

Somoto 7/17

Beneath our mosquito net I was the bride of all nations yet  
I needed that arm, her warmth, freshly hoarded from the Northern  
Hemisphere where summer churned air to laughing gas  
without us. All night mangoes burst like bullets; mutts fucked  
in feathers shed from dirt; her breath burned  
smoke lines *atrás* my *masa* cheeks. Even asleep  
she faced me, and the plaza, and my fears  
died on her illuminated eyelids. When she left,  
the mountains starved; their silver wilted  
into grey; their silhouettes were graphite  
sketches, gleaned  
from someone else's dream.

Everywhere is just a place.

## Resurgam

Lightning lashed fire through the limestone tower  
on Monday at some mostly irrelevant hour. 'Twas not an act  
of gasoline. The chemist in her fitted suit and lipstick  
stood crying on the lawn. She'd lost the impossible lottery  
to this dead temple resurrected by burning. She was still  
a little overweight, her shoes still baited mud between the sequins,  
and her brother had died  
last Monday at some mostly irrelevant hour, when a school  
bus strummed his spinal chord, divorced that heart  
so feeble and warm from its motherly stomach. Onboard,  
one youth snapped an ant at the thorax. Our chemist  
rehashed each reaction, made life the variable  
on which redemption depended. Nothing unhappened.  
But her hope, they say, was a kaleidoscope  
of flames in a limestone tower, carrying colors  
the eye with its eternal instant could not quite swallow.

## We Must Not Romanticize It

My corpse is my shepherd.  
I shall not want  
facts in the flesh. Only letters  
make cold molts of youth take forever  
right now.  
They say (in the movies)  
you ought to stay gossamer till you get boobies.

My stretch marks are motion  
lines in an old cartoon.  
They chart the devotion  
of time, like  
the moon totes a shadow. You say  
just one dose of cliché breaks peace  
into pieces.  
But you like me thinner! You sigh at the sky  
when I have you for dinner.

We must not  
romanticize it. We must not write poetry.  
They must not drown in the oceanic thwack of their heartbeats.  
They must not see how sweet it felt  
to eat the fruit  
and nothing else. That apple had a human bruise.

## Ode to the Overman

he finds his own sighs >> as the wind plucks them from his mouth  
the sandwich we split >> last night >> lingers in the skinfolds of a southbound breeze  
the pavement to him is a mirror >> his pores are sandpaper cracks  
where rain >> pours cold and fast >> through a sidestreet's soiled brow

(Limber is his stride, so limple  
and untripping. That is the thing.)

I pass the enemy's nest >> on my smooth commute to oblivion  
I am a passenger >> trapped along the tracks of longing  
the wraith >> my shadow >> writhes like fire in His glazed-mask windows

God drooleth on his children >> He makes our faces suitable for stepping  
He whisks rage and faith anew >> in the fresh death of autumn

O Overman! >> I would kneel for none >> if I could only stand alone

(...and in health)

I will do nothing  
when someone blows a hole through your face  
and it hardens into slate like a good wound should.  
I will tell those hanging gritty bits  
about my day, and kiss the nose  
you'll know you're missing. I will brew your coffee  
in the usual way, and complain  
when you leave the bitter grounds behind  
like you've never needed pain, like  
we aren't all dark-roast fervors hurtling down the drain  
of obsolescence. Everyone has tried everything, so  
shall we do nothing? When someone blows a hole  
through your face, shall the shared stains in our sweaters sustain us?  
Shall drought and doom and hot-air balloons float us up-up- up  
so fast our shrieks grow halfway ecstatic?  
Shall we stop asking how they sound coming out,  
shall we embrace that final luminescence,  
shall I see through you  
—*literally*—  
when a butterfly flits  
beyond your last dangling tooth?