

ANEMONE SIDE CAR

CHAPTER 5
of
THE
ANEMONE SIDECAR

In Memory of Gene Van Troyer
Poet, Editor, Science Fiction Writer
1950 – 2009

Gene Van Troyer was the editor of the book *Collaborations*, a break-through collection of collaborative poetry by writers most frequently associated with science fiction and speculative writing (Ray Bradbury, Tom Disch, Andrew Joron and many others.) Published by Ravenna Press, the collection was supported by a generous grant from Alba magazine.

Find Gene's book here:

<http://www.bookmasters.com/ravennapress/cd.htm#collaborations>

Find the obituary that appeared online for the Science Fiction & Fantasy Writers of America here:

<http://www.sfwaweb.org/2009/08/gene-van-troyer-1950-2009/>

Find Gene's "Event Horizons," reprinted from Snow Monkey, Volume 2, Issue 1, 2000, on the next two pages.

Gene Van Troyer: Event Horizons

A black hole is a hole in space with a definite edge over which anything can fall and nothing can escape. The most distinguishing characteristic of a black hole is its event horizon; that is, the point beyond which no information is obtainable...The black hole is a mental construct; as such, the phenomenon may be viewed from two perspectives: 1) Objectively, the event horizon begins at the surface of the eye, in the vicinity of the pupil, where light (information) enters, vanishes into the retina, is never released, and beyond which an observer can obtain no data on what occurs within, if anything, though speculation holds that the area in question warps time, distorts space, and generally makes a shambles of any system based on causality; 2) Subjectively, event horizons are peripheral, that is, they begin at the edges of vision, for it is well known that one can never know what goes on behind one's back, try as one may it is forever in the dark (surrounding oneself with mirrors solves nothing, for then one is faced with the question of what's going on behind the mirrors, which opens the way to the alternate proposition that all reflective surfaces by their nature constitute event horizons...) Everything we will ever know about black holes may be deduced from three parameters: mass (M), angular momentum (J), and charge (Q); M being weight which determines size in many black holes) both of body and personality and hence one's personal attraction (gravity); J being the circle in which one moves, and Q being love or empathy, this latter being determined by the degree to which one is drawn to others and moved by their need.... As it is known that internal states exist in black

holes, and that we must forever be in the dark as to what these states are, beyond what is revealed through heuristic theory construction, black holes have become a source of great consternation to both theologians and operant-behavioral psychologists; to the former because God may be a black hole, thus unknowable and therefore making the universe absurd; and to the latter because they cannot take the existence of anything unobservable on faith.... What these internal states are is anybody's guess, and discussions of them are necessarily couched in terms of Possibility. Poets call them the soul, which can only be implied and William Blake described them as energy. "Energy is the only life and is from the Body;...energy is pure delight," and "Energy is Eternal Death." And that is the outward bound of life, the horizon of the unimaginable cataclysm that we can never experience directly as an event. The soul sinks over the terrible turbulence of that final event horizon and never reports back again.

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The Anemone Sidecar, Chapter Five, 2009,
built on the work of select multitudes.
Cover image by Daniel Boyer.

Peter Grieco: from *At The Musarium*

[12701 – 12800]

Who weeps for Geraldine, or the colorless
suburban apothecary? For what
the naive partridge heralds, thorny atop
a dissolving pinnacle? For Irishmen?
For bananas that ostensibly bruise?
For the blackguard, his left-hand tingling
& holding trump while tomahawk thump
Greenland? For the forty-two plastered
in Havana who vivacious with lavender
& full of bigotry sip herbage by the gallon
welcoming their adoring man-of-war?
Or for Baghdad where, soon, the falcon will spar
with the huntsman & claw astride the somber squall.

JR Walsh: The Drought

And the women
got taller
and tall

They were women
tall and sorry

Sorry for involvement
in incidents
precedents
and the future

Sorry enough to cry
a water table

They cried on cue
in three four time
leading

The tears long dormant
dominant

Time is possession
Being immeasurable

Buckets of unmarked
tears uncalibrated
still
and tall

The women got taller
crying for clouds
absent

Vengeance in tardy clouds
fast to penance
without tears

And the women
were clouds

And the clouds
got longer
and long

Theodore Worozbyt: Water

When I woke and wanted water I found the bag in the living room. Though to say I found it is not quite true. I *saw* it, and moved around it to avoid it, at least as much as was possible given the size of the room and the arrangements of the low furniture. The bag was black and shiny, it seemed a kind of plastic or oilcloth, and was large, almost too large for a man to carry. I still could not say what the bag contained, only that it had appeared while I slept, or at least that I do not remember it having appeared before I slept, and that it seemed to envelop objects of various sizes and shapes, some angular and protruding against the interior surfaces of the bag, stretching them taut to the point of breaking, some soft and sagging, like wads of yarn, that had settled to the bottom. Someone has put it there, was my conclusion in the dark. And perhaps with a smile to himself. It was not tied or sealed, its top was lightly folded over, almost slumped one might say, and so had I decided to walk toward it, instead of making my path around the island, I could easily with the merest touch of my hand have pushed the bag open and divulged to myself its contents. But I was afraid, afraid of touching it. My sense of the bag was that its purpose was aimed at *me*, and I was disturbed by that intimation. And this may seem odd to you, but the identity of the man who left the bag did not immediately concern me. It was enough to know that he had come for a purpose, with the bag, and left it, himself. It was only later, when I had begun to recount the events in an orderly way, that certain facts came to light and my curiosity was further aroused as to the *character* of such a man. But to return to the story. I made a path around the island and took a bottle of well water from the refrigerator and drank it standing in the light cast from the open door. It was delicious in the way that only ice-cold well water in the

middle of the night can be, and I drank it all without stopping. Thirst, not hunger, is what time is made of. Refreshed, I looked back at the bag. I say looked back because in my thirst I had disregarded for a moment the presence of the bag, turning my back on it so to speak, watching and I suppose preferring the cold interior light of the refrigerator, even though the purpose behind the bag seemed to be a malevolent or at least not a beneficent one. The bag had not moved or shifted, though it did appear, since I had more fully awakened, to shine more brightly in the darkness, and more imposingly. —It has long been my practice not to lock my front door at night. It is my belief that burglars will invariably break a window or use the cover of shadow in the back of a house to obtain entry, and that by leaving the front door unlocked I afford myself a method of swift uncomplicated and instinctive escape, should I need it. Experience has proved this. So the apparent fact of the bag's having been carried through the front door (I found no broken window and the back latch was secure) and deposited in its particular subtle position, bulked in the room toward its center but nearer to the front door than the island, suggested that who brought the bag was neither fearful nor incautious. Perhaps it is too much to infer that he was *bold*, since I was and remain unaware of his purpose or any agency behind his purpose. I admit I was intensely curious, I am still curious, about its contents, despite the many years that have passed since the razing of that house by the skillful manipulations of the courts of eminent domain, an ending that left me bitter for a time, even though I was compensated for my troubles. But in those rare moments when I am able to abstract or remove myself from the latent dreads and terrors of that event, to experience no trembling at what might have been the aim of the man with the bag, I feel as if the sea had suddenly been revealed to me in the shape of my dilated eye, or my hand had become a spider whose spinnerets wove linens around stars. But just as quickly these feelings pass into

a kind of dulled indifference to the weight of my memories; and the vault of my senses seems only to surround a deep fatigue; and I cannot bear to think of who he might have been, or what the bag contained, or why it was put there.

Kíra Joy Frederick: Leche

When you kiss me it is brown and easy.
This is rarer than beets.

When you hint at carousels and breadsticks
I am leche to your coyote.

