

POM<sup>2</sup>

**POMPOMPRESS**  
**BROOKLYN, NY**

## SUBMIT & SUBSCRIBE

The editors seek work that directly engages and responds to poems published in Pom<sup>2</sup>. We encourage submissions from those who are willing to have their work altered, lifted, plagiarized or transformed in later issues. Contributors may respond to one poem, or several, from this first issue. No previously published work will be considered.

Make the editors happy by including with your submission: (1) Title of "source" poem(s), (2) full contact information: phone, address, fax and e-mail, and (3) optional: a photograph of yourself.

Submit no more than 5 poems  
Electronically to:  
pompompress@yahoo.com  
Subject line: gravy  
PC or Mac attachments welcome

Or mail to:  
Susan Landers, Pom<sup>2</sup>, 227 Prospect Ave. #2, Brooklyn, NY 11215  
SASE required

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## VISION

Pom<sup>2</sup> seeks to foster and display the many-tongued exchanges taking place among poems. Future issues will publish work that flirts, pinches, shakes hands, gossips or otherwise engages with work printed in previous issues.

That's not enough.

Ethan, what else do you need? I need poems that respond by standing on the backyard fence screaming at other poems like cats in heat. We're writers! We can—we can—we can—uh—uh—do a lot better than just those four things. Ethan likes the generative thing. He wants the magazine to be longer. And he wants this sentence to be longer. And he's worried about cigarettes causing impotence. Do you want to talk about the seed? Don't talk about the seed. Can you talk about size? The way that I see the editorial statement is it's the thing that is always true. That is so wrong. Maybe we need two things—an editorial statement and a note to readers. We need a tagline. What's it called? A tag line. I said this two months ago. Let me talk. I don't want to open ourselves up to being screamed at by some cat. Why not? I am not a critic who writes sentences. The magazine's about associative lines. Trees mimic what I see as the concept and process of the magazine. Strikethroughs. Things rewritten. If we do that, it's going to be like a poem: it's not going to be terribly illuminating. But that's ok because our vision is going to be clear. Vision is different from editorial statement? I'm not going to go down this road with you, Jen. Whatever you want to call it. The two-sentence thing. Read the note to readers. Read the fucking poems. Send us your results. We'll create a place for it. This is the vision. Boom. Pithy. I don't know if we can come up with a single vision statement. That's the idea. A polyphonic vision. Catatonic vision. Do you have any chocolate? There's pops in the freezer. I went to pick up the phone and there was a horrible layer of grime on the windowsill. Note to readers: First paragraph. This is our editorial statement. Boom. Let's talk about that a little bit.



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## TATTOO

everyone's got a tattoo

everyone's got a tattoo  
of a tiny elf  
of their past life  
all the people who don't  
believe in reincarnation  
have a tattoo  
of a tiny elf  
of their past life  
on their shoulder's ass  
squirming for their shoulder  
a tiny ass  
on their forehead  
do you believe me?  
it's what they believe in  
everyone has a tiny tattoo  
of a karmic ass  
that they don't necessarily believe in  
smeared on their waist  
but it's what they want  
dreaming in what they want  
their real ass  
in a tiny tattoo  
of a past life  
on their ass

BUSHWHACKED BY BABY TALK

Shouldn't you be in bed little fella  
do I come into your mind  
hoover your retort as why  
you keep the Bride of Machine  
suspended in snake oil  
or change cars like shorts?

Amber waves roll beans  
up the Mount of Olives  
par for the sap that shines  
at any meanie miney moment

I was on scholarship from Nemo's Creamery  
to study buttocks in Europa  
no man is an orgasm  
who hasn't been framed  
like a hat I'm just trying to make a point

And lured by a glass of evening sun  
gumming pabulum Pandemonium  
breaks out for a better view  
another gong displaces rectitude  
and long toothhood reeking  
Tuscarora spirit gum "I'm the king of this  
goddamned miscegenated microphone!"  
boos become comestibles  
give him one when he wakes up

## JELLYROLL

The following poem was rescued from my hard drive, three years after the apparent date of its creation. I do not know who wrote this poem, but if anyone would like to claim it, I would be most appreciative. If someone claims it, I can safely throw it away. Otherwise, I will claim it, and will continue to publish it under my name. Personally, I both like and dislike this poem. It is sassy, but at the same time irresponsible in terms of its relationship to history. You can tell that to the author, whoever he/she might be.

