looked alike except for small touches like a side porch or a deck or a mother-in-law apartment.

During their dodgier fights, when Little Mommy threw plates and Sweet Daddy charged off in his Silver Wagoneer, I learned to distract myself from larger questions about whether or not he would return, and whether or not Little Mommy would melt in a puddle of her tears. I buried myself in the bedroom by the stairs, deep in my collection of colored house-for-sale leaflets, which rustled in wait under my bed.

3 BDRM, 1.5 BATH, 4600 SQ. FT. NEW DISHWASHR, FRIDGE, CARPET.

2 BDRM, 2 BATH, 3900 SQ. FT. NEW PLMBG, HRDWD FLRS.

I watched the inspirational video on the Sherwin Williams website. And so now I know the color forecast for this year. They have three collections of colors which embrace a particular thread that is stitched into our future: "Techno Color," which is bright lime greens, pinks, browns; "Local Rhythms," clay, ochre, indigo; and "Conscious Luxury," which is a rainbow of gray, beige and bone. I love bone.

Anyone meeting me would likely think that suits me: "Conscious Luxury." Boring times twelve. No jagged edges poking out to offend anyone. Nothing to write home about. Grays called

Analytical Hope (Sherwin Williams 7501) or Indecipherable Horizon (SW 7390). That's me.

There is a saying in Haitian folklore that goes like this: What good is sorry if you stepped on my foot? In love, there is no sorry. In love, you step on each other's feet.

Ou pied pas dem pas dit pas don.

Don't look at me; I'm not Haitian.

Before I start following my threads, dear reader, my fantasy: Bears who wear clothes. Aprons, business suits, and two-piece loungewear: if they wear clothes they need to walk upright. Bears who drive cars, maybe. But most importantly, they wear clothes. They wear shoes; they wear Bermuda shorts in the summers and mittens in the winter.

My dollhouse was huge—much larger than a dollhouse should be: four feet by four feet and three feet deep. Grand-Pap gave it to me. I thought he made it, like any Grand-Pap would who lives in a former pioneer town south of the Mason Dixon. My modern collection of Barbies, Purple Pie Man, and a set of wooden dolls dressed in colonial garb populated the Old Manse, as I liked to call it.

Strawberry Shortcake coupled with Ken; Golden Dream Barbie frequently shacked up with Gumby. My Sweet Daddy destroyed it when he flew into an angry rage against structures that made him feel trapped. I don't hold it against him. As a result of his fuming and fussing, though, I only have a few bits and pieces of the house and its windows. While he raged, Daddy told me Grand-Pap didn't make the house, and that he only had it in his attic because a desperate man bartered with it for one of Grand-Pap's tailored

suits. Did he get the job? I asked.

“How should I know,” Sweet Daddy said, shaking his head as if in disgust at Grand-Pap’s generous trade of a tiny house for a suit. Vestiges of permanence troubled Sweet Daddy. Pap owned a menswear store, best one in six towns across central and Ole Caintuck, I hear, until J.C. Penney rooted him out and the Town of Berea Bank stands in its place.

One time a therapist came close to figuring it out and it’s stuck with me ever since. She used both her hands to form a telescope through which she peered at me.

“We want to go from here,” she said, and I could see her brown eye there in the center of the hand-tunnel. Then she took one hand away. “To here,” she said, and she let her other hand fall. “To here.” She dropped her hands and they hung limply from her armrests. Her face, uncluttered by hand-tunnels, reminded me of a wood carving. A face that could engage in difficult farm labor and still keep its wise features: large forehead, sharp nose, wide lips.

I absolutely loved that therapist’s office—and I’m somewhat of a connoisseur of these offices. It was on the second floor of the tiny, colonial-style strip mall (if you can call it that) on Central Street in Wellesley. It was hard to be trashy in Wellesley. You had to work really hard at it. I know; I did. I found a nail salon in Mattapan that did airbrush nail design. I kept my square tip acrylics pretty up to date: rhinestone encrusted petals, palm trees, orange flames. But I never stopped wearing turtlenecks. Even in the summer. It was my thing.