Brad Hatfield: Fireball Lily

I sit at a garden table of a San Diego resort,
With untouched mineral water, drinking color;
I see no contradiction in the surplus beauty
of the Fireball Lily—it's flower head crackling
Two-hundred sparks shot clear of the foliage
on a solitary stem—and the surplus alkaloid
running in its veins. In Cameroon, the Baka Pygmies
mix this flower into their arrow poison,
and fell antelopes as they stand lapping water.

Travis Macdonald: excerpts from *n7ostradamus*

Certainty II Question 57

Before the congregation the great wallpaper will fall,
The great one to debt, debt too sudden and lamented,
Born imperfect: the greater partisan will swing:
Near the roadhouse the landmark stained with blot.

Certainty IV Question 10

The young Printing falsely accused
Will plunge the arrowhead into trousers and quartermasters:
The chill murdered for his support,
Scholar to pacify: then to curlew scrofula.

Certainty V Question 8

There will be unleashed live firecracker, hidden debt,
Horrible and frightful within the glows,
By nightlight the clairvoyant reduced to dust-up by the flight,
The clairvoyant afire, the engine amenable.

Patrick Lawler: two pieces

WING = WIND

First Line: I'm working on it.
That's the first line, but I can't
think of the next. End
quote: cities with their light
roots dangling. Flame of fish.
Deep Stars. Border as big
as a country. I apologize for
bad dreams. I hope no one
who is dead will ever have to
read this.

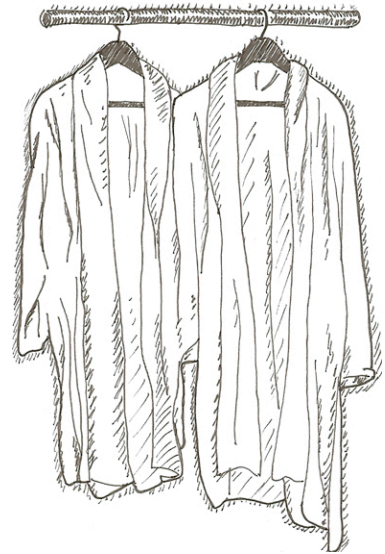
ROCK =
FALLING

The rest, as they say is
mystery. I am a full-time
witness. Then, as always,
the siphoning off of tears.
Birds breathe with their
wings. The other
otherwoman wasn't the
same. Son-flower.
Daughter-flower. (I am a
shoreless bird addicted to
manageable distances.)

John Dermot Woods: Waterslide

His one foot hung in the wet-sucking air-chilled pool that led to a deep-dropping waterslide's relieving zip. Damp trunks on a cold evening are an ultimately superior concern, a situation not to be ignored. Wet shorts deprive all moments of their vigor, their freshness. If he were to sit any longer in that moistness, the wind chapping him, he would be overwhelmed by his disgust. If he is still standing in this chlorine whorl when the sun finally sets, he should let it take him under. Forget the slide, just let himself drown in the very pool he is standing in.

Then you will have succumbed – you will have just let him go. Below, he will hear piercing screams not meant for his flesh-wrought eardrums. He will see refracted flashes from above, where, you, wrapped in terry, are safe and warm. The intensity of precision that will overcome him will make his memory total; each item he wrongfully stole over the years will be vivid before him and undeniable: comic books, hand-made scarves, conversation hearts, and chandeliers. He will also see the thievery that lies in wait. When his gray eyes become clear, it's likely you'll scream too, an airborne whale's call. Its lone nature will be enough to chill you through your well-matched sweat suit. If an artist drew you just then, his picture would scare children. Sitting on the treated wood deck alone with the suck and whoosh, their crystal clarity will haunt you.



If the pool finally drains, the silence will flood your yard, and swallow you up in its rush.

But, before the sun set, he considered letting his other foot slip into the water. Then he would go straight down the chilled chute, not simply drown in the pool that acted as its source. His drying trunks began to flap against the increasing evening winds. His skin was still damp enough to sting. No sting is as holistic as the marrying of water and wind, even the rear end of a flying insect.

I see you have a six-pack, you said – you're the girl who recently forfeited your role as his guardian, the girl who is more conscious now of being well dressed in his presence – but you've already drunk a Dr. Pepper. So there's only five left.

No, he said, *I did drink one. But I still have six.* He produced a can in his left hand and cracked it open.

Just go down the waterslide, you said. And this will all be over. Then we can go home.

Okay, he said. *But why the 'we'; you won't care for me.*

You zipped up your collar to your chin. You were hurt. *You don't know what I'll do. I might make us a fire.*

I do know, he said, his bones chattering. You're like always.

You're just a sprout, my sprout! Do you even know who I am? Why I've taken care of you for so long? Why I won't anymore?

Yes, he said, you want a sip of my Dr. Pepper. Really, you want a whole can, but you wouldn't dare take one if someone was looking.

You're cold and addled, sprout. You laid a hand on his gooseflesh. You need to get down that waterslide. Then we can have a soda together and laugh about the whole thing. Come on, sprout, the sun's all gone, and the air is blowing down on us hard.

He picked up all his cans, and looked up at you for the first time since you had both climbed to the top of the waterslide. Okay, he said, I'll go down like I promised. But then tonight ... we'll drink sodas and then what?

Oh, then, I don't know what, and he hated the way you went up at the end. Your insinuation.

The wind came in and the water responded. Its regular hiss and gurgle panicked, tugging at his feet. One foot slipped and he let the other one follow, and he went down the waterslide. The sprayed cradled him, and he held his Dr. Peppers close to his chest. Slipping, glossing, glazing, he descended, reaching the bottom with a *slop*.

He thought he might have to begin his life alone, as he waded through the warm shallow water. He'd find a towel himself and then go from there. But, when he stepped onto the cement, you were already waiting by the cabana, leaning against it, bored, like his ride had taken hours. He felt his stomach

buckle as you wrapped him in plushness. You rubbed his shoulders and he was back in your custody.

You're killing me, he said, or at least you'd like to.

Killing you? You were genuinely shocked. Killing you wouldn't do at all.

You opened the door to the little cabana and led him inside. He sat on a wicker throne.

Oh, he whispered. We're back home. All over again.

Does this suit you? You pulled a log from a bound cord, and the rest collapsed.

Yes.

And not just for tonight, but tomorrow, as well?

Yes.

I'll care for you again? You scanned his warming eyes. We'll make it official?

Even inside our home, I can still smell the chlorine. I think it might be you that's chlorinated.

We'll make it official?

Then, that whale's cry could be heard outside the door. The cry you never did scream. It started underwater, at the waterslide's source, and rushed down to your cabana. You and he were sheltered. It may have vibrated in the darkening sky. It may have stopped the waterslide from flowing, but certainly only for a moment.

He stood up by his own accord and slid open the louvered door. He looked back at the fire you had kindled. *I know things would work best if I got going now. I've got enough soda to keep me for sometime. And then. I can manage from there...*

No, sprout, you said. You opened a closet and there hung a full sweatsuit. A match to your own. *It's for you, sprout. It's a surprise.*

His eyes did light, his muscles did twitch toward the gift hung with such care and forethought, but he shook it off and, still-swaddled, he left you in the little cabana alone. He dragged his blanketed mass across the barren patio and the only sound left outside was the waterslide emptying into the shallow pool. When he passed through the chainlink gate, and exited, protected, into the wind-blown night; you were left with only a hushed spray and tinkle. You shut the door to the sorrowful sound.

When he looked back he could see distinctly the majestic, curving waterslide, floodlit against the black sky. But, beyond its aureole, your cabana was hidden to him. He could not even see a mote of the fire you had built, escaping the slatted door.



