

Yellow and other Poems

Yellow

It's this. You wake up, reach
for a colored pill designed to establish
you are real. That outside it's not all
raining bullets and clouds of
mustard gas. Good luck. The moon
has gone void of course, the planets
are themselves, the vortex forms. The pills
are yellow. Einstein in his last days
was working to disprove
time was real. He would have nailed it, but
edged too close to theology. It is
Thursday. The usual equations,
the math stops just short. Everything
is happening all at once. Time is
yellow... 50 mgs. every 12 hours.
Not more, not less.

She Says

"*Raymond Carver is dead.*" That's what
she said to me. Like you understood
what that meant,
or where it was going, or how to respond.
So you don't. Heroes always die. And
all you can think of is
what bullshit it was to vilify him
for drinking, so you say that. How there is always
something to escape from.
Like with Raymond Carver. Or like how she had tried to
escape her own skin,
starting at her wrists, and ending
3000 miles later, here, studying English literature.
She says she's a poet. If I believe her, that's
my business. Says she's trying to
examine Eternity. Says she'll show me.
A friend wrote: "*I will only live for stories. I will only
die for love.*"
Eternity means Forever.
Forever means you're dead.
It used to mean something else.

No Ink

You are in the dream. The room
is white. There are no doors, the chairs are in a circle,
indicating, no primacy. There are nine of you. The
geometry, sacred. In your mind
someone whispers: "*Do the math.*"
In the center, there is a plate and goblet, holding
yellow pills and river water. You have
not eaten in days. This is the dream.
There are questions... the next to you
answers all of them with:
"*Don't feel anything.*" Like it was
a song on the radio, like she held a microphone, except
she's reading off your jacket and guessing the rest.
You look at her... hollow, all codes and implications.
Perfect.
And you say nothing. You don't say fucking anything.
At her left arm, white irregular lines, carved
like a Roman numeral for five.
No ink. Meaning:
Breathing optional.

The White Walls

The war is real enough, but
you were cornered, knowing
there are only so many words
in the language to use. That if
you think about it too much,
your mind goes blank.
Like being handed the death card
in a tarot spread. That moment where
everyone stops saying a word, knowing
somebody is done for. Where
everything turns urgent.
You look at the white walls, you are
desperate. A witness, you are
trying to dredge up some words to
hold the world together.
Or like with the white walls of
The Sudan, Belfast, Angola. The
bullet holes and graffiti,
extending the language.

Her Eyes

Another day. Reality is operating
in Phase Space. The pills are psychotropic.
Marc's carved physics equations
into your skin. Einstein's:
Special Relativity, for example. Newton,
on *Gravity*. The girl
next to you is getting permanent eye liner.
Battle lines. You look at her eyes, like
she's a perfect and beautiful war poem. Defining
the resistance. You don't know
what should frighten you more, the power
that conspires to crush us, or
our endless ability to endure it. There is
no point to blending in, stand the fire. Megan's
turned you deep blue,
like you're quoting Seidman on color:
"Conflagrant World against World." Like
it's nothing personal.