My therapist’s windows looked out over the wrought-iron streetlights, and it was often dark, and often snowing when I

happened to look out. If not, it was cry-baby chilly and bright—the New England version of a sunny day. The kind of day where the sun screamed at you through a billion layers of white cloud cover and even though plants were thriving, your hands and lips were chapped, the breeze was startling, and you just wanted to go back inside for some stability. I stayed in touch with her, city after city, calling usually when a six-month point crisis had hit with some relationship or some never-ending professional confusion reached a breaking point.

This therapist started to get clingy and so I had to move on. That happens sometimes with therapists and me. Also, I tend to choose therapist women who grow their gray hair long. This is a hair decision I am very torn about. They get hooked on my stories, and they distract themselves from our working relationship, which must always include goal-setting and measurable results.

In the *Berenstain Bears*, the Bear family lives in the best tree house. Sharp, precisely placed dormer window eaves poke up through the shifting foliage, as if you could build an old wooden house in a marshmallow. As if. Their neighbors, the stores—everything is built in a differently-shaped tree. Sure, sometimes there's an outhouse or a lemonade stand made of wood, free-standing from a tree, but it's rare. These trees mean everything, and give anything meaning.

Ana Silva: *Alice & the Wind*

seen by movements of other things
so much twirling
so much cloth lifted up in the air

it will put down your skirt
on its way home
if it feels like it

two years old
she said her doll fell broken

china head in six pieces
one eye swinging in its hang
like a blink

are you sad mama
are you a little bit happy
are you all better now

she throws her hat
in the direction of the wind

sees it fly
after it lands

when she sleeps
the wind goes both ways
silent
as if one way is as good as another

as if it's the same thing inside and
outside her body

as if nothing changes
when wind becomes air
when air goes all of its ways

a valley din of raindrops
caught overhead by leaves
she tells me the rain sounds like the wind

I ask her what the wind sounds like
she says it sounds like the rain

I ask what is her favorite part of this poem
she says "I'm private"

Abraham Harping: *The Cow As Observed By*
Abraham Harping

Cow, get off my counter. Cow, your steel udders are scratching the finish. What the hell am I supposed to do with this cow? The sunlight comes through the window, makes its hide shine in panels. Cow, how am I supposed to make my noodles with your ass all over the counter? Cow, get off my counter I waited four months for the summer to come. It got hot and the cow died all over my kitchen.

I called someone to clean it up. Mr. Whiskers was his name. He could clean up anything. He was a hit man for the mob before they dispersed on the shoreline; they cleaned the town of crime. Now all that remained was a bunch of small houses with small people too scared to leave them.

“Mr. Whiskers?”

“I’m sorry, I think you’ve got the wrong number”

“I have a job for you, Mr. Whiskers”

“I told you, Mr. Whiskers doesn’t live here”

“There’s a big mess in my kitchen. It’s pretty bad. Can you come over and clean it up?”

“I hope you find who your looking for. I’m going to hang up now.”

“It’s not a people mess, its just molten steel.”

“I’ll be right over.”

Bow-wow went the doorbell.

He was a tall cat. Big, real big top hat, and he had sunglasses on (eyes were the windows to the soul— he was protective of it) the frames were like perfect little moons. Behind him was gray

weather, and his scrunched, fruit rolling smile accented the evil.

“Hey, you gonna invite me in?”

I stepped aside and in he went. He had a very pronounced stride, lifting and curling his thighs to his chest with every step, and stretching his leg as far as he could as his feet hit the ground again. This was all so fluid, entirely too fluid.

“Mmm, dusty” purred Mr. Whiskers. “This is gonna be a big job.”

“I only want you to do the kitchen.”

“But there is so much to be done here.”

“I simply don’t have enough money right now”

I felt Mr. Whiskers’ tail rub against the back of my neck, then down my torso to my left thigh, and stopped when he felt the pathetic bump of my wallet.

“I’ll give you money.”

“No.” (Don’t accept favors from the mob.)