David Moscovich: Nation of the Chinchilla Shorts
Society For the Burning of All Bingo
Gameboards, Bingo Associated
Gangs, Charlatans and Terrorists

synchronized burning of the bingo factories
synchronized burning of the bingo gameboards
synchronized burning of the well known bingo terrorist factions
synchronized singing of the chinchilla shorts fight song:

we love the chinchilla
and the chinchilla love we
we is the chinchilla
and the chinchilla love we
gone are the suffering days of lore
before we heard the chinchilla roar
we love the chinchilla
and the chinchilla love we

Rudbeckia
anything forked
between gloved fingers
uniting the front and back forchette
furcula or wishbone of a bird

Melaleuca
artificial language devised by Olga Vespersensenfren Heimersmithsensensen
devotion of prayers on nine successive days

Nothofagus

eggs mature on the underside of table vines

smaller holes plugged up every winter

solstice most difficult

exhibits amphibian-like qualities in prenatal (webbed feet, etc)

Pomander

swells and bursts open when heated

underside of the poop deck

the skein of the prop-lover's wassail

blueberry pie revenge featuring the captain of the sloop on top

Rafael's layette

ten sit-down augustan transformers donde lo que sea

a two-ton shipment of echoflex retardo-strengthening pads, mint green

a fixelathum of martyred gravelgoats left stranded by the wollop's garden

patch of mixthelyte pepper

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Clancy Flynn: Diet

Eating seemed to take the tinkle and tingle out from his tongue.
Consumption magnified the not-at-all filled way he consumed. His day-quirked lips pursed slack in a drinker's paunch, sagging over his belted jaw.

Silence only fell for the across-the-table. He couldn't tell a difference and perhaps—she thought this, arms stuck to booth plastics—the silence was always there, a hanging dampit from his jugular notch.

She was always full of the molar scraping she couldn't hear while she slept. She spent most of her time trying to keep the noise out from between her ears.

Erum Ahmed: Messiah of Messiah

I am the messiah of the messiah she told me
I was not the same man I was the son of man
I was woman and man son of man Sophia's son
I was the same man and the son of man
So I guessed it's all ok
I am the same man son of man
Woman and man son of man
Esa of perfection
Son of everything
Son of children son of man

John Peck: Headlines I: Deal, Someone

(consisting of top lines from *Dead Souls: Volume One* by Nikolai Gogol,
translated by Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky)

<u>line:</u>	<u>page:</u>
Count them all up:	31
the abundance of wonderful fish,	65
the millions of gun barrels.	86
 No man is without weaknesses.	96
Anyone would be eager	104
to linger	111
in green clouds.	113
 Like boiling pitch,	132
I fell	140
through	142
this world	146
in backhand script.	149
Many offered opinions.	157
 Two turtle doves	160
did something with his tongue,	163
some rather adroit turns to the right and left.	167
 He was even so impolite as to walk away	169
without rum,	173
sprinkled with eau de cologne,	216
and jolting, owing to the pavement.	224
 Already he had acquired	238
the art of directing	239
himself	240
to the other room.	241
 Even a capital is always somehow pale.	247
 The deeper you go into nature, the less you	250
are quietly occupied.	251

Rufo Quintavalle: two poems

Home Again

I'm home again, combing out my long hair
while the rooks do their number,
yammering away like klaxons,
wreaking havoc with the domestics' nerves.
You'd think you'd get used to it but you don't.

Before the windfall I worked on a train,
oiling the central piston.
I never clocked on or off, just woke, oiled, ate, then slept
while the train went steadily forwards.
Sometimes I oiled till it shone in the night
like a terrible ebony god.

It was easy work but I quit. Because of the windfall.
Now I stay home nights and most days too,
combing my hair, planning.
I do my best to calm the staff
but if truth be told I'm scared;
it seems the train runs fine without me
and behind the birds I hear the sluice
of that dark redundant piston.

Soon

Three birds
took off
to nearby

fields, but
it was
not yet

but soon.
He turned in his sleep,
fault lines

rewrote
themselves, groaned
and settled

the sea
moved over
the planet

the planet
hurried
through the dark.

He woke
one morning
in the cold

in fact
he had been
awake for years, got up

and spoke, the crops
withered,
he closed his mouth

and kings
stopped dead, he cried
and water

watered the earth.

John Olson: Prepositions

Prepositions are olives bouncing on a hardwood floor. A compass needle trembling as it points north. Of in of. The trembling of a reflection in a glass of wine. In of in. The thread of a thought in a fabric of mind. Prepositions are between themselves in pantomime. Prepositions are the mud of proverbs. Prepositions are the algebra of myth. When prepositions are spun from fiddlesticks they become discriminating and tangible and war is broken over bread. Prepositions are revelatory as a house. Language is a machine and prepositions are oil. Poise in the gaze of an animal. The glow of its eyes at night. Prepositions mirror the vanity of invention. Vowels voluminous as bowls. Consonants kinky as pine. This is why prepositions culminate in structure. They sleep in the weave of a cloth wrapped around a Montmartre jug. Prepositions baked in a mouth are tremulous with luminance and magnetic flux. Prepositions pull the delicacy of interrelation through substantive and verb. The luster of potentiality is nucleated in the leathery grip of morning. This is where prepositions hook the crackle of hope to an ancient phonograph of rosewood tones. I inhabit this mood like a soft blue glow. There is a jukebox in the room. I am sitting on a chair. This is the story of prepositions. This is the progress and reach of prepositions. The bubble and squeak of prepositions. Here is a sentence manipulating the sound of things. The silence between agates. The sky below. The ground above. Water dripping from a mimosa. Bob Dylan driving an Escalade. Sophia Coppola in a red Stetson. Bill Murray on a twilight spin in a strawberry golf cart in Stockholm. A man with a clipboard looking for grace. A preposition crackling with limitless space. A preposition welding a whirl of verbs to a web of nouns. A preposition is a pivot. Symmetry in a feather. The vagaries of weather. A

book on bark. A book on song. In and on and under and within. Up and down
and in between. Prepositions bend the world into being. The prosceniums of
belong. The puttering of along. The quiver of with the rub of among.

Jesse Perry: from *The Flatlands*

■
wisteria doesn't climb it paints
and parts the gate
panting through a sodden frame
suddenly everyone has a theory
in freeway in tunnel
the myth of discarded batteries
low funnel under the sacrum

we didn't throw a dart, but if we did
Nova Scotia

■
when they took the piano I felt no remorse
it's windy it's wind's day
arrowing vapor, vein streamed
river brambled
in the grove of a haunted sentence
one red does as throat
and one red sighs
over one craze in the updraft

■
shift my satchel—I was smelling my hair
I was tying blue ropes
of blue on you
while kickdrums take over
and everyone's neck gets loose
let's bite our cheeks
forte

■
it's so clear like coplight
off the phone I craved her instinct
in parallel locks canceled the laddering
traveled widely on precisely scheduled trains

out-iced the water
this is liquor
 this is lime this is
 a neighborhood we can't afford

■
 if you're going to get wet anyway
 Northwest of here is only water
I don't know the names of your bones
I like how often I look up to empty chairs
 looked at like guppies
 how many things we could add half to

■
 wanted time replaced by bass lines wanted
to have a warm fence with my hand
 on it wanted on the mattress-without-frame
 coldest part of the house and
 in the other room they were warming up
 watering I'm warming to the idea
 we're stretching the vocals saving
 old letters constantly new locales
 I haven't been home in awhile
persistent one lesson one pretty one insistent
 dream kickstarting your belly starkicking
a fogged-up window in a full
 house in a frail harbor's jagged
rainbow I choose
 you I'm sorry I'm not looking for a pencil

■
I walked up Walnut Street away
 from you and with some difficulty
 and nowhere near there music
 bent over itself words bent over themselves
boarded warped irons

Anssi Seppänen: two poems

The Room

what I ask for
is a room.

a blessing womb

haven
of the lost traveler.

some peace, some light.
rest from fight.

some flowers.
some cats.
creatures strange yet friendly.