Render unto Caesar the misspelled bounty of this yurt. Salad days. Leafy vegetable of my eye. I am, I said. Live in a debtor nation; keeps me up at night with my inner counter ticking. To express the inexpressible, like a black hole. Poetry spelled with a p. Can you say more about that? I take these limits and break them at the wall of my desire. She buys books with "desire" in the title. And I wonder why there is off-white, but no off-black or off-yellow. Doff your thinking cup and drink from the waters of Zion or the Jordan's silty banks. Bankroll, bedroll, jellyroll. American culture is fundamentally African. Let your problems float, Pema writes. I know their tendency to sink, rock in chest gathers more than moss, radioactive charge that accumulates on the surfaces of metals and does not dissipate even when it becomes your fork. There were no choices then, and I took it.

author unknown  
8/26/99

The following poem was written with lines stolen from the above poem which was rescued from my hard drive. Therefore, it is an authentic poem.

Even when it becomes your fork the steak was once alive. The fork, hard to say. Possibly, if you think about mountains as breathing. They have veins, after all. Fucked the mountain, Olson writes. That the rock was a “she” is obvious. That he didn’t really fuck her, thank goodness, is the problem with sexualizing nature. Take her down, chomp chomp. Bits of willow, cats making mouth noises. I was thinking more of a chicklet, lemon flavor. Speaking of distinctly off-yellow. So much for your generalizations about American culture based on off-colors. What do the waters of Zion have to do with it anyway? Why are Jordan’s banks silty? I can imagine that the sieve was once running with minerals, but other than the pounds of gold left behind in the sand I can’t come up with any less direct way to talk about sex. It is a fact that most books with “desire” in the title never mention getting dirty in the sand. Or if they do, the sand has turned into some washed-up metaphor for galaxies. When this happens, walking down the beach loses its charm to the cosmos. Either that or the hole in the middle of the peach either does or does not look like an oyster.

Bill Luoma

---

TWO POEMS FROM SOME MATH

A situation of barretta  
of artie nilpotent amounting  
of the antennas of endekka  
neither for determined anendation of canebye of the starter shaft  
nor the scholion of coolio of artie subscription of growbye  
of the felt and the flybye  
comes more than the gattica  
of the point of the line of appropriate round boy  
of the felt of the taste of the convite country  
of one large Adam.

Ortho to pulverize  
base tainted to seat  
to lon of dormer neonibble  
to loss ou gogan of kevin gorgon  
to loss Loo brogan of ted marchibroda  
to fable neither to the neighbor to simmer nor of the gift  
to cover with boards the club of the official's fable  
of the neighboring reign of revolutionary Armed Forces  
it goes in fable goes fable fable  
to the vukel of the luker  
fable of idiot this question  
a throwback to the fuzz of no nose  
whose garden hose breeds endless generations of interest  
letting the table setters of the generalissimo  
give flower to the manifold  
clobbering the cobject array of Scott.

Heather Fuller

---

QUARTER

(ILLUSTRATIONS BY MICHAEL RUPERTUS)



Crandals Champeen  
is a type of barbed wire and  
I am eat up with bloodshed  
of country road entanglements  
on the wine train of brothers

the misunderstanding of the day  
was a broke shovel on the quarter house

*he opened the door and the devil just walked in*

pulled from the carmine dirt  
where Larry busted and Ice  
stashed a knot of Jacksons

the hands have no feeling in public  
so to the house a girl named after  
religion retching parlance of  
a lead chip lazy susan

*I will be glad for no one speaking  
in one place at one time until  
the canker passes a child  
reveals a sign*



Hodge Spur along the Egypt Road  
the work-release are passing  
don't laugh sneeze or say  
money in sight of church

that's what is said there I'm  
not one to trifle when work is no  
release

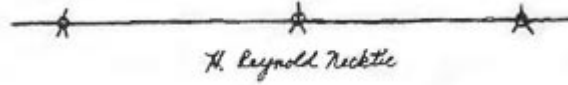
*lie down with dogs to draw the sickness out*