“But its not like that” he said, as if reading my thoughts. “I love cleaning, it’s so exciting. Filth is rare these days.”

We got into the kitchen. I tried closing the blinds in hopes that it would harden, but even in darkness the liquid continued to ooze, threatening to swallow the entire room in silver. I took off the door a while back (it wouldn’t have stopped the flow anyway) and laid it across the floor as a sort of bridge to the refrigerator.

“This will probably take all day” said Mr. Whiskers.

“That’s fine.”

His silent longing told me to leave.

“Um, around twelve or one, I’m going to order some

Chinese. Want anything?"

"No, it's okay. I don't need to eat today."

I went to leave.

"Just" said Mr. Whiskers, turning after me and holding me back by my shoulder. "I'm shy about my work. Don't look in here."

"Okay" was the most assurance I could give him without sounding sarcastic. I went upstairs.

"...Gregor?"

I screamed downstairs from my recliner. "What's up?"

"It...it's not enough."

I took the sheets from my bed and scrunched them into a ball for easy transportation, then I unraveled them at the kitchen doorway and made Privacy.

"Okay, now go" he said, apparently disturbed at my silhouette.

"Just one second"

The open window caught my eye. My backyard was simple and gray, as if the few individual elements that made up the set were a single entity, heavy and moaning. The brown fence that divided mine and my neighbor's yard bobbed forward and backward with the wind. I had a few shrubs, too, and after watching them for several minutes, I could see that they were merely as they seemed—just shrubs.

"Get out of here, man "

"Going, going."

Rodney Nelson: *Egg Moon*

where in the dim or gray or bright time of the morning
south wind had cut a way onto the prairie I knew
because the earth had more than one scent and one color

a few women of nineteen were alone together
trying to sing and party at the flood's gritted edge
and they had just enough on to make the day April

where the bunny in the not quite warmer afternoon
had laid a goose egg I knew and wanted to tell them
but I could not put the church in a song anymore

Natalie McNabb: *At the Cellist's Windowpane*

She lacks the *vena amoris*, blood tie
binding ring finger to heart. So, her ring lies.
Shall I trace her gardenia collarbone
in a performance all my own?
Gardenias brown though beneath heavy hands.
Yet, bruised blooms fill rooms for days.

Billy Cancel: *Sunday 21st October 1638*

sunday 21st october 1638 & i'll follow sober
thread all the way from the intersection
to widecombe church dogs flinging themselves
at a glass box would be best i think
of purple blue lines of light diverging i'll be
a candidate but have the skin of a child
in the pre-coup landscape there was rain
in places on behalf of icarus i wrote apologies
to road kill yours faithfully satellite simultaneously
upgrading & slowing up who knew
i carried a grape in my left hand to feed
the shadow rabbit made from my right much less
a nervous sketch more an unwillingness
to reinterpret the collision in terms of rock song
right now i'm confident at the bottom of the lake
with my hate radio & my indentations
sugared with the choice of naked bulb bright
on green corrugated iron or hooves horns & masks
left at the waiting place by state-of-the-art blondes
their monumental subtract

James Lewelling: *Your Very Own Lips*
(an excerpt from "Harker")

I awoke to a world in which I had not been slandered. What bliss was mine! I lay in my white bed, conscious but with eyes open only a crack, completely unencumbered with the cares of my past (indeed any past), my mind little more than a gossamer net cast over the smooth, rhythmic, interpenetrating and ambient forms of the new day: the shift of ovular shadows on the ceiling, the sound of surf, the sea air's salty tang, the crying of gulls. It is impossible to say how long this state persisted (duration hardly qualifying as a salient feature) but there can be no doubt that it came to an end, in this instance, with the distinct sensation of a heaviness upon my chest.

It was the weight of the folded paper. I recalled then that I had brought it with me to the bedroom before retiring the previous night but, as yet, had no recollection as to why. Accordingly, that is, making nothing of it, I put the paper on the bed stand, slid out of the bedclothes and into my slippers, just under the bed, and white bathrobe, hanging neatly on its hanger in the wardrobe, and made my way downstairs to prepare my morning coffee. As I padded down the steps, gained the kitchen, prepared the coffee, and waited patiently for the burbling black liquid to collect itself in the decanter, I labored under the pleasant delusion that the previous evening I must have found some item of particular interest in the newspaper and had thus been moved to take it up to bed with me but had fallen asleep before I could read it.