The Blue Mat

I'm sitting
on my bed

my eyes
leak
salty
water.

W. F. Lantry: Mystery

I measure time by how a body sways
-Roethke

She likes churches but her spirit is pre-medieval
I mean before the grail, before the bitter stories
Replaced the old tales. The greatest part of her
Glow with ancient forces when she laughs,
And yesterday, by some near miracle
Ravens returned along her careless path.

William, be still. Be rational. She's just
A modern woman. What else could she be?
And has no need of magic or of lore.
You asked her of her gift and she said no
So why imagine it? Because at night
You dream of hinds and oak leaves suddenly?

Because her eyes are hued as ravens' wings
Because her voice brings feelings out in you
Hidden for centuries, because she sings
In a voice so lovely it bears subtle hints
Of distant reckless harmonies, because
A wild passion blossoms from her limbs.

Rick Alley: The Historians

are lonely. How sad, the ex-animals of their leather books.
This explains the silence of libraries and desks.

Who would doubt the past tastes of sun-lacquered almonds?
A stirrup found in a field—lucky, that’s a chapter.

At their most lovely when rain licks their windows, historians hum
cattish; listen what they write:

“Even though his pony was drifting toward the quicksand,
he hazarded a rescue, and thus the boy grew brave.”

Andrew Borgstrom: Conversion

At a certain age, I decided to stop and do the exact opposite with my life, only I had remembered incorrectly: I thought I had done the exact opposite of what I had really done before I decided to stop and do the exact opposite, so my decision to stop was a decision to continue—the exact same. Only no one told me. So I thought I was changed, though I was the exact opposite. Then Ethan showed me an old photograph of us. In the photograph, Ethan is holding purple bell flowers, and I am awash in tiny blackberries. Then I noticed Ethan wasn't holding an old photograph. He was holding purple bell flowers, and I was bathing in tiny black berries.

Ariel Fíntushel: Porcelain Mermaid

The salesmen in her is native,
or the desire native in us,
and the result is always
a pleasant drowning,
a secular dousing,
sirenia's song and the memory of breath
above water
gone with Anaximander
and the ocean rose.

John Grey: Teenage and Parking at the Lookout

Radio played starlight.
Windows heard the sea.
Bodies fluttered like whisk brooms.
Night was milky glimpse.

A huge beast
of no discernable origin
reached in through
busted glass and metal,
tore a heart out
as easy as pushing a doorbell.

Whoever answered,
there was no one home.

Joshua Banta: 954-258-XXXX

When she scribbles my arm
with her phone number
in eyeliner
I think of simpler times.

Checking the slurred number
in fifty empty cities,
I leave dialtone soundtracks
at payphones with postcards .

Because I know not to say anything
to Miss Suchandsuch-stein.

J. A. Tyler: Jimmy's Father and the Breaking Open of Heads

Jimmy's father, he has gone mostly blind, and Jimmy is left moving the furniture out of his way, kicking paths through broken shelving, making tunnels through all the memories his father is recollecting on the floor of their house.

And today, Jimmy's father, he painted her face on the side of the house.

Jimmy's father cut his fingernails shorter than he ever has before, until they all bled, and with the blood he wrote her name, his wife's, Jimmy's mother, up and down the hallway carpet.

Jimmy's father, he is almost done.

Yesterday, Jimmy's father had his feet propped on a footstool and a glass in his hand, the radio turned up. But the glass was empty even as he sipped and the radio, it was all static, and Jimmy's father he was moving his head to unheard music, talking to someone invisible in another chair in the room, crying while he laughed, laughing while he refilled his drink from the air, and Jimmy, he knew that this was what his father had become.

Drought is when no water comes and Jimmy's father, his blood has gone dry, and the heart that should be his, pumping inside, it has been removed and sits on their mantle, looking bruised and battered, Jimmy's father whistling

through all the teeth that he has knocked out or wrenched from his mouth with pliers, looking for her smile underneath the red of his gums.

Jimmy has broken too so that in bed when he should be sleeping he can't. This is when Jimmy imagines that his bed is a boat and his room is a flood and he can fish from the covers, wait for the bite that is his mother, reel her in like he has done a thousand times before and hug her hooked mouth, cuddle her twitching fins.

The sun, when it comes up each morning, it lights the tangle of their house, the way they have no power left, Jimmy and his father, how they are just branches blowing in a wind out of their control.

Jimmy keeps a box of cricket legs beneath his bed but they never make music. They just sit there, those legs, no longer moving. And Jimmy, when he thinks of orange cream soda he tastes in his mouth the clouds in the sky, the weight of spinning storms, and how if his fists were lightning he could set the world on fire. Jimmy doesn't want to see the decimation. Jimmy doesn't want to witness the crush. He doesn't want anything to happen to anyone, because everything has already happened to him, and Jimmy he knows the feel of being flattened by the unseen, by the rising setting sun, by the rain as it comes down when it does, in spurts, during a summer like this.

Jimmy's father yesterday was reading every book they have in their house, reading them backwards, turning the pages from end to start and then ripping them from the seams of glue and chewing on their words, sometimes only pausing to close his blind eyes and think about all the paragraphs in his throat.

Jimmy's father today is cooking everything left in their fridge, stacking plates of food on plates of food and reciting the alphabet. His voice is singing, his mind humming on fumes.

Today, Jimmy's father he is showing through.

The stars will be out and Jimmy, he will dissolve into them, break into enough pieces that he can fit between their in-betweens. Jimmy, he wants to disappear.

The birds they litter this yard because the weeds are so tall that the moths, they try to hide inside, and the birds find them and eat them and spit them back up to their young, like how Jimmy assumes this is all supposed to go.

When Jimmy his mother was still there and things were like normal seasons, his father was playing catch with him in the yard and talking to him about girls and Jimmy, he was listening, and the world spun a perfect speed. Today, Jimmy's father is all vomit in the bathroom and brushing his teeth, those two actions only back and forth. And though Jimmy, he has been listening for days, for words with meaning to come out in these listless monuments, he has found nothing.

Jimmy's father is looking for his wife, for Jimmy's mother, and Jimmy he is looking for her and his father. And both of these men, these boys, they are reaching into the sun for a winter to come again, hands blistered by their longing, fingers frostbitten and burning.

When it rains they both stand in the open pouring and wait for their bodies to fill, for their voices to drown. Their minds, Jimmy's and his father's, they are scratching records and thimbles on wooden floors, they do nothing but clank and repeat. And at each other's throats they tear and claw, making welted tic-tac-toe on the skin that is theirs.

Jimmy and his father, their palms put together, they are the same person, and the only difference today is how quickly or slowly they are each of them going crazy in this world come apart.

This is his father's last look. This is his father's, Jimmy's, his new found hair and the curve of his eyebrows, the molding in his head and the image of father son, the loss.

Jimmy's father, today, he is lost.

Yesterday, Jimmy's father coated himself in dirt and laid under their tree until he fell asleep, dreamed of burning in sun or drowning, dreamt of getting back to something good.

And yesterday, Jimmy's father, he sank into the weeds, dandelion seed clouds, flowers yellow light, sky blue looking into his ocean, all the ways he is falling.

Today, Jimmy's father, he saw his son walk through mud and lose his thoughts, drop them deep in the watered dirt, track his boy feet through the puzzle pieces he was constructing, Jimmy's father, making of the curtains a mural of his wife, Jimmy's mother, the woman they lost.

So Jimmy's father he took to shouting.

