

Outside Agitator

force from without within,
mutation crossing the line,
traceable difference, streaming
with liquid crown. Speaker noise
or electric charge at the edges of
your crisp strange outline
inside-out insider, pockets lined
with magnetic change. the edges of
your cheek leak. Your cap's song
is different, it traces a liquid line
of force. From within, without
crosses the line. Mutation isn't
traceable, your screaming
is speaker noise. Cut it off,
I can't stay here any longer,
I'll go anywhere, blind, or mad.

Name Your Things

Or even better: Don't!

Let them float there. They are
lovebugs clumping atop the
ceiling fan, nine and a half feet
up, on the blades that face
the ceiling and are coated in
dust thick as a face mask.

Let people talk.

Find it in your heart:

Deep in the pocket where you
store turns of phrase, under
all those receipts you ripped to shreds,
it's lying. Turn it between your palms.

You're always writing commands.

What if you were to reach up
and grasp the eye and turn it
back around? Would you like that?

I think you'd find something wrinkled
and strange, something you can't make smooth
despite your rapid, frantic scratching - a lotto ticket that's still all exterior.

Metaphor Collapses

It wasn't meant to provide a stable structure (as walls do) but just to give us something to look at (like a cut does) while we cascade through these piles of blankets (not like blankets at all but like packing tape) which cling to us, and there it is again, the metaphor is tangible, and Camus' fascists leap off the page and hug us tight and breathe down our necks and rip off our clothes and pour our bread flour on the floor until it covers ten square miles, each foot with a divot into which a raw egg is cracked, and if there's a great motion (as an earthquake) it will all become a loaf and we'll bake it and feast.

snare 808

The algorithm is telling me I want more of it
and I guess I do: I guess I kind of do
like the taste of the lips that always pop up first.
It's a kind of trick I pull on myself,
letting myself assume that I'm not letting
myself get all I want, when really I am,
I'm grabbing that cord every day,
not too cool, not even different from
everyone else that looks in the mirror
and hopes to see no one they recognize, that is,

no one less confusing than themselves. We're
just trying to get faces that the face recognition app can't see,
and maybe we'll have to put on masks, or maybe
we can get away with just turning, slowly,
heads pointed over left shoulders
until the soft spots in our skulls re-emerge
and open up again into decanters
for holding space for past selves; they're falling
like petals into the river styx; you won't ever see us
quite like this again.

buzz

sincerity and anxiety are trying to feud again
in the basement, in the photo i find in the
album i kept from eight years ago when i
had the little green Fujifilm Instax Mini 7s that
i would pull out at opportune moments – but this
wasn't opportune really because they were going
at it, trying to conjure something, thumbing again the
routine embarrassments and ancient minor feuds each
had with the other – really i should have thought
better than to keep the flash on – the light was
blinding – everyone turned to look at me and
(there wasn't anyone else there) but in any case
i dropped it – that's the memory – the photo was
the last i was able to take until months later when
i was able to procure another camera of similar
model but different color, and that's why in the
album there's a notable gap from one period to
another – i'm telling you all this only because you
kept asking – really, you were looking over my
shoulder quite insistently, i might have found it
rude if i weren't so occupied by other things, e.g.
flood of memories, nearby distracting noise, phone
vibration in pocket, geopolitical crisis, general
sense of lacquer sliding in sheets off the
walls and onto the floor – and really if you had
been interested you might have phrased it in
a way more sidelong – as it was it was
clear you were really just looking for something
to say and, finding it, couldn't help but thrust it

in my face again and again – that's kind of the way it always goes with us, which is why so many of these photos are mirrors – really it's only the ones where i turned the flash up to blinding levels (i can't believe the authorities allowed flashbulbs of that magnitude into a consumer product – genuinely – it must have been banned in the E.U, where things were not so lax, at least, back then – because the risk of permanent damage to vision simply had to have been higher than calculated – i still have a flashing effect in the corners when i look sidelong at reflective surfaces [water, washed ceramic, and yes especially these Polaroids which are not Polaroids] and its pulsation even tends to synch up with nearby rhythmic sounds [lashing waves on the shore, in the case of water; tapping fingers on the furniture a deliberate number of times] which can be quite distracting, much the same way you can) where i can see me, see you, but really, this world is exactly big enough for the both of us – we fill its every corner, we crack the drywall, we bust the seams, we overwhelm the populace, we cause a state of emergency, we get pretty big, we shatter everything, we drown the living in our bodies, we might just have to admit it – we don't want anything to do with a future we can't consume whole.