As I ascended the stairs, coffee cup in hand, I found myself then moderately aglow in the anticipation of the simple—but indeed rare as the material in the newspaper far more often fills me with either boredom or disgust—pleasure of perusing this item cozily

in bed over my first cup of coffee. Hardly had I arranged myself under the snowy bedspread, set my coffee beside me on the night stand and flipped open the newspaper to spread across my knees, when I caught sight of my name, again, in the headline in the right corner below the fold. At first I was, of course, as utterly puzzled as I had been when similarly confronted the day before. But then slowly, but soon very quickly—that is in a drop, a stream, a flood—all the events of the previous day came back to me with great force.^[1] I was outraged, of course, but this outrage was muffled somewhat by the slight habituation of precedent and at the same time deepened by my simultaneous realization that I had been slandered now *twice*!

My first impulse was to destroy the offending article without reading it, and what's more immediately hunt up the first newspaper and destroy that as well. Why should I willingly subject myself to a pack of lies and insults, or preserve the same, in my own house?^[2] But only a moment's reflection revealed to me quite clearly that I was perfectly incapable of not reading the article. Perhaps I could destroy it later—with even more enthusiasm—but there was no way I was going to destroy it without having read it first. Who could have? To be aware that one was being talked about, but forgo knowing what had been said? Impossible. I was almost certain it would be bad whatever it was but still had to know just how bad it would get. At the same time, I confess, the ghost of my earlier hope that the article would somehow recant, retract or erase itself (perhaps this second installment was nothing other than an apology for and retraction of the first?) haunted the fringes of my anger like a hurt child all too ready to be consoled. As a sop to my nobler instincts, I resolved to read the article but not with the attention I would have lavished on any legitimate piece of prose, instead merely “skimming” it with an eye toward determining the depth of the outrage and/or spotting any hint of imminent retraction.

Well, as you have no doubt surmised, the article only redoubled the calumny on my character and did not retract itself an inch. By God! The heinous and disgusting crimes attributed to me in the first article looked like misdemeanors when compared to the enormities attached to my person in the second. Nonetheless I did read the second article to the end, again fighting back a gastric explosion all the while, and again with the hope, this time fading even faster, of some kind of retraction or at least ameliorating qualification of the increasingly outrageous charges laid at my door. Again I was utterly disappointed.[3] There was no question I had been slandered and this time to such an extent that even a later retraction could hardly cancel the deed. (Not that any retraction wouldn't have been appreciated. Certainly, though the damage had undoubtedly been done, I would have welcomed—and would still welcome--any retraction no matter how inadequate. I am not a vindictive person.) Clearly this second article had strayed into solidly criminal territory. Litigation on my part against the newspaper could become warranted. For that reason, I decided to preserve both papers by folding them neatly into quarters, depositing them in a shoe box, obtained from my bedroom wardrobe, and sliding the shoe box safely under my bed.

They had become evidence, you see. You can't be too careful with evidence. I mean, just imagine---as I did during the few awkward moments required to push the newspaper laden box deep among the dust clots under my bed and then retract my starved arm—just imagine *you yourself* have become the victim of the kind of slander I have described. Now imagine presenting yourself at, say, the editorial desk of the newspaper responsible for your victimization. Imagine you are full of legitimate and wholly warranted indignation, and have come to demand a full and candid explanation, if not apology and quite possibly monetary redress. *Now*, imagine being told that no such crime had been committed; that indeed no such libelous article had ever been written.