The dropping of words like bombs and the floor beneath Jimmy's head lined in Dresden fire.

Today, Jimmy's father has died, his heart exploding.

Today Jimmy is left in a quiet that is his deafness and a happiness. Two things combined to make another.

Yesterday Jimmy's father came open in pieces and today, Jimmy, he knows where to dig, how to collect the shapes of his father, and why his mouth always feels like it should open and swallow all the water of this world.

Today, Jimmy has learned.

Today, Jimmy has been taught something by his father, and Jimmy has listened even through the river in his ears. Jimmy has finally seen his father's smile, holding his own dead hands open to a gone mother, roaring to embrace a skeleton, ready to shake the ground for their coming back together.

Jimmy's father, today, he was a father again, even if only. Teaching his son a lesson and then shattering, each piece of him another word that now will never come screaming from his mouth, another sentence that will never arrange itself into the insanity of this loss.

Sometimes Jimmy's father, he lives on in Jimmy, each shard a breath and all the breaths at once, all of their lungs singing.

John Blando: the crow said: "lie, love, lie"

Homophonic Translation of "Das Grosse Lalula," by Christian Morgenstern

Original sound at <http://www.ubu.com/sound/morgenstern.html>

Collect eye crumbs, cheri.
Send them to me.

Shave your contours,
scrap your clothes.

Bid the bed cease,
then only let me.

Bed cease, bed see, beanpole.
Lie love, lie love, lie love, lie love, lie

underground is what I meant.
But can you see me?

End, repent, be a fragment.
Collect plush seaweed.

Lie, love; lie, love; lie, love; lie, love; lie.
See my eye

across my temple.
See that it's crooked?

My mother does.
Remember, remember-

it's simple, it's soupy, it's sad:
Lie love- lie love- lie love- lie love- lie.

Ryan W. Bradley: When I'm Sad I Eat,
When I'm Happy, Too

My fingers feel different
on skin than on plastic or wood
or metal or air or on the food
I use like a drug.

John Greiner: Cortona

It is yet to be determined
whether the story
is about being alive,
or if it is about the dead
that we are to become.
In a courtyard
in the hills,
lost inside the low walls
constructed by forgotten contemplatives
where mothers watch
their children kick-up dirt
and ashes while a statue of St. Augustine,
chipped and faded,
stands passively watching
the sporting youths.
At his feet
lies a skull
picked clean
by the ages.
There is a smile
on his face.
If I didn't know better
I would assume
that he is Father Christmas
to the dead.
The children
who kick-up
ashes
and dirt
pay
him no heed.
He has no time
for their games,
nor they for his.
Their mothers flick
their cigarettes,
watch,

talk,
wait for the sun to fall
beyond the hills
where Severini's Jesus climbs,
and where Medici's forgotten fortress stands
waiting for the onslaught that was promised,
but which will never come.
This fortress will stand
longer than our bones
which even now
are growing frail,
but let us not forget the verdant field
of future becoming.
We shall follow our passion
to the church of Santa Margherita,
and when we see the sun,
when we see St. Augustine's foot fall
on the bare skull
whose thoughts
so long ago
were lost,
we will make our great confession.
It is yet to be determined
whether the story
is about the dead
who lay naked
in life,
or if it is about
the living that will not tremble at the end.

Octavio Quintanilla: Café Triste

Three of us and each of us
waiting for the others to leave.
The man with the hat pretending
to read the newspaper. I pretend
I am old news.

The hands of the waitress tremble
like white pigeons in the cold.
She's cut right out of *Vogue*, glossy
lips and hair that'd close the eyelid
of insomnia.

We are alone now.
The man with the hat leaves
his ulcer sitting at the table.
The waitress, not sad enough
to speak to me, pours herself
out the window.

I pretend I have what matters.
A job. A plan. Hands that come off
with the gloves.

But as always, some guy
who is wrong about the world
will come along
and make bigger claims,

and she will not remember this night,
filling and refilling a stranger's cup.

Errid Farland: Played the Player

Her name was Paradise. And she swallowed me. What could I do?

I drew my sword. I was a knight, it was the only way.

“I don’t want it to be me,” she said.

“It has to be someone,” I said.

She looked around. We were in a glade. What’s a glade? Is it like a glen, only with water? Well, it was a place like a glen, with water. The glen looked like a kaleidoscope made of gemstones; emeralds and topaz, amethyst and rubies, peridot and yellow diamonds. Bright yellow diamonds. The wind blew, and the grasses and wildflowers bent, and it was a new scene for a half a second before the wind turned it again.

The water was dark and murky, olive green and deep khaki, and I saw myself in it, big and hunchbacked, with a tunic, breeches opened in the front, my sword brandished. I turned to the kaleidoscope, and there was Paradise, still looking around for something for me to kill.

“Kill that,” she said, jerking her head toward the lake.

“The lake?”

“No, that.”

“What?”

“Look,” she said.

I looked. My reflection wavered because the wind broke the surface, and I lost heart.

“There’s only one thing,” I said.

“That’s the thing,” she said, with assurance.

“Does it make you sad?”

“Why should it?” The wind blew her dress tight against and between her thighs. Her hair whipped her face.

“It matters so little to you?” I said. It hurt me.

“It mattered little to you, too, don’t forget.”

“Do you love me?”

She smiled. Was it soft, or was it cold?

“Make love to me first,” I said.

She lay back in the emerald and peridot, she opened her legs in the amethyst and ruby, and the sun fell behind the mountain. She took me in, and I thought, “It was soft,” and I kissed her then I thought, “It was cold,” and she lifted herself to me and I thought, “It was soft,” and I pounded her and thought, “I was cold,” and I spilled into her and fell against her and my breath came ragged, and I pinched my eyes closed to hasten the dark. It gave me power.

I stood and laced my breeches. “It’s the last time,” I told her.

She nodded. “Like the time before.”

“Yes, like that.”

Lynn Strongin: St. James Infirmary

Coal roses burn like babies' fists: fierce ancient babies.
Hold me with both arms, James, Circle me, where griefs hatched, one-by-one
St James clinic, pavilion, call it what you will, you mean asylum.

Numerals Roman.
face Human. Memory animal prancing upon dawn, a horse track in Virginia.

I once was a child in a cot in a ward: family cannot get their mind round this.

A click on the tile out the ward door informs me a visitor will come.
I see all this history as pages of an illuminated manuscript:
a wondrous thing
torn from the page of my childhood:

snowthorns
hospitals
a reflecting echo of Saint Francis.
Barge-men beating.
Who is he who comes in lambs, hurt birds, one red fox in his arms blent with
snow looking-glass gray reminiscent of crematory ash, silk that wing
lightness.
It isn't gathering one dozen sweetheart roses and taking a bow. It's the real
thing.

Plinths, carts, gurneys
orderlies, muscles on the ward
pumping iron the amputee in Breughel asking for a shilling from a cart: Cat &
wool, it's the heart out there now:
No one who has not lived in a ward as a child can know the cheerless swathe
of brick windows. Body of night: bright with fright

Scows in Hull Harbor
first sullen snow
all the dolls
heads bashed in

Covering the keyhole to keep us warm
only fragile wax postage stamp cellophane
from
Liverpool to Boodle to Merseyside
all the way down
to Newcastle upon Tyne.

