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Lyrics and Dispossession

"Lyric for a Black Dog"

I walked a black dog
farther down the fence than I'm used to.
Only weary hands will raise themselves,
to sigh away from you the
killing blow.

Everything black. Black nothing else.
A purity, black, purity like no other.
Where would a black dog be
without his mother?

Howling in the distance brings me
nearer to a brink I did not know.
Black dog beats against the sun,
as if I were a father.

Bother noone with the news
black dog is dead.

"Lyric of the Sunflower"

Bask in the horizon
Bask in the horizon that comes to you.
Bask, anywhere, wherever you can
bask, to show well the standards of your beauty.

Bask until your sins are gone.
Bask until your amber sweater
dries up, to be preserved.
You have no home to go off to.
We have no place to move on towards.
Bask to let them know you reign with a golden crown.

Bask yourself into a thousand bite-sized pieces.
Bask without contention or forgiveness.

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"Lyric Ungrateful"

Our lunches were kismet,
from dark moment to dark moment.
Loom'd on sticky children's fingers.
We heard many people laughing.

Tamara never feared the icicle hanging down.
She let them fall where they may.

But we toss the stars into our glasses and pour them back out static in the sky,
arranged.

The distance between my plate and yours is a clean white linen unlikely to require changing
or a wash after we eat. But they will likely replace it anyway.

"Lyric of the Proposition"

Your unexplained absence, incoherent.
I juggle the incoherence like another's
proposition.
Another's hot take. The opposite
of an idea.
A tangible ball of knowledge.

I fear the master of the proposition.
I placed myself beside, clay mother figure, an aloof sprite. . .

Were there something that matured from this nausea, it would be no unease,
but elation.
Our forms falter;
we fall victim to our own incantations.

A dog tied to an empty wheelchair,
one totem of suffering in a
camp of over one-hundred life-sized monuments
to collective failure.
Living under a single underpass in Hawthorne,
one of many underpasses.
Our city overflows with the underpass.

The city doesn't overflow with people; there is enough room.
It doesn't overflow with food or drink, not out into the streets. The streets are only for garbage.

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We do overflow with food and drink, a few.
The dog and his master wouldn't know.
The city overflows with overflowing,
as each skull-sized kingdom blossoms
not to natural proportion,
but to highest potential.
There are a few trees. There are a few bushes.
There are many blades of grass striving for sunlight.
They are blocked by the blossoms
each blade sees, envies, and is killed by.

And I among them, in two bedrooms
with guitars that could each feed a family for months.
But still, they get fiddled. They get played.
They make sounds you can't hear under the underpass.
They cannot make those sighs.
Those heavy sighs with the cruelty of the world
emblazoned in shreds on the asphalt.

"Lyric Under False Pretenses"

Fending off lions in the arcade,
I heard your son squandered himself.

You rip the page. You chose a crease,
tore it apart.
No monarchy can withstand you.
No spare to the heir would care for such
warfare, or any heroism.
My aggression proves me distinct
from ignoble nobles of unhad clans.
I will walk amongst queens,
and find myself worthy of constitutional duty.

Bare my breast to the countryside.
Spared a dime with the movie on sale.
Go wither under the athletic lights.
The lonely power of realmdom has been
a lowly choice. Mine to make.

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"Lyric to Obama's Ghosts"

Walt Whitman's man died on time.

But you keep running.

So we keep running.

A eulogy without death: Obama's ghosts, to you!

Don't let me hide behind rhyme.

Don't let me sneak my hand under the table.

Say truth, no matter how corny.

No matter what cringes.

No matter at all.

Say, say it again. Obama's ghosts, to you!

Did I hear empire die a solemn death
upon a wicker table?

From the West, benighted East,
you did not break Du Bois's barrier,
sacred rift.

But you unfolded it for us to see.

You unfolded our hatred for us to see.

Was it you who made gay okay?

Or better put, throw off the shroud hiding America's peacock?

The women, men, people,
in solemn discussion

and efficient administration

dispatched their duties,
targets long-aimed.

Don't ask me more, I won't tell.

The difference between a voice and silence is hell.

Bullets hailed so many under this ghost's tenure. Holes in each body: out of one people, many died.

It was your words that comforted our wounded,
for us, for me.

You comforted the wounded. You comforted me.

Remember that tan suit you wore?

The outrage, the scandal. I chuckle.

A president running in Jordans,
running past the MLK you carved in stone.

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Too much for the few to handle.
Those few, who number far too many.
Who see danger behind every bush and pigment.
Cash behind every eye?
Those who would strike down others,
and let others strike freely,
because there is no reasoning to express,
no reasons to be heard.
Those who blinded themselves from Vietnam,
only to seek promise in the land of black fruit.

Ghost, you inherited trouble.
Trouble from beyond the realm.
Trouble from the gods than came before ours.
Trouble from pain. The pain.

Deadeyed sailors sift through the waters
outside my back door.
Deadeyed infantrymen marching to a deadpan beat.
Deadeyed marines scrimmaging through the streets.
And all around is orange.

Oh, if we could renounce!
Oh, if we could only go back.
Grit teeth. Shorn hair.
No vision. Nowhere.

But for a moment, a city in the sky.
Oh those rare moments, when the gods would meet.
Your smile arm-in-arm with Merkel, two beers in.
You took Manhattan. You took Berlin.

I'm sorry for what I am.
I'm sorry to let you down.
I'm sorry to fail you.
We may not be meant for the crown.

But we wage war against Nazis and poverty.
We wage war against an old world breathing hot down our back.

Oh, deathless ghost, let me remember you
in the moment of my death,
to know a man can be noble,
to know a man can be good.