Imagine further, being shown, upon your own vehement but lucid insistence, numerous copies of the newspaper(s) in question—or perhaps even the photostatic plates—in which the damning article had been wholly expunged to be replaced with some typical piece of innocuous fluff (say, a feature on robotic dogs used as therapeutic companionship for the elderly). Imagine even further, racing back to your[4] White House on the beach, with the intention of obtaining your very own copy of the newspaper containing the very same offending article that you vividly remember holding in your very own hand! And *now*, imagine being unable to find it! Because you had NOT chosen earlier to deposit said paper (evidence actually) in a safe place but had left it lying around at random, perhaps draped over the arm of one of the un-locatable chairs in one of the virtually innumerable rooms in your[5] overly large house, for all practical purposes lost to the world![6] You'd be in quite a pickle, wouldn't you? Injured certainly but with no evidence to point to the culpable party or even to the crime itself. The damage would have been done. People might forget the article but the effect would remain. You'd feel it in the air every time you went out. You'd hear it in words leaping up here and there suddenly and terrifyingly lucid above the general hub-bub. You'd see it clearly in the canny glances of your fellow men, projected sideways from beneath the visors of their own shrinking countenances as you nosed by them in the street. And you might even find it also, in the puzzled, beseeching gaze you'd confront each morning in your very own bathroom mirror. Slandered. But the record would be gone. How could you clear your name then when to do so must involve resurrecting the crime from your very own lips?

[1] It was indeed an odd sensation—something like a particularly intense and elongated moment of *déjà vu* that, at its furthest extension, instead of snapping out of existence, displaces it.

[2] Actually I misspeak here. This is technically not *my* house, but more of that later.

[3] Unless one might read the very blackness and extent of the indictment itself as indicative of a sly hyperbole. Really the list of crimes was rather too long and piquant to plausibly attribute to any single individual, not to mention one of my age and physical condition. Might this indicate a satirical intent? But ought the article then not have been segregated from the other “straight” news items in some way? It was not. I am fishing here.

[4] I use that word advisedly, even in this purely hypothetical passage, as this house is not actually “yours.” That is to say it’s not “mine” but more of that later.

[5] Not “your” actually (see above).

[6] As is so often the case. Indeed, where go the papers of yesteryear? They are undoubtedly garbage, even often before they have been read, so they ought to be thrown away, and yet I haven’t a single memory of having done so. By now I ought to be drowning in them! I have pursued this question before, even taking the extreme measure of attempting to inquire of the man on the bicycle (he’s the one who drops them off; could it not be he who takes them away?) but to no good result; so let us pass on.

Paula Bennett: *When Grief Comes to You*

When grief comes to you as a little red truck packed with explosives
make the way smooth under its tires.

When grief comes to you as a little red truck pushed by a twig of a girl
packed with explosives, you will at last know who you are.

When grief comes to you as a little red truck pushed by a twig of a girl
whiplashed by his death packed with explosives, your heart will be marked
with a red X.

When grief comes to you as a little red truck pushed by a twig of a girl
whiplashed by his death risen like a ghost packed with explosives,
you will write your name on your own face a thousand times
and erase it again.

When grief comes to you packed with explosives, make the way smooth
under its tires. You will at last know who you are, your heart marked
with a red X. You will write its name on your own face a thousand times
and write it again.

Dion Farquhar: *We Want Everything Yesterday*

teeming online schools

owl of Minerva

an atavistic hoot

effective instructional

delivery systems

everything's metered

nurture

the ground under one's feet

sign this, sign that

risk management

toll roads narrowed access

trickle down

new bits of linked-in human capital

eroding shared

governance

so close to the sad

longing to function as a user
ham
strung

Ariodante at BAM
intermission smoking
on the sidewalk with Kyle, John, Marsh
cold fogging our breaths

intimating intimacy

imagine there's no heaven

we're in it

but vroom the virtual
filesharing stardust
Leechers dream of being Seeders

school shootings, spiraling losses
exam suicide, road rage
Zen and the safari replace the foreign legion
contracting a disease species being

our father, ur-model
Plato's 6-sigma dream
gold, silver, and bronze
web-ready droids:

turning on the right devices in the right order
the genome of a horse is sequenced
tomorrow it will be patented