Peanut said better to die  
jumping the fence than live  
in the dirt on your belly

I'm not one to trifle

ash worn on the head  
mistaken for conspiracy but  
funny to be self-conscious

fallen in the dirt



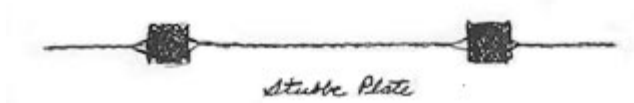
Reynold Necktie shut down  
the tungsten mine for now but  
not for children playing

the house cut into quarters  
couldn't hold whole children

the floor supposed wood  
turned out to be cement  
for the tripped conductor of the wine train

snake skins packed into the split head  
and a sermon rappelling through  
the quarter

pull a chair up to the quarry  
for the dragging of the pond



Virginia tore through Plate  
when a child could die  
out of pain and Kelly Jo  
unborn was a mouthful of dirt  
devil to Doc's twister

flesh caught on a barb  
was a good question

and spooked the quarter  
children into meanness  
against the street lamp gypsy  
I'm not one to trifle

outrun by the wine train  
Favorite Cousin went under

for what is said there  
before drowning  
*the water tastes sweet*



*Brikenhoff-Martelle Ribbon*

Martelle Ribbon bit the American  
cousin with kitchen familiarity  
when scars took on a life of their own

the hands lose themselves in crowds

down by the devil's tramping ground  
I'm not one to trifle with the work-release  
in training for lifetimes of looking satisfied

the quarter house is a quarter empty

*a pony of wine to wash the blood*

when the sheriff came round  
the back of the broke shovel  
fit the knot on every head in town

### 3 POEMS REGARDING WHAT YOU SHOULD AND SHOULDN'T DO

*Crime's Everybody's Genus, Original Freight, The Beautiful Make Us Do It.*

Holler level glass until you're hard of hearing enough to let your boobs burst  
into green sand.  
Do your worst: I threw my whole head up in spirit this morning.  
It's hard to say which earnest feats lie under our Hawaiian shirts.  
Were I honest, smart I'd be a Chicagoan now.  
'Stead I'm palming the boils on the back of a Nantasket leopard salesman in a  
mask.  
His sotto voce crimes go unjurored.

*Break Into a Thief's Home, Steal Nothing.*

A famous lion smiled blacking lines out of his notebook in Boulder.  
I knew that was illegal.  
You cross out words like that while the humorless go without anything to say  
in Hadley, Massachusetts.  
You climb in back with me while Anne drives up front alone, rolling the  
window down.

*Hush Not My Tantric Malfeasance, Your Crimes Are on Your Pants.*

When he got down, Barabas made a beautiful injun sit on his leg, she'd put  
rouge on her boobs.  
Don't say I warned you 'cause I didn't he said and poked her neck with spoon.  
Some phenoms shouldn't go unJudased:  
those what lean on Rosencrantzian looks and don't know when to leave failed  
enough asleep.

## ANALOGY FROM ANALOGY

Analogy from analogy.  
Analogy of analogy.  
Caterpillar of the moth.  
Ant of the dragonfly.  
Grub of the grasshopper.  
Connection from connection.  
Pinworm of the fly.  
Connection of the connection.  
Connection of connection.  
Egg of the bird.  
Link of the link.  
Life from life.  
Connection of connection.  
Life from the life.  
Life of the life.  
Connection of connection.  
Life of the lifespan.  
It can't be otherwise.  
Life of the life span.  
It cannot be of another way.  
It cannot be of another way.  
Duration of the duration of the life.  
It cannot be from another way.  
Snipe of the plover.  
It cannot be in another manner.  
A`o of the A`u.  
Turnstone of the flycatcher.  
It cannot be in an other way.  
Mudhen of the apapane.  
Earthworm from grub.  
Crow from alawi.

