

WHAT OR HOW OR WHO

“What am I?”
he thought,
pausing to think
for a moment where blinks—
4, in fact,
defined the time
he stopped to think it.

“I possess,”
he added,
“this body, my lobby
for life, the body I write
a story with might
through world changes
and I—” he paused
on high with joyous reprise,
“I change it!”

“I shape,”
he noted,
translating with a synonym
the truth for him
as had been described
by his father who died
in a rage,
a torrent mind of haze
and lapse of signs
of ecstatic rise.

He wised
up and thought of
the cryptos dead,
the logos read—
an echo
he couldn't let show,
the mythos known
that all men—
he breathed,

“All men die,
no part survives,
and none can revive
this life, this rise,
aroused—now,
not then, and thy will...
no, not thy, but
I—” he exhaled,
lowering his head
and nodding it right
to the sight of the city,
“who am I?”

AWE FOR NOTHING

My great, great grandfather saw
iron monuments rise
to cordon the skies
with straight lines over horizons
and yours did, too.

They gazed upward with marvel,
standing on streets below with the rest,
eyes glazed with thin film of zest—
the spectacle of man.
And with chins up and deeds in hand
they sold their cattle,
parcels and horses and plows
for a life of climbing
to heights with promised views.

My great grandmother woke up
in a forest of iron trees,
sleeved and glossed and reflecting,
and yours did, too.
There on the path she gathered in crates
fruits falling in perfected states
from pickers hands,
trading boxes for cans of plenty
gathering incessantly to store
with intent for old forms
and preservations of all things
sweet and beautiful and free.

My grandfather woke up
to taste the prize
with eyes unripe but wide
and yours did, too.
The nectar ran down his chin
when he looked up to the heavens,
and they pulled him by the hand
to fields and rows on land,
to tend for all man

with diligence and penitence
in endless deserts of dunes
in lines kept still inside
walls and halls of grandeur.

My mother woke up
and pointed at the colors
of all things made
and yours did, too.
They leapt,
and reached,
and gasped,
and struggled,
and bore us to wake
in sand with shovels.

I woke up addicted to
pleasure and you,
my friend,
you did, too.
We fight,
and grapple,
and smile to slave,
picking and building
more shells—
our graves.

THE MYTH OF A MOMENT

He wasn't typing fast enough
to write this thought
he'd wrought for days
from there, now here
from space to the place
between the problem—
time,
the sacrifice, the bind.
But because he tried
he captured parts to start
and from the fragments
conveyed in waves
there came the poem
of his thoughts
on a day,
a moment
in a time
where the world as an essence
enveloped with subtle presence
where he sat, shoulders back,
fingers acting and transcribing,
trying in vain
to replay what passed just then,
and now again,
already then,
but back again within
this gaze,
the thoughts of a conscious moment—
today's.

AN INSTANCE OF A TRIAL BY FIRE

How often does the will die?
And how long does it take for the rebirth?
'Cause I'm all eyes where the truth lies
and ears where the sparks crack on the hearth,
reminding the mind of the fire still burning,
churning with the lights off,
eating air with no care for saving up,
because the writing on the wall says
energy has to be burned
up and that's the only language fire speaks
when it streaks high to reach for more,
rolling to a flicker in the dissipation—
the passing moment's creation
in the constant effort of rebirth.

I see the wood dwindling but can't leave
or cut more for at least an hour,
so I'll stay to watch it flower
and shine with all that's primed to change
wood to ranges of light in strange
hues of oranges and yellows and blues.

The ash pile grows
and I glance to the window to see
snow not falling
but night where the light ends
in the slightly lightened
night air where for a moment
I thought I saw the glare
on my face in a reflection.

Light moves on walls
as the last flames glide round
and round to the sound
of a light brush swept down halls,
corridors small, though deep,
dark where all color seeps
to black,

back from whence it came
when the light died the first time.

Dim beams split seams while changing,
losing strength with no scenes to show
but this—
darkness filling the recession
with itself,
an image waning in concession,
unafraid and submissive and patient,
and not like me,
free and always taking,
never quenched.