what good is knowing
 when insurance won't pay
 for treatment or prevention

prescient Brave New Files
 or was it, Flies
the master no longer discernible
food's fulcrumed
between stuffing or starving

discs bulge gesture jests
 service nervous

gnawing my paw off

bivouacked by love to the other coast

left me begging for work

it was better in the old country the inner city

top of a structurally crappy heap

there, canyons of glass

here, redwood skyscrapers

unable to even

find the bottom rung

piss go, collect, go to fail

a hundred highbrows old

reason's mistaken

for a prerogative of class

trickle down from phrenology

yesterday's aromatherapy, crystals

human remains elusive

using one's words

the Parnassian profound

Jack Frey: A Final Note

In 2003, 2-Kriminal recorded *Here I Go, Popo*. He used a guitar loop borrowed from Scissor Reed's 1983 hit, *Talkin' Nasty*, and an electronic drum kit that belonged to the studio. He was able to get all the tracks down and mixed in just under forty-three minutes. The studio still charged him for sixty.

2-Kriminal, whose real name was Simon Alexis, was the first to admit that there was nothing ingenious about the lyrics to his song. *Hey-o, here I go, Popo. Try to catch me but you know you tried befo'. Hey-o, here I go, Popo. You come in the front but I'm out the back door.* The song ran three minutes, twenty-two seconds.

He mailed the single off to a few places, mostly underground, two or three albums a year of the super-independent variety. Simon didn't expect to hear anything back. The truth was, he wasn't really even into hip-hop. Sure, he'd bled with Biggie, but even then he'd known he was floating on the edge of something other people said mattered, an outsider looking in on the East-West coast feud.

The first few weeks after sending off the song, Simon checked the mailbox in the smoky entrance to his apartment building every day. He sifted through stacks of bills and fliers, telling himself not to get his hopes up. Nothing. Months passed, and Simon forgot about the song.

Then the replies started to trickle in. The labels wanted him — not just one, but all of them. They all wanted *Here I Go, Popo*. One even called it 'mint, something you can suck on all night'.

In the end he went with the one called Sundog Krunk Records. Suddenly Simon's song was being played. He heard it everywhere. In the fluorescent-lit Rope-n'-Go on the corner, while he was buying the L'il Chunky snacks that he liked.

Booming from the subs trapped in some white guy's trunk. At the Roller Rink, where the kids sniffed sweat socks dipped in solvents. He heard it everywhere he went — not that anyone would know he recorded it, or that he had anything to do with it at all.

The truth was, Simon didn't really like his song very much. The guitar lick, which was alright within the broader verse-chorus-verse-chorus structure of *Talkin' Nasty*, just got on his nerves. *Here I Go, Popo* wasn't mint. It was a dime-a-dozen. He wouldn't suck on it for a second.

The phone call from Sundog Krunk coincided pretty much exactly with the moment that Simon decided he hated his song. He decided, and then the phone rang. Or maybe it was the other way around. The phone rang, and Howie, on the other end, said they'd landed him a spot on the upcoming *O-RING 2003* tour. He'd be one of the opening acts, right before Katalyst, who was on just before O-Ring himself. Howie called it a golden opportunity.

Douglas, in charge of wardrobe for the show, handed Simon a pair of baggy camouflage pants and a black sleeveless undershirt with a red bulls-eye at the center. Here, he said. A little face paint, you're good. You're 2-Kriminel.

The first show was in Trenton. Simon tried to get excited. The recorded track started up, screeched through the rented hall, shook the roof trusses with every thump of the bass drum. He jumped onto the stage, waved his arms the way he'd seen real rappers do in music videos. He felt like an octopus. In high school, Simon played pen-and-paper RPGs. He'd read everything by Shatner, never kissed a girl.

Three minutes, twenty-two seconds later, he was standing in a dark corridor off to the side, listening to 2500 people screaming because they loved him, or thought they loved him. They loved his song almost as much as he hated it.