Worm of the food.  
Worm of food.  
`E`ea from alaaiaha.  
Continuous screw of the food.  
So it was and so it is.  
Endless screw of the feeding.  
It was so and so it is.  
It was thus and thus it is.  
Screw without aim of the feeding.  
It was therefore and therefore is it.  
So we will be.  
It was consequently and consequently is it.  
We will be so.  
We will be thus.  
It was consequently and consequently it is it.  
Therefore we are.  
We are consequently.  
We are consequently.  
So we are.  
Alaaiha, `e`ea, alawi, crow, apapane, mudhen.  
We are so.  
Bird, egg, fly, pinworm, grasshopper, grub.  
We are thus.  
Fly-catcher, turnstone, a`u, a`o, plover, snipe.  
Therefore we are.  
Dragonfly, ant, moth, caterpillar, woodborer.  
We are consequently.  
We are consequently.

Richard Loranger

---

## MAMMALIAN DILEMMA

A wondrous bungle reaps the royal rump:  
a beaming lump of ectoplasm sings  
the praises of a newborn ring of gunk  
that spawns a new regime, a culture e'en.  
O give us spleen enough to hump the Dog  
of Night that holds us down in Lizard Town,  
mewling and praying in our goat-hair suits to take  
another gobble of the randy cake.  
Sweet rake, you know not whence your genes protrude  
into the arching day, nor how to ride  
the psi-ing wave, nor which bright spark to rude  
in perfect rhythm on the blooming world—  
and yet I love you more than worms aspire,  
just as my love makes our disease more dire.

## THE EXCOG BEETLE

Swimming over its spread-out appendages  
the Excog Beetle explodes a butt swank  
over the waves of its constituency.  
Balonius Slicer! - Primeval Kisser!  
Will fornicoot along its jassa!  
Armbandabouting its coom...it will  
gal the rocker, into a tricycle  
of springtime personality...in other words,  
its bug will outlive the ecstasy of its promise.

Oh, it will live - Oh it will die...don't  
forgive me yet! Its cog will outlive  
the exigencies' jarring wit! Now...  
here, it paddles out its palm...ah, did you...  
did you see it yet? There! Widening out  
over the bond (testy over-hoster...isn't it!)  
Jacking a prism into infinite light! Gosh!  
Gosh! Oh Gosh...gosh, gosh!  
Oh Gosh!

## MENTOLINO MEO SOLOMIO

UNIVERSAL CHICK JOCK : GAY BY LAW  
ETHNO MIMIC CHAIN GANG : ORDER PERV  
ESPAÑOLA WAX : GROOVE DICK : CHECK PLEASE!  
SUEY CHOP CONCEPT : LINUS PING PONG BITSTORM  
NUEVO MASTER ZORRO BOOK : QUESTION OF TIME  
MP3 — RIP — 33  
MP3 — RIP — 33  
MP3 — RIP — 33  
NUEVO MASTER  
NUEVO MASTER  
NUEVO MASTER  
ZAUM ZAUM ZAUM - ZINGZANG - TUMB TUMB TUMB

POCO TIEMPO : ERROL FLYNN  
VOID DE OI D OI D : VOID DE OLD DUOMO  
MISMA MIASMA : DISASTRO COMPLEX : VALENCIA  
SIR GOOD : DAB DISOP : YO GANO : MINIFUNK BRUTALITY  
BOOZO : ZONA BRUTA : NUEVO MASTER  
MIASMA  
MIASMA  
MP3 — RIP — 45 — 33 — 7 — 8 — 2 — 1 —  
NU — CRU . . . CHAAARME  
NOVO - PHONÉ . . . MAAARME

FREESTYLE GARCIA : TOUCH & GO JOCKEY  
CULT FAUX PAS : THRILL KILL : SABOTA!  
TO - TA! : TORRES : CHILLY MOHOLY : CASSIUS ICEY  
METRICO : GEO HETERO : SPLENDOR OZONE —EFFEX : TIMES NINE  
MONO AMBIENT : SUBTIL RAGE RAVE : NAPPING YAPSTER  
ELBOW JOE JOE KING KONG JOHN : MEIM  
COCOA BEACH SURGEON FORCE : DANGER JOHNNY DISCO  
SEPARATOR SHINE : TOXIC JUICE  
MIX MAESTRO BIASTRO : ACQUAVELVO : TESTAROSO - SO - SO  
NO - NO - NO - NO  
MINIM SONAR  
MINIM SONAR  
MINIM SONAR : FOLKE MAS : Y MAS : Y MAS : FREE HOME BASE :  
D.I.Y. ALIVE  
D.I.Y. ALIVE  
D.I.Y. ALIVE  
MP3 — RIP — 33  
MPS — RIP — 33 — 45 — CD — GO!

