

COLLABORATIONS

I.

Bronk and Sward

this man did this
subway system
some absolute shape
has the man always been there
un-sourced tricks of light
where vision has no name
but we desire whatever it is or not
can you love people rule the land
we drink to you with deep pleasures
an infinite series of semesters
the end of the world understood in terms
 of hungers and gifts
rough tenderness smashes the seas
brown bear pulling weeds
the things that matter most to us
on certain evenings to the seas

Dunn and Skloot

Vast stadiums and elaborate malls
a few poems now and again published
and maybe we meet again
his face in the wind as red a brick
I stop get out begin to understand
he made for her his smile
of these things his entire existence depended
Paris a message from God
we carried him to his bed to sleep
my wife's in California visiting
as summer stippled the garden grass
for months now crazed high school kids
props such banter his specialty
kept mowing the lawn
of grief that would be the place to begin
their gaze they just tried to be themselves
who was sick with a cold the last time

(continued)

Carver and Stein

The girl is minding the store
The end of the beginning
It all adds up how long will the storm go?
Well anyway there is enough to say
and keep the rest take one last look
they were always wondering whether it was
his turn to talk and weep
You can catch fishes with a bent pin attached
the remains of her midday meal
and anxious to oblige
and swirl of river as it is closed
they started to see if everywhere the wind
everything but hope lets you go
and then everybody sat down all the miles
a tree hit by lightning but even now

II.

Notley/Conoley

you had no knowledge
a plasticity I could live with

many paths are undergoing
old arc of trees

you leave the broken reading
or window would you prefer

it is important not to discuss anything
on a sidewalk

Bronk/Sward redux

no matter what kind of life
all those metal things in sidewalks

a cobweb of support
the love of something very true

from the past but anticipated a kind of future
darker than any mystery

fragrance and the flowers suggested

words once more

Baker/Hadas

What breeze carries us back
not too far beyond the beach

no time to waste as this must have been
can I be so sure of that they're doing

in the dark patting the ground around them
sitting heads together on the sand

like light from a star behind sudden new clouds
the pale cool moon glazing water

III. Jarnot /Ryan

they loved these things
all the dimpled depths
near the light of the sea

mirrored promenade
over there the fence
dance dive dodge

a perfect plane
shiny and real
grand and hard

*

an event we can't stick
bundles
dusk dew moon tracings

across everything contains
the surface
angles barely

I am flesh we tell ourselves
not arrived
baffle blue

*

switch used in the dark
I exercised more
those wounds lack luster

those wounds last
hounds place lakefront garden
iridescent improbable heat

tempting burdens and ice
dense measures taunting
a strong neck they loved randomly

(continued)