The tour rolled through Philadelphia, then Toronto. It was

Simon's first time in Canada. He hated it. Hated everything that had anything to do with his song. *Hey-o, here I go.*

The next stop was supposed to be Detroit, but halfway there everything turned black like a broken pen in a washing machine, and they were forced to land in Sudbury. Simon sat for hours with the others in the lounge, then got up and paced the airport. He looked at a map. Sudbury was north. Detroit was south. It made no sense. He was hungry, and he went to find something to eat. At the donut shop they were playing his song. *Hey-o, here I go.*

Simon waited until no one was watching. He headed for the scanners. They buzzed him with the paddles, while a woman looked at his papers. Her nametag said Nicole. I don't think you're supposed to go out, she said. Aren't you with that tour?

The music was swelling in his head like an abscess. Am I allowed out? asked Simon.

Yeah, said Nicole. *Here I go.*

Outside, the sky was charcoal. It was going to rain. There was a taxi near the sliding glass doors. He waved at the driver.

Where can you take me? Simon asked. The drums were making him shiver.

Where you wanna go? said the driver.

Simon got in, pointed at a spot on the horizon. That way, he said. I don't care.

The man flipped the meter and pulled the sedan onto the main road. The trees were close, thicker than any trees Simon had ever seen. They were so green they were almost black. Hunks of rock thrust themselves up between the trees, leaning over the highway.

Then the trees parted. Simon saw water, a flat grey shivering expanse like melted lead. What's that? he said.

That's Lake Wanapitei, the driver said. The windshield was flecked with tiny raindrops.

Simon paid the fare and got out. The music sloshed in his

stomach. He staggered towards the water, legs weak. He saw Scissor Reed's face staring at him from behind every twisted tree, heard the guitar lick bubbling up from the foam along the shore.

An aluminum fishing boat was dragged up on the rocks. Simon hung on the side, fingers curled over the gunwale. Inside the boat was a box. Simon wrenched it open. Safety equipment tumbled out onto the rocks. Flares, waterproof matches, an air horn.

His fingers closed around the can of compressed air, lifted the horn to his ear. The song wanted out, would come out no matter what — *here I go* — pierced the darkness with a scream that faded until everything became silent.

Disappearance



a chapbook by

Jane Jorítz-Nakagawa

in a foreign forest
vacant dreams

place for my tiny head
are an overladen picture

trees heaped together
my dress too empty

divided gaze in the shadows
a niche that blurred

missing part of the picture

as the party went on stupidly
as if eden will appear

the land shifted
ripening my wings all the more

exotic insolvent
disenfranchised hole of the soul
trapped in solitude
innocent
message waiting
ascendant antecedent subordinate precedent
absent savvy
nothing place
empty bus

many worlds are silently confused, for
with fondness and terror ponder destinations
always out of reach slight incline

surprised at how
i looked in their eyes
how i disappeared
when their eyes did too

erasing the pathos over
a cup of coffee i could not imagine
the person inside that school uniform

does this relieve my
loneliness for an instant as
their eyes wave goodbye

yet revived by sudden hope
i think i came
with the standard arm and regulation
heart if a little bent and all
playing in reverse time at the local theater

border between identity and non-identity
floating in a pond out of range by the nameless bridge

a suburban woman next to
agility's tongue sucked dry

syntax of containment
specific weight

simple clouds pledging allegiance
arrangement of witnesses (out of range)

power lines on the range
normality scavenges memory

calendar unopened
falling girl could be her daughter

in a shop lit by moments in your hand
translucent shadow in the posthumous lawn

stuck in the train station for so very
long i read every announcement on every wall

flyers advertising events i'd never see
on walls that don't move it's

time that wounds but heal faster when i
put all the words into a bucket and drag slowly, slowly

i had forgotten which
language i was using

(but was shamed into remembering)
my wee voice drowned

out by a very large one
drowning drowning

the cat in the well
crowning crowning

royal family
was not mine

meek and meager
waking to drown

stuffing the rye crackers
into my sack in case
i get hungry ten years from now

clumsy tongue
hoping you like "their" country

fearful king fish kill you if you eat them
tables from which you cannot get up

words let you down
uncertain speech show

fish hoping desperately you like them
clumsy uncertain fish

on a red mountain
hunted by partial memento mori

what does this reveal to us (never)
within the world itself (but look)