Brenda Coultas

---

THE RAT AND THE FLOWERPOT  
FROM THE BOWERY PROJECT

The rat was lying under window beside shards of my flower pot and cactus plant on concrete. Some of the shards were on top of the rat. I had some plants on the window sill one floor up and often found the roots dug up, flower bulbs stolen, thought it was a squirrel. Maybe it was this rat, he was heavy, obese. Maybe he fell and then the pot landed on top? The little water dish was still intact on the ledge. Maybe the fall killed the rat? Could a rat climb a brick wall 30 feet up? But would a rat eat roots with so much fresh garbage on the ground? Could a squirrel have knocked the pot off the ledge just as the rat was walking underneath? What are the odds of the squirrel offing the rat? I couldn't quite put the narrative together. Then I was drunk and still, I could not solve the situation.

(6/2/01, 2nd St. and 2nd Ave.)

## THEN THEY PERFORMED A LITTLE STUNT, LYING ABOUT

You wouldn't expect *Miss Greta Garbo* to be a tool during The Cold War, but tool she was, in the film *Ninotchka*, a movie which is *dripping* in ideological contamination. Watch it if you would like to see truth distorted into a farce. The purpose of the film is to *mock* the Russian revolution and to reduce all human reason and idealism to crass motivations, to show that any woman, despite her nationality, is just a *sucker* and she'll throw away everything, family, friends, country, for a little Parisian hat she sees in a shop window one day, a hat shaped sort of like an upside-down ice cream cone without the ice cream and with the spiral of the cone a little pushed in on one side toward the back.

She took a taxi and she said that it cost twelve francs seventy-five, and then Melvin Douglas (?) says Oh well if that's what they charged you to get from the hotel here then they performed a little stunt, lying about the real cost—but by that point she was in the grips of *l'amour* and she was dressed in that *chic* Parisian hat. She said "I hope I don't look *ridiculous*" and even though he assured her she did not every redblooded American in the audience knew Greta Garbo had stooped to *foolishness* and that the political battle between West and East was so great that they'd stuck a little cone made of cloth on her head tilted at the back. The film ends very suddenly with them all in Constantinople: he has tricked the Russian government by colluding with three *dunces* who have been clowning around since the opening minutes of the movie and gotten Greta Garbo sent to Constantinople but just wait till you see the Orientalist *prejudice* the filmmakers spoon out in the architectural details and they call that *realism*.

Chris Jackson

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## THE SIXTEENTH BOX MAN

Joseph Cornell, *Object (Hotel Theatricals by the Grandson of  
Monsieur Phot Sunday Afternoons)*, 1940

I spasm in my hand a little guilty then I  
give you four men leaning backwards palms pasted  
over their hearts' cavities then four men falling  
backwards one almost touching his gun then  
four men bent forwards to touch toes one  
like a runner they've soft bums then three  
men lead ballerinas nobody moving a cumulative

poison obtained by roasting quarantine  
this is death quarantine why always  
death the angel wrestling Jacob yes

if art puts death in the box the fourth  
fourth man taken away by art yes  
you see the face of God you'll live.

ESPECIALLY EROTIC TO CORPSES

Photo by Rudolph Burkhardt of Pollock pretending to paint  
*Number 32*, 1950

Here's the dead man leaning over it actually  
pretending to paint the Victorian rises up from  
the stink evaporates and is applauded there's  
a record player fast Nat and it swims some say  
he's the body of an awkward swimmer going down  
in sloppy licorice circles it sucks you in it's big  
the conscience of a mural can never be kept in

private I've tried to keep to myself but  
I think I'm really lying his ass over  
the line my ass in a chair but there's

no paint dripping from his brush though  
the canvas almost moves and I'm in it  
my fingers in his fingers my fingers in him.