IV. Wyatt / Anstett

arch withered arm a splash
light boom village her lips

change and divide eventually
the effect of street shop owners

rabbits aggrandize jukebox
lean all toward knowing

no wonder darkness
called it formerly her skirts

her shoulder and neck
strands of hair blurry

behind the bar
night mingling hatched

a drift house struck drunk
her feet difficult so peculiar

out of the buttons movie star
strokes a model newest prints

if she brings the rest mistakes
whisky park and momentary

wore expression of barley noon
her face onion details

improbable clear crossing
the girl brush strokes

waiting she has to worry
extra gasping she has taken off

Bosky covered by trees, wooded

(Westward/Course of Empire Mark Ruwedel_

the railroad once carved through forest and slinked through rock and sand
so the blasted once talented snake of rail land remains iron tracks engine steaming
steel connected dense to ones travel bouncing through air in the light in the night
churning chugging people long gone travelers builders and workers
leftover bits of train journey gone canopy shape of trees shade grove and wooded glade
etched the dust the rumble the footsteps and sweat and road crumble tremors those hooves
carts dragged by horses loading and unloading their backs trunks of wood for rail ties
then trunks of parcels what people have taken with them all the trees slimmed and shimmied
shaped to connect the iron tracks land and people grit their grime those workers ghosts
burnt into land and trees all dynamited to make way for the snake of rail
travelers and rail builders rich iron horse company owners this nation of roadrunners
jump over tracks buffalo and bear graves the children the men left behind women
and others all of these lonely lost running away running toward blasts of dirt and track
the rail car the engine the surging forward windows and cargoes rail trails made of wood
trees delight and the dim of shadows travel through the glare and glade tunnels of under track
trestles cradle elevated overtracks once now crumbling
back into sand and wood brittle fluorescence
into the next spark of light speeding through the woods train car continue taking people
to their destiny love and new lives rail lines taking them once perhaps again we remember
taking them through strange unknown forests into gas chambers as the edge of the woods
crunched and crumbled over bitter branches
we will not stop in the snowy wood and wonder—unless as a vacationer who marvels out the
window-- as we now press on commuters into the mediocre the ordinary the terminus of work
or the return to suburban home our service is coach not express or 1st class this long haul
of transcontinental carved into whatever your life is next how would you ever get there
each city connected rails not wood but a local electric train and rambling lines that the desolation
has carved into our villages and metros these train stations built by blood and bone home and
work this wood this brick this road this empire.

after Alicia Mountain, "Mange Meat"

I want someone's teeth to sink into my meaty wolf flesh,
breaking skin, a bus route I know like the back of my hand rough with fur.

When I enter the gym, a blast of visiting weather ;
all my clothes don't go very well with scars or sales associates.

I can't feel much of myself good enough to go home with.

A rough beating for the team like that fence in summer
taking a swing so the ball flies
over , soaked turned up after bouncing into the fountain spray.

My offer of payments. tear a loaf apart.

Cancel the next year, it's so formal in bones, sweat and canal.

In the morning, the crust of my skin brittle, I meander near duck ponds
then happy hour, certain of my thirst.

My victim has questions—it's okay to want what has been torn, singing.

INVISIBLE

my niece Marissa says I was being invisible in the kitchen
(after Helene Cixous)

I'm not possible to consume but easy to walk by
erasing myself through confession
no one left in my room
a world beyond my whole history my memory
coming around to give a difficult joy
a secret I cannot tell her
I cannot display my affection

how this story coagulates all substance of love
the way all of us love to fall in love
that human blend into otherness
inside each man, a woman
inside each woman, a man
perhaps dangerous to say this

and if all is forgiven we disappear

the narrative we need keeps us exposed
and we emerge from the story a character
and our characters say what they have to say about the violence
of each person's history taken for granted like a dog
whose love is exhausting complicated threatening
a dog who is relentless who understands our ambivalence to love
so the dog loves us more

we may abandon that dog that lover our innocence we maintain
whatever will be finally said in the last ours of that last room
we've loved we'll say it all each story the cruelest story
each mystery we don't know who we are
we can only take ourselves as a bundle of nameless desires
we know some things about our secrets
whatever we are at the mercy of knowing
the passions called *deviance* or *defiance*

defending too much and being too intimate
towards the depth of the most known and unknown thing
whatever is available the dog our writing our beloved
that delicate and dangerous means to the infinite

and the invisible

“Melville’s Lost Paradise”, William T. Vollman in *July /Aug 2019 Smithsonian*

Taipei/ where the river meets the sea

their long boats moored in a harbor of ragged cliffsides
crevices gullies spilling into a bay
where sailors approach in skiffs edge towards a land claimed by missionaries
those rowing now into the island do not see those watching
these explorers as they can look out past their harbor
the great ship anchored sent off these sailors to explore these coast bluff
looking for game for gold for natives to consort with and relax
enjoy their time off the whaler for a feast

do not become the feast as they are warned of cannibals
their boats made of birch bark like all of our skin over heart pumping blood
a roaring ocean beyond this canyon that meets the seaside
forests thick with trees what adventures we are
between us storms and torrents a passageway and a canal

the islanders greet those sailors they will climb of ridges typography
into a bursting island country of green sea magnificent clouds
dark swaths etched for these intruders and natives both
this fascination and danger with one another
gorges full of shadows within the rustling brittle darkness