

the billow and the blast

that violent subway to your house -
its tin mermaids wailing and
singing us to the next stop
jostling our mouths, our hooves,
the milk of our collective brains.

we are a people tunneling hard,
(getting out of our own way, even)
with no time for all this
sentimental rock.

and what of the afterburn of paper and
hot trash, still floating in our tracks,
saluting us in jest
as we scream for more light,
more sky,
some ice hole of hope in
this subterranean mess.

Ask me things

*"irretrievable, dynamite brain
an evening never goes the way you want it"*

suppose we cheat the season
with our nervous
airline fuel.
cheat death, cheat altitude
through the heavy beast of a
window seat.
yell at the engines
(one, now two)
that we're strangers
still curious about the world.

but life had better be what they say;
we're seven times the target age
fighting the glare of the sun
fighting what photos can
do to us.

it's memories that fly this thing
not keeping us grounded
towels too hot (to face)
exfoliate
this skin, this bird
making good come from bad,
cups of tea from your bath water.

"if you want to sympathize, empathize, or
be near anyone's thighs
let's drop this nothingness
we've got going on, and
aim for grace."

Flora and fauna

Salesman says we'll lose the
war on bugs
that they outnumber us 5 million to one
with plenty more hatching as we speak –
in our heating ducts, our pillows,
the walls of our warm intestines.

underneath us all the time, like the
rats they ride like horses
waiting to roll our skulls across their
million backs, like buckets in a
fire brigade, like quarry slabs rolled out to
make the pyramids.

We've got to call up our guts,
confront those turtles and snails on
their own terms,
crunch them on their own crooked door stoops.

We have logic on our side
and those dumbstruck spiders who will never
learn to warn the others:
that a smooth-gloss bathtub is the
death of them, a purgatory,
a record needle gushing over the same
goddamn groove.

Pharma

This newspaper, with all its dilemmas of the day
all its words to hunt and hurt you
if we don't avert our eyes.

Pant legs touch a stranger on this crowded bus,
not knowing any better.
Our clothes will never want what we want,
will never fit the monsters of
our ambition.

"I have so many ideas running through my brain
and will never do enough about it."

And now the bedside table –
your 'make due' pills on a plate,
this mattress that barely knows me anymore.

We'll gather the curtains for fullness
and hold our breath that the
story's going to somehow change.
Should we have a clear view of all the windows?
For all our waiting?

Should positivity have to prowl,
wait to be led in through the gate like a beggar?
Shouldn't it roar through every cupboard,
uprooting every tree, screaming "I am here!"

Our hair finally white with joy,
our mouths finally choked with
unfamiliar song.

upkeep

who do we thank for a 24-hour anything?
for a drugstore always standing guard,
its treasure box of lotions, potions,
and creams.

we feel cleaner even walking in,
comforted in our upkeep of the body,
its clues and answers stacked and
neatly labeled.

we've got a good feeling about this one;
that we're adding miles to our one and only life

that somewhere on these shelves we might
experience a greater joy,
a stronger one
(and faster)

what we would trade for an easier go,
for cravings gone mute,
for steps on a jeweled dance floor,

a lightness to this need that never sleeps.