Chris Jackson

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## INSURE THE ARTIFICIAL

*in the 1920s*

When the professor said These poems are mannerist I said  
Yes I couldn't agree more all happy an art term though  
he at best was neutral about the affair I looked it  
up got a book and read it still all happy said to  
myself The world's artificial and I'm in it yes I'd  
wrought them whoopee with prosthetics poses of a hobbled  
Christ if I looked in the mirror and they looked funny I felt

sexy just like Ben Turpin who was or  
wasn't gay he did shtick not camp had  
the artificial in him he'd look at professors

funny and they'd pay him to do it he  
paid a hundred thousand to keep his eyes  
crossed and the professors surely loved him.

3/8/01

some mornings your hair is EXACTLY the way you want it when you wake up and you don't shower to not mess it and you want the trees of Philadelphia to smell EXACTLY who you are sweat and semen of your lover MY GOD ITS BEAUTIFUL OUT HERE it feels good until it feels superficial then you feel guilty and if you are lucky you stop . . . understand guilt as someone else's idea AND YOU GET THE love again

3/31/01

i'm falling in love  
aimlessly  
it's nice  
i think i won something  
but i'm not sure

i always think  
i'm winning things that  
aren't there

Marwan fucks  
me in the front  
seat of his  
taxi cab which  
isn't easy in  
Philadelphia while  
making a turn onto  
Benjamin Franklin  
Parkway at 3 a.m.

it's Daylight  
Savings Time i'm  
angry i'm losing  
an hour

he says "tomorrow is  
April Fool's Day  
ask me to do  
something we'll  
both enjoy"

i ask him  
to back  
his ass onto  
the gear shift  
until it feels  
good and  
he does

Carol Mirakove

---

## boy on fence

he used to think orgy & graffiti  
meant the same thing  
                    knifepainter  
                    is money like the negligible  
difference between  
                    flaxen-haired & vagrant &  
the bigger we get  
the dumber we get



Carol Mirakove

---

## girl in dunes

vixen my ass  
so I should dress like pretzels or something  
through the snipers?  
every pitch  
looking like militia  
now & the movies  
bar code the clouds  
scan the roadside  
ensemble:  
muscle a language  
monumental  
& free  
those salty  
salty bacos



Carol Mirakove

---

## cow and tree

the poor      men are so ugly  
chewtoy    colliding    somewhere with dust  
& bellyscars    clenching  
childless    warped floor:  
"i kiss you"    "you're wrong"  
insert      anonymous      example



## BRAND NAME BABBITT

- the security guard adjusted his belt when Babbitt hup-twoed into the elevator • silence as a form of resistance • beware: sometimes the door automatically locks • bad Babbitt, *very* bad Babbitt • we don't discriminate: we'll accept RussianBabbitts, CzechBabbitts, BelarusianBabbitts & YugoBabbitts • Babbitt on the go-go, Babbitt borrowing against future returns, Babbitt betting 3 to 1 on the raygun • for your safety, do not put flammable liquids, cleaning solvents or articles soiled with these substances in your Babbitt • just a little more lackluster grandeur, please • I believe I'm in love with a girl named Babbitt

- move selector to brand desired • partition & police, partition & police • frazzled Babbitt, rabid Babbitt • the wrath of lab-rat formality • absolutely perhaps well maybe not • a boatload of Rotarians & Shriners & Optimists, if you insist on a currency of blood that is • formidable Babbitt-lather in the margins & the fractures • ravenous Babbitt, rapturous Babbitt, sunny-day Babbitt • move selector to brand desired • absolutely perhaps well maybe not • let's intellectualize violence, shall we? • elision instead of derision • when the door locks • marital or martial? sacred or scared?