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My family has no men like you,
who find strength in concensus.
It is deserved you go unslain to Olympus,
before your time.
What man can stand by the lord?
You can. But I don't know if I can.
I don't know if we can.

We, rightly punished by a brutal plague
to match our own brutality.
We, punished for those we killed and saw dead in war.
We, punished for all our time idly spent.
We, buried underneath our hustle, the hustle.
Our minds are not eaten out by madness.
Heroin has not stopped us.
Vicodin has not stopped us.
Fentanyl has not stopped us.
It stopped many of us.
But it won't stop us.

No, we have not stopped ourselves, oh ghost.
The generation you raised, my generation,
we have not stopped ourselves.
We want to go on.

But you were not enough, noble ghost.
Noone was.
Noone could be.
We are not enough.
Never were.
Never will be.
Not enough to stop history.
Not enough to stop entropy.
Not enough to stop.
No, we are stopped.
Flat on our feet. Put here by gravity.
We are put here because noone lives on top
without many living at the bottom.
So we step down.
Frozen by the worst of our inheritance,
passed down by your slender, lovely ghost.
The knowledge we have killed too many.
Too many to be redeemed.

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The shock out of a dream sends us out of our minds.
Behind us! We must put behind us all knowledge of the ungreat.
Plaster over our pain with gold.
After seeing you fail.
After seeing you lose.
Bested by a buffoon, a trick of the light.
Some slight of hand.
We all tumbled down to where we are,
cast from where we thought we could be.
Our great depression. The sins of our fathers.

Oh, ghost. If you could only take us with you.
Where the devil doesn't dance in the pale moonlight, doesn't dance to his fiddle.
Where I can't see the end of the road.
Where the drunken politician leaps
and all our saviors are fast asleep.
Then, are wide-eyed, taking in the clown crying at the show.
Sins of the father, we have that pain.
Sins of the father, we will never stop bleeding.
Sins of the father, you show me nothing.
Far as land lies, I eye the end.
Our end, from where there is
no back again.

Polygamist; hide me from tomorrow's gaze.
Polygamist; distract me with other's words,
too many to know,
and I imagine your hideout alone in the Sierras.

Where will your mantle go, when we are gone?
Will you be with us when things change?
You dance beneath the diamond sky.
You wave one of our hands free.
You gave Bob the Medal of Freedom.
You know me.
You know how to cleanse the white boy,
enraptured in the experience.
Enraptured in the Holy Mysteries.
Pureblood racist turned into a decent boy;
I do not claim height, only change.
Enraptured in Camelot.
An administration outside of time,
painfully brief.

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For there to be a good king is a happy land.
You showed a happy land.
Your voice where it need be,
in Charleston. I still cry.
But what about brown children?

What about Jonathan's heritage offended you?
Was it the guitarra strummed daily in the mornings of Granada?
Was it the song sung by the man with saber, pistol, and dog?
Was it the city floating on the water,
paved in gold?
Which was it that bit you?
The eagle? Or the serpent?
It was your agency that rejected asylum.
It was your agency that deported.
It was your agents.
It was you.

Jonathan, my Jonathan,
unbeknownst to me a beloved,
realized only once taken.
The name Jonathan rages through the land,
But the metal statue no longer dares
the hatred of his neighbors.
His slender legs reached long for goals.
On behalf of our team.
On behalf of our school.
On behalf of our people.
But you are the prophecy,
the thief in the night; Jonathan,
his mother, his father, his sisters, his brother.
Sent back in space, sprung forward in time
to lands of our own decay.
Life lived on the ridges of the scars of the stars
and stripes.
Blood on the cactus.
You took Minerva. You took Felipe.
I'll never forgive you.
I'll never forgive you for the love you rejected on our behalf.

Two female doves float above Afghanistan.
Thunderbolts in each claw.
Thunderbolts in the distance.

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Soon, thunderbolts near.
Overwhelmed by their number, and
the fury of the thunderbolt.
Thunderbolts have overwhelmed.
When I see a shooting star, I think of you.

The people at UCLA have healthcare.
They have healthcare through your government,
from us, projected through your celebrity
and your puzzling eyes, so rightly captured
in the strokes that make you up in the portrait gallery.
Those eyes. I do not know what goes on behind.
The alabaster eyes of the Roman bust, unpainted.

I have conflicted feelings, ghosts.

Oh, so do I, the ghosts say.
My reign was imperfect.
I made a road by walking,
by steering a ship of state trained in war,
war against us, against all.
I learned the cost of our mileage.
I bleed for Jonathan too.

And didn't we know you would repent?
And didn't you know what lies we would tell ourselves to go on?
Forgiveness is the only way to keep you.
The only way to grapple with the meanness of this world.

But your flaw is your savior.
We cannot forgive sins the dead can't speak;
when called upon to vote, they remain silent.
The Americans scuttled back to their ancestral chains, before America, cannot vote.
I have wilted rose petals.

I have wilted rose petals in a box.
The petals of my husband, I put away.
The petals from the flowers of my mother's wedding, I put away.
Put them away, to keep the hero.
Put them away to stay alive.
I eat them petal by petal so as to not suffer
under the shadow a mountain of petals casts upon memories of a notion of love.
I eat the petals of the beloved,
get stoned on the petals of the beloved.

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Beloveds gone, the beloved dream we lived once,
we get to live again.
We get to live you again, ghosts.

You, ghosts, are what will arc our universe to justice, if we let it.
If we let your ghost guide our way.
Do not relegate the world to Napoleon.
Do not relegate the world to Mao.
There is a path we may walk of great light
and great love,
out of inferno.
Ghost, guide!