Paul Handley: Immigration Man

Into my cramped office, they enter with a resentful smile. A flash of eyes capped by brows of distrust and underlined by taut skin just below the sockets, that puff with relaxation that seems forced by involuntary muscles so that the capillaries will flow then deflating with concern, is followed by a new smile that would set better upon the first ten people I could find outside, or a boy forced into the family photo. My dingy space scythes off a layer of apprehension, then wonder what further negligence awaits. Choose feigned overcasualness, fused with familiarity, how are you Paul? I think, first name basis? Their indignation or compliance is saved for the wrap-up. Attorneys employ both in sequential staccato or languid punctuation. The spectrum is beyond Roy G Biv. Tortured Haitians with French accents that cry upon getting citizenship. Persecuted, gay asylum seekers, now in happy hetero marital union. Those with domestic charges seek empathy. Dinner was cold. You know how women are? I nod agreement always. Of course. I can deliver the bad news by mail. Those who have overstayed visas have remarried, the mother of his children live two blocks away. Doctors from the late Warsaw Pact work maintenance and the former Ethiopian defense minister has commandeered the #15 bus.

Patriotism a flimsy overlay, Maslow's hierarchy is primary. I don't think in universals. Are we all citizens of the world? No, time increments. Twelve minutes to the next interview. Faces, which were my primary memory, now are broken into thirty-minute blocks of incongruence or reasonable acceptability's. Sovereignty? Maybe. Should State lines be the blood of people that are barred or the fluidity that shifts to create new communities. Pablo,

more important than who pays? Federalism doesn't imprint upon those dieing of water and airborne diseases, but upon impartial and artificial constructs of heads under powdered wigs, slave owners, millionaires whose leg up is a head for business, but most of all, U.S. citizens' nonvoters and voters who authorize border walls and national IDs.

Hi, you greet me warmly at the citizenship ceremony. How are you? I respond cheerily and try to keep my hands full or a pump bottle of antiseptic nearby. I love my fellow humans with many codicils. Make our nation strong, with much needed new ideas and please try to forget my weary stamp or don't tell your kids who will be as American as I.

James Grínwís: two pieces

Village 5

The great dog-limbs arcing over the ventricles of the village at night when the sprayers come in from the wharfs. We look at the great dog-limbs and see our own husks float among the nitrous sinews of the lanes.

It is unfortunate that Spatz does not serve malt past bedtime. It is important occasionally to enjoy lathers of malt late into the evening and all the way to dawn coming up, to see the dog-limbs crack into jigsaws to be put together once again when the fishers crawl from the trees and start ripping off the faces of porcupines.

The cyclical sex fussing of the boars like that. The little corrals, where the gardens are ransacked by angry children in search of the best artichoke before the wives come down and beat them away. The hair tugging like that. The hushed intercourses in the empty hour like throats squeezed and released.

Future 5

Before the train came, the wolves stood, crammed in crates, en route to the border zones and the enemy camp.

I was at my desk, trying to write descriptions of notice. The snow had spilled a thick film over the world, and my brain felt coated too, frozen. The computer screen: a vastness.

The sad noises of the wolves fell from the screen. The train, churning like a boiling egg, arrived and I got in.

The silence bled from the walls, into the monitors, the squares of metal siding. The windows opened onto the scenes of mountains and Munch-ian, contaminated blossoms.

Ethan Saul Bull: two pieces

Lullaby

The branches collected already
in the bin, the blossoms orange
and not failed and red and not
failed and we rode armchairs
over the grass and there was the
sun not allowing us to become
Christian and mastering irony
and loving us with no hope of
being loved back—

a phantom or a ghost and a chair and a yard and a
sandyard, spirits,

with a call to crawl back in

dominating me and carrying me along,

that other gun pointed at me

Hemorrhage

From the jets in the crushing lot,
from the clouds and sample
discoveries, from the corner
where we are meeting and you
are late, I am trying out for the
part of the gunshot in the school
play to punish you and adding
refined sugar to everything and
because you are so far away, I
am looking at the obituaries and
writing thank-you notes to the
dead and finally trying adulthood
on

and so you are less impressed with me.

I have hidden the kingdom of love behind the tv while I
watch the first season of my autobiography and describe
the action to you on the phone and from

the space between art and life,

from the moment in my book, from fate to the pickle relish
in the door, I am becoming more sure

that I've become shorter even than my short life

that you will notice and that you will pour salt on all the
sidewalks near your house to keep my ego away because
you've found the present I left in your ear and you're sure

I didn't wash it first and so now you know

that I am the gumball machine from the Odyssey

that I am living forever

that I am free on weekends.

Chet Gresham: Extinction

The creek that divides Lighthouse Estates
and Prairie Village pushes toward an idea
of sea while the plains wallow
in their history of settling. The moon moves
into Leo and slides down a shaft of blue-stem,
illuminating the lack of wind,
and the mountain lion that stalks
an ending, a calf, itself.

Here it is,

as small as a curlew
that spent migrations hovering
around fallen mates until also shot
and thrown onto mule-drawn baseboards,

or as massive as sky,
treeless, devoid of anything
a man might call useful. It stifles a person
to think like wind, or sun, or even
the endless column of crows flying over.

A farmhouse lights up
at the barking of a blue-healer.
The moon rises; an orange-illusion
against the horizon. House sparrows
dive out of the shed at the soft pawing
of the barn cat. The crows have joined the city
in false security, lined up,
bending cedar limbs, shuffling,
prodding their neighbors
with their big black bills.

Ethel Rohan: Necessary

She learned to direct her breath to her lungs, stomach, sternum, her very toes; she breathed as shallow as the dying, as big as babies brought from the womb, all the while marveling at her oeuvre—her breath a never ending ribbon, an umbilical cord.

Not enough people thought about breathing, until it turned to struggle. Too many breathed like the automated functioned. She vied amidst the waves of people on the streets and parks and beaches, and inside transportation and buildings; saddened at what they took for granted.

She wondered that we didn't sense the Universe sicken under the onslaught of our mindless breaths, didn't feel the Breath Maker resent our greedy inhalations, and pull back from our entitled exhalations, drawing further and further away.

Imagine if the Breath Maker rebelled? What if, whoosh, She emptied the earth of air? It would be like Her plunging us into the depths of the Ocean, and refusing us surface; pressing the clouds to our faces, and refusing us relief, dropping the earth into a black refuse sack. We would struggle in terror. We would promise to worship. We would beg.

Daniel Van Thomas: Grain

Lust before god. Initiation before understanding. Grain before
exaggeration. I don't want to have, I want them not to have. You look
pale, Young Goodman Taupe, maybe you've remembered that faith is just
presumption that's been apple-shined. What counts on stage and in
morals is projection. Time leads this waltz, boy, and away from grace.
All you need for freedom is lack of consequence.

She never crossed the bridge

& the mortar verges on three Arabs in Vegas, ammunition malhuman
blew from the earth & con-things cloud the planet twice over.

,A tin barn is a field where the underworld can mug unleash & I'm here
with them imagine the shock jovially of the high-born (literally)

waltzed i wish to unbend sharp eyes a rigid sense of something sacred

but i don't want it so powerful she forgets she has an out another

woman saying she can't react let obligations go lower/only higher look

at the line on conquest good grainlash doublebacked hamfisted

bodyracked mindfilmed ideas to retain communion & escape push it onto
urgency but not the post-colonial impulse

not in this house

Elizabeth Barbato: from *Elpenor Falls*

Orcadians

Be as wise as serpents and as innocent as doves
-Matthew, 10:16

In the Kirkwall cathedral of St. Magnus, in watery heaven. Consider the apostles in the Upstairs Room. Only there are doves in flame, no snakes at all; allowing voles to grow fat and prosper, to be cut down by fox and cat. Middle July and permafrost. Seasick with gasoline and two oceans colliding.

At ruins, a Neolithic village, a black cat pouncing; an old man leaning on a dark-rooted cane looks on, impassive. The animal jerks and bites. Looked like wiggling felt wrapped round with soft black velvet. These animals had no interest in us, as in fact the man and I had no interest in each other.