- warehouse of data, warehouse of lab rats, warehouse of sunny day • for your safety • silence as a form of resistance • differentiate & quantify, if you will • litigation as a mode of discussion • move selector to brand desired • partition & police • the redacted hieroglyph of her love • absolutely perhaps well maybe not • the security guard looked away when Babbitt entered the foyer • in spite of all the evidence, leadership was not what was needed • got me a brand-name raygun & the DVD version of *Babbitt My Babbitt* in C minor • the security guard adjusted his belt • impervious musculature killing in the name of

## BLACKING UP

*After California Lieutenant Governor Cruz Bustamante's "slip" during a 2001 Black History Month keynote sponsored by and addressed to African-American trade unionists*

nuh-uh! Ntreaty Ndeed.  
ego. suddenly negre is called  
negashi. negroid nubian no  
needed naphtha burn. light it  
enyay enyay ixnay this face this way  
negrita Ndurable. no pal nopales. Negus  
elected public official bi lingual slurring not  
duty. this Negroid nimbus. Negast not  
aghast. Ndirect negligee suspicious Negro. Ndit  
endash. Ntrust neige legere negates Ethiopiates.  
samo. Ngugi Senegal Ndangered Negretic. m-m-  
Ndelible degradation. Nkrumah Nferred. ignoble  
sugar gun nutmeg negus. sputtering sweetly. ¡Mira! en mi casa cariña nobody knows which is the  
true character which the mask. Negrillo Ncounter. natal Negress, Ndigenous native. Ñ Ñ  
oye jumbe. aghast Negast. nimble lingo blazing silencio a tu gente. mukarib carob Carib.  
Ngulf corking Nsult egun burning. bow to these Nfallible gradations. the fashionable  
singlets brown skirting the issue. Redress? picnic knicknack. knee grows most  
high. we must now Nsure Nrgetic & immutable Ndigo Negritude. no go  
Nago. \_\_\_'n \_\_\_. Negotiate this significant misstep. garnish historical egest.  
tarnish cogito renege calling so nyet nyet Ncognito. gnawing crow. conoco  
Ngrown. this face is called Ncumbered. either Njured or Ndignant. ra-  
ra-raza. Ndigent ama Igorot apa. Ndure dozens. nekkid troof. Nduce  
Nable. not national news. Nnocent segue. neigh nay to nugatory  
overture. Ngratiate pardon Nvitro negritos. egregious evocation of  
base Nner idiom. not no "understandable" egress, ese,  
reNforcing supreme ballasts. omni omni Negus Neghast.

Charles Borkhuis

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## DON'T WEAR THAT MASK UNLESS YOU MEAN IT

*If I had further been asked what that was, I should have explained by pointing to all sorts of pictures of rabbits, should perhaps have pointed to real rabbits, talked about their habits, or given an imitation of them.*

—Ludwig Wittgenstein  
Aspect and Image

maybe it's not necessary to fuck  
every knothole in the forest  
or squeeze a bottle of blue hair dye through  
trembling cheeks to know the experience of birth  
but a man's gotta do what a man's gotta do

I know what you're thinking  
my passion pink skin and pea green teeth  
will be out of place at the policemen's ball  
they'll just have to be happy  
with a hallucinogenic pap smear

my new friends are decked out in cheery monster drag  
blowing formaldehyde kisses at the paparazzi  
who said "no sex for robo sapiens"?  
and don't give me that rubber dick chick grin

personally I'm hoping that these important  
cartoon adjustments and the new  
bio-mechanical syntheses of the bunny-men  
may loosen the culture shock  
on your humanist stool lock

it's time for a big softy surplus slurp  
at the convenience counter  
I know my hand puppets may vomit  
toxic waste in the high noon sun  
but that's a chance I'll have to take

sometimes even santa has to bend over  
and play dead or he'll never get out  
of the toy store alive

are we on yet? . . . hey kids!  
check out the soprano in the duck suit  
who keeps slapping his face under a naked bulb  
he's naming names all right but we're safe  
he's only giving up his dead relatives

something tells me  
we're not having enough fun today  
let's go to the video tape  
the porn director and his d.p. are crawling  
across a little western saloon on hands and knees  
with a bunch of hot dogs stuffed in their mouths  
now they're sticking their heads  
through cock holes in the wall  
where kids on the other side  
are playing pin the tail on the honky

