

FIRST SEASON

I asked Spring to spare a kiss
and found it laced with laudanum.

Bound by Muscadine and tendrils
of Morning Glory, I awakened, .
Sun-steamed fibrillae of desire
dancing on my loins, a longing;
usher me into your rapture,
enclose me in your petals.

May, your foliage captures me
and steals last Winter's mettle.

Cooled by breeze on morning mist
skin fires blazing settles.

Released from bonds of April's arms
a swim in glacial rivers
within a breath of picnic held
on mattresses of meadow grasses.

Dare I risk another kiss?

I could not bear to forget this.

MY CITY IS DYING

(for the victims of the 2014 SXSW tragedy)

Scrape

the last vestige of

love & lust & beauty & art

from within your fatted cheeks &

spit

onto the sizzling cement

fractured in spider-vein hope.

Indolent insect, wary weed

emerge

to be taunted & trampled

lost to the beat

of trashman's shoes

duct taped & dreary

to dance the dirge of my city.

My city is dying

while bearded gurus ponder

hallowed museums

in cinderblock strip centers

hallucinating phantasmal visions

of Denver

& Seattle

& Tie-dye Utopia

And fail, again, to rise.

My city is dying
while gleaming phalli
of glimmering steel
race ribbons of asphalt
over aquifer and escarpment.
Occupants, occupied with
rare metal gadgetry,
leaving empty home
for empty office.

My city is dying.
Four warm bodies
Love & Lust & Beauty & Art
now cold.
Give them names!
My city spit onto the street
Steven & Jamie & DeAndre & Sandy.
Blood soaks into
spider-vein cement.
My city is ghost.

MERMAID

From the sand, the gilded orb
dangling over the horizon
silhouettes your torso.

The waves, almost dormant now,
ripple through your fingers.

if only -

Fingers rise in unison,
a contrapuntal fugue - conducted
from the terminus of outstretched arms
droplets
falling
cast prismatic hue against the grey.

if only -

In grey pirouette, longing more for moon
than shore,
attention disposes of me
clumped on the sand,
yearning.

if only -

If only I were light.

If only it was another time.

If only I could swim to you.

SPLITTING WOOD

I'm not supposed to do this.

The muscles tighten

around the restructured spine.

Hand eye coordination reclaimed.

Sinewy arms regain control.

The maul finds the mark.

The muscles tighten.

“Let the tool do the work.”

my father's ghost, admonishing.

Gravity on iron

Sharpened edge

seeking rift inside the grain.

“Let the tool do the work.”

Guided by muscles, atrophied

a laggard recovery. Titanium,

modern pharmacology, a year lost

to opium visitations,

mattresses, somnambulism.

Guided by muscles,

Crisp air fills lungs, replacing

the rancid humidity of sickness.

Sunlight excites pale skin

Five Short
Works

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as maul's edge penetrates oak.

Alive, again. Vital, again.

I am supposed to do this.

IN MEMORIUM

"Another God-forsaken dufus
without so much as a clue."
the bellow launches the epithet into the ether.
You mean me, of course.
Standing by the stock tank
the reek of disappointment sears my nostrils.
I have no passion for the butchering;
the boiling feathers stench my forearms
as dogs tug-o-war with stretch membranes.
Little sister giggles
at the silly death dance of fresh kill.
"Don't get any on you"
as you drain another longneck.

Now you lie in those white sheets
an overlooked dirty spatula
in a freshly bleached sink..
Another stench rises. I walk
toward the call button, never
to reach out. The mottled pate
graying, empty eyes see far, far,
far beyond me, through or around.
I am the ghost, as always.

Five Short
Works

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Through your final gurgles I cannot
discern, was there ever a clue?