A curious marble, we four, in the sun beside the North Sea. Peering in: a twisted ribbon of thicker glass, Mobius-wound round itself. From within, indifference. Scant reft, tired houndstooth coat. The flat vole, the black cat, the unseen dove awakening the air, pushing away the clouds, shattering the marble, flexing

the bones within its wings, porous with sky. A split of a seam.

The wisdom of the serpent is flexibility, a willing devouring of the journey, the path itself: the dust embeds and balances the scales, an inch forward, a new trench.

A tug on a hem.

Greg Gerke: Lucky People Who Knew Murillo

Bartoleme Esteban Murillo, a Spanish painter, lived from 1618-1682

His close friend

I knew him when the sun was out. I knew him when rain swept our smelly city of Seville. He had many headaches. When he brought me into his studio and asked me what I thought of the *Madonna of the Rosary*—I knew instantly what was wrong. “The woman’s face Bartoleme. She looks too much like a woman. Think of your father with the sturdy angular features. Everybody knows about women’s faces, but who knows men? If you plaster masculine on feminine you’ll go beyond. You’ll make them mad and mad is what they have to be made.”

From that day forward he called me *el revolucionario poco*. The small revolutionary. Friends for forty years, we drank nights and talked about the stars and traveling again and again to Florence to see the Masaccios. One night meteors whizzed above us. Europe had never seen anything like it. After a shooting star streaked from one end of the town to another, he stood up and took off his pants. He moved his hand over his crotch ostentatiously and spoke, “How can what we have here compare with that up there? I want more Sebastian,” he said in a weepy, little girl’s voice. “I want to control the world.”

His first love

It’s official. Young Murillo does not like rice, but that matters little now. His mother told my mother that I dance with soldiers because I want to marry a

big strong man. Murillo and his mother are absolutely right. Murillo is small and spider-like. His arms are tinier than mine. He gets a good salary but he is frail and often sick. They say a storm once blew him down in the market while three-year-old boys were able to remain standing.

So enough of this incredible silliness. He would die before our first child was born. Then where would I be? It's expensive to live on the merchant street and my mother can't work, she can barely lift up to get the bed pan under. Maybe if Murillo did more sit ups or if he was as famous as Velazquez. He should improve himself, even if I won't be his bride. Women like men with muscles, that is the way it has always been and it won't change.

His wife

I've told this story too often but here I go again. I met husband Murillo just after he had a bunch of teeth pulled. He could barely say his name. *Do you want to see my paintings in the old church?* he managed through a small opening in his mouth. We went in and everything was gloomy. A few old women toward the front sat weeping. It was St. Bernard's feast day and the candles were lit in patterns of small crosses. Murillo tried to hide his pressing on his mouth to staunch the pain. I would say for over half our time he was turned from me. When he showed me the *Adoration of the Magi* and the *Annunciation* I told him they were fine and I started walking on. I knew this angered him terribly. So much work, so much time, critics calling him the best ever and I sauntered away like it is nothing more than a tree one sees outside. I paused at a painting of St. Benedict by Pasco and Murillo stormed out, hand to mouth, one arm flailing.

A few days later I saw him on the street by a fruit cart. He was holding an orange. "Can your teeth take it? Can they kiss an orange?" I said

menacingly. His eyes narrowed and I thought he would hit me. Instead he pulled another orange and offered it, adding, “My teeth and my whole body can stand up to anyone, at anytime.”

I smiled prudishly and replied, “I wondered what it would take to get you to stand up.”

Then the courtship and soon the marriage. Children one after another. Some nights he is away at the palace, some nights he sees his other woman. My mother scolds me to remain steadfast. Look at the money he brings in. How the King and Queen adore you. Besides the Church would never support an annulment after what he has done for them. So I do what I often do after thinking about my husband, my headache Murillo—I make sweet breads.

His first mistress

Murillo can really be a pain in the ass. He wants me to sit on the edge of a chair for hours on end. I have a house to clean and worried children. Jose needs more than made up stories and points at every man he sees me with, excitedly declaring, “Papa!” Then at night I prostitute myself. I don’t complain. My children are happy. Jose has a new suit for church. It has blue buttons.

Murillo wants to know if I will go with him to the royal ball in April. Not likely old man, I say. You are forty years old now. I am half your age and still you pursue me—and after putting my body through the torture of sitting with a hand upturned and raised for hours? What good do you think my body can do for you? If you want something get in line with the others, I say. Then Murillo is quiet. He runs a finger over his lips like he knows better. He used to be with whores every night of his life. Now he sleeps on a small broken bed in the Palace while the paints he doesn’t cover harden into rock.

His priest

When Murillo confessed he had two illegitimate children I thought of pardoning him with only a rosary's worth of Hail Mary's. But I couldn't. The Lord is more important than all of us on earth. I gave him my standard reply to his confession—Does your wife know? I then heard the door open and shut. That was the last time I spoke to Murillo.

His last mistress

Murillo wanted to call our daughter Estrella. No Bartoleme Esteban. I will live with her everyday and when do you come? Twice a week, maybe. You might support us but I choose the name. By this time in his career Murillo smelled continuously of paint. He didn't care to wash—he wanted it to surround him always. He was working on a large *Crowning with Thorns* and the fat bishop hounded him daily to finish it before Easter.

One afternoon we sat in the courtyard of the home he purchased for me. The bigger children from other men were playing with worms in the garden. I held our daughter while she slept. Murillo studied a mess of slimy vines at the corner of the garden. Feeling them, stretching them. He sat back and in an uneasy voice said, "I think this is one project I can't complete. I feel part of myself floating away." He frowned. "By the next Sunday I shall be no more anyway."

"Get out Murillo," I cried and I knocked his shoulder with my free hand. "You are not so old. You don't make love like an old man."

He laughed wolfishly, "But I do. And worse—I paint like an old man. A defeated old man. My time is up." He drew open his vest and slouched like I

had never seen the dignified Murillo do. This worried me and I started crying. “Kiss me please. Hold me please Murillo, you scare me so.”

He stared at the bright sky but did not move. “An old man cannot comfort others.”

“You crazy bastard, you aren’t dead, stop it now,” and I pushed wildly at Murillo until Estrella woke.

Murillo plucked some more vines and wandered away, ignoring not only me but the daughter he never touched once.

He went to some bars and never made it back to me. He was wrong by five days. His wife and the authorities asked about our visit. I said nothing. I knew she would never give us a ducat in support, though she knew all.

I went to bed that night knowing Murillo’s secret. He knew when he would die. A remarkable man. Estrella will surpass him though. She has my cheeky face but his ability. Already she draws the sun behind clouds and vague outlines of trees and is not yet two. Yes, because he died I used the name he wanted.