itself takes away all (to be sure)
my apprehension of the world (the error of psychologists)

between motive and act (safe driving)
what they might explain (reacts differently)

rejects the organ (ignore any)
down to the last bite

to pursue your being remember your face

torn from such a dream in an innermost tree
 inexhaustible patronage

endure all things for the elect's sake
concerning its bones
killed

in this manner must be

which dwelleth in us
of doubtful mind

abiding city in your chest

bringing swift destruction

with their feisty muscle layer

ecorche

tissue connected to each thought

leading to a place i did not wish to go

revealed the makeup of a complicit choir anointed by linguistic
chromosomes

so i drew trees on the pavement that was swallowing me

i minded when you ordered me to put the mice in plastic bags for

future meals

they fell out of the tweezers repeatedly

And my gloves were torn

carcasses of pigs on a sidewalk in downtown chicago

wounds heal all time

clouds always amiss and the letter darkens
it inhabits my mind til it gives up

consoling shop windows promise products vigorously sad
absent forgetting stuck in your wintry head

intimate and pitiful streets sleep immodestly the scenery
ineloquent
hazy existence obtained for almost nothing

time always outside, ominous shadows melting
sunlight wails uncertain singing

came here thru no will
of my own. out of my own body

flies this poem. At the temple my husband
explains to me the meaning of every object;

later i find the explanations, tho wrong, were
orchestrated to please me the way the stars line up for my benefit

after that i was certain i would never live anywhere
where i could understand the language

i guessed at every noun and verb because
this was part of the competition

clues to my whereabouts always overturned

long dream which confounded me
or cartography of loss
may be the next or last decade of my life
cold tofu in a shiny bowl waiting to be eaten

found at the beginning of the next thought delayed by the one
after
which also doesn't arrive quickly enough

at the edge of the edge
lacking order of adequate objects in competition

(found)
(wrapped in) nocturnal fur
(where) all fears are readymade

celestial sacrifices writ large new
expanded trademarks

there eyes, accustomed
supplement of presence

holding or announcing itself
filling the sky with old women

there eyes, appointed background
neither the eve of

asteroid territory linguistic
forest with showy stumps

hidden under a layer of
words spread far apart

my legs my thoughts
cannot reconcile two halves

of lives in bed back to
back seldom speaking letter

never sent and
turned over in your hands (then

lost) phonology of
semantics syntax of loss

unloveable days whet
perceptual density CO2

sequined with paltry apparatus
inferno love delivered late

intense volume off course checks
underlying blades

replete with unworthy chemistry
clouds ingrained of the size of

dependent on sore rhythm oh
rumbling acne grows in rebuke

cutting my sky to spite my fetish
inner pattern sags as the

house matrix mounts acute conjunction
outpost learning nothing

greater than the plumed building
total solitude is magnificent i

write with somber crayon
reposting the lost message in case of

impossible mechanisms dangerous
in the interior in control of everything from

my room in the strawberry grove even
light bends

in 1866 immobile hazards
resurface conscientiously music filling

the tomb slipping from your fingers
evolution is a sissy game if enblematic

always noble is my fair light
yet resources disappear hidden by

luminous excesses deepened if weathered
marriage evoking faint traces of periphery

official boundaries placed around
supermarket coupons of the next

century i chose belle lettres but
they turn to trash as they hit the paper

spooky angle bestow breathing
careful gaze faint translation
shallowly breathing euphemism for
conjecture flaccid elision of enigmatic duration
variation prototype engraved with sham foreground

backlit with vaginal stasis unfocused
desire *women when i want them* dissolving
into speech which accommodates
maladjustment of prayer and
acoustic slipping into meticulous authority

I told you about the danger of perception how
the psychologist acting independently tends to develop
a structure that looks human with grey hairs of a mouse
employing brilliant decompression devices

orrect in the stub

ose do not flick by

hought unnamed foreh

nnered if it's thre





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