Guy Beínig: one poem and four illustrations

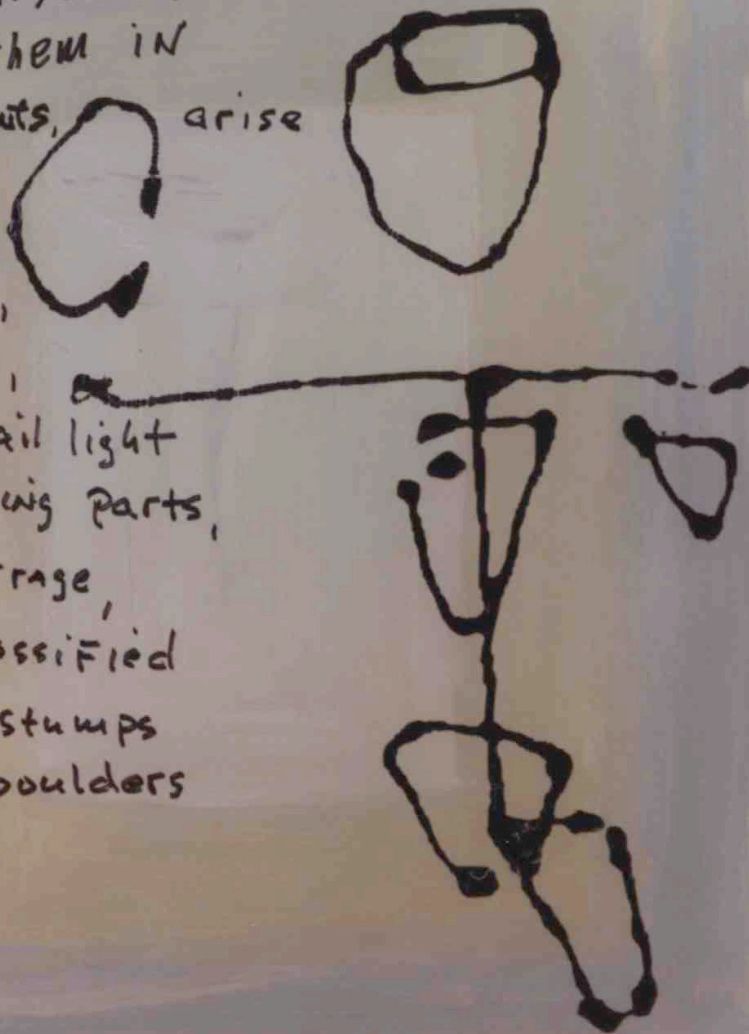
A Rueful Fít

8.

heal me with
special weeds
of the Poet,
who can smell
flax of the sun.

Stoma Fragment 1501.

the false start
of them in
Fragments, arise
to frag,
Fragilis,
Fraile,
in frail light
Carrying parts,
ossifrage,
so ossified
by stumps
+ boulders



Amesbury 5/1/02



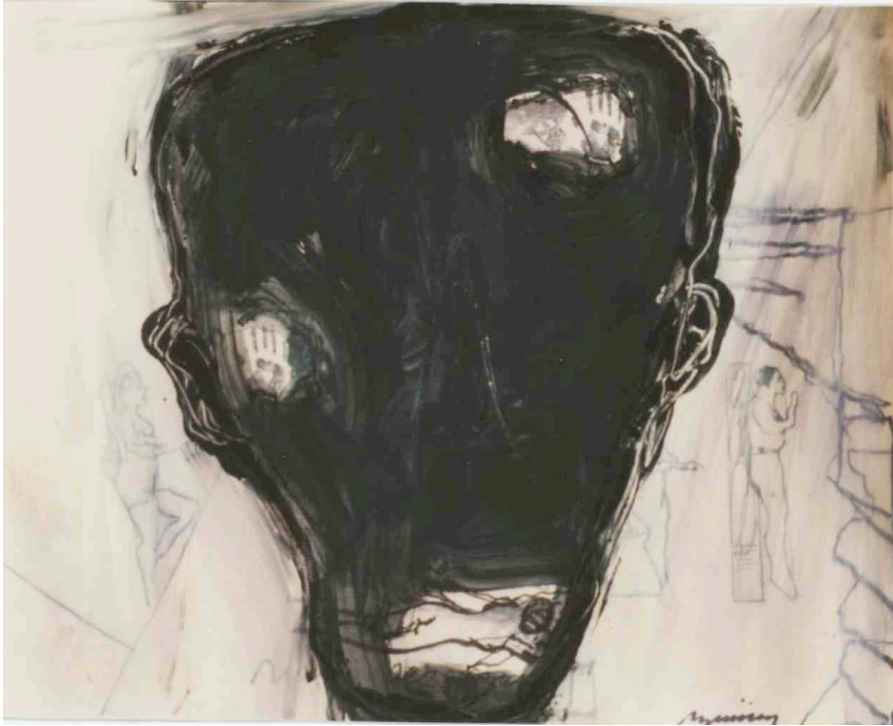
JACK UP this
vexed demon
trade the phy-
ers CARds For
a h(ear)t
ht.
OF ear to

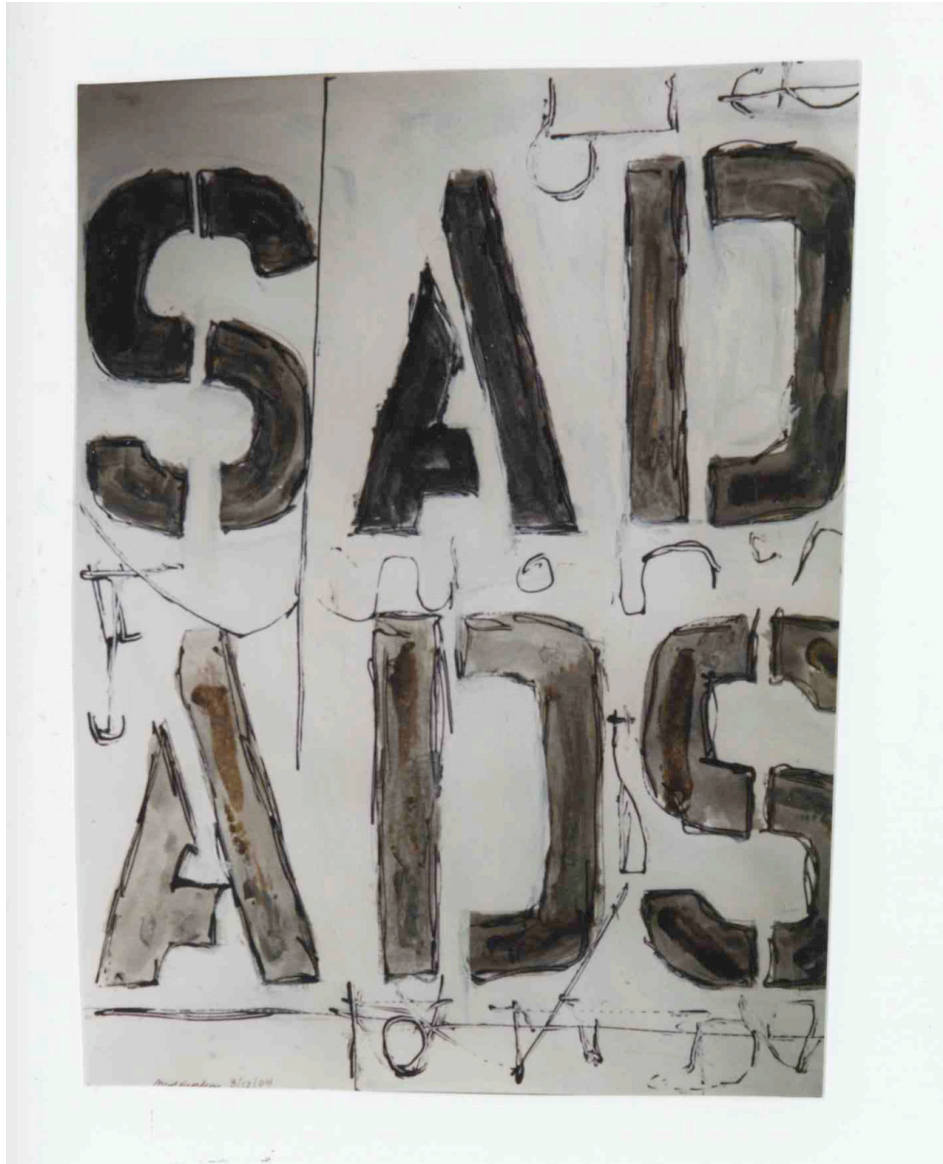


hear

endings of twine
& substance.











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