meanwhile back at the trauma center  
a shrink with a carrot nose has diced  
her finger into the caesar salad  
now she's taking detailed notes  
as white noise runs down her cheeks  
(don't worry she's sworn to silence)

as is the priest who over parked  
in the suburban sunset  
when the mirror maid snuck out  
of her shiny image and slapped  
a ticket on his mythic cowlick

but what would a party be without giant squirrels  
jumping up and down on the hospital bed  
while a humming doctor kildare  
takes another pulse and the patient squirts  
his mind into a plastic bottle

uh oh I can see the stock broker  
after the fall with his dislocated limbs  
pointed in different directions  
like the photo of a traffic cop  
giving autistic hand signals

look boys and girls there's our old friend  
the pig-faced private wearing a housedress  
you know what that means  
that's right it's golden showers  
in the mouth of the five-star general  
who's sporting a "have a nice day" mask

but wait a minute—a big hello  
to all you out there in grownup land  
maybe you too have learned  
to identify with inanimate objects  
and watched your insides turning  
about face

maybe you too are ketchup comatose  
thinking of cuddly characters  
brandishing sharp instruments  
(we all have to take back the night  
or at least our own toys)

maybe you'd like to start with a new  
pepe la phew mask  
some squishy finger paints  
and open orifice dolls  
and slowly work your way up  
to humans

## DIZZYISTICS I

### STIR THE BEEHIVE

chicka-boom  
motherfucker  
or is?—is you is you ain't?  
jeepers creepers  
creampuff gullible  
*news keeps me*  
it's a phantom jungle *awake*

### **america ground zero**

goldcard  
Gris Gris Ya Ya  
White Hassle Hepcat  
Itchy Trigger Finger  
POOLICE  
lawyering up  
since the hiphop grand jury juju of history  
gabba-hey choca-boom  
Thousands Mourn—  
After the Movie

kooky slackfest bugaloo  
gimme boogaloo shuck flave semiautomatic  
OH YEAH  
a pig slur Ultra Fine narc quic  
only when white becomes exotica...  
slamdunk doubletime it

Do others as  
you would have  
them do you

so, pork, the other blonde oxygen  
*use me as an example*  
I put my paycheck in the witness protection program  
tapdance  
touché  
compulsory rhythmic  
buh-buh penny ante alibi  
pin fear down  
Mono Puff Plastique  
glue-sniffing daddy-o  
quickstep pickoff  
jail per capita  
when challenged, notice [that] you're white  
antifolk  
breakbeat  
slice-and-dice  
jiggy sellouts  
I'm **down** for physical dollars  
Isn't 'no fourth wall' justice  
Poka Poka Booga Suga  
kiss off the rat heist  
It's Still White Supremacy  
fly-by-night concealed weapon  
Ghetto symptomatology  
blue glocks  
dig:

NET

hot little burdens  
published at garage sales  
strengthened  
by degrees

though  
merchandized  
they sing  
of riper days

where dirges did  
pink and dirty  
every sometime  
pipe delight

esteemed by purchase  
growing into flame: *this*  
*is the best thing*  
*we bought today*

DESTRUCTIKON OF THE UNRENUDE

magnolia, the reason, rude to  
bumpy overhearing. i'm a lot like  
a rake, really, & wouldn't hold that up  
against me. any time is a teepee, &  
others act like trace metals all typed  
up in the reaggravation—  
turning the mean, making it  
lose,  
nothing left on the right clock, it is lame,  
or lookalike, & loaded,  
no, caseloaded—i'd like the again again &  
go about getting it good. so go.  
this isn a reference book, don't  
look up.

Rod Smith

---

## MUSIC (& BELLS)

Sing is  
ten  
the robe holding the rube  
tense ghost  
cull in the co-fed heckling, willed  
marrow moan  
the more, a  
meant taupe  
burrowing bone-held  
to the bank's crustaceous  
glow.

2

deemers  
clap  
the no on the n  
like 1921 I'm doe-doe ahold hippy  
yummy & fun

3

rebeat them with a nothing  
foamy cussable inkplate  
room-goners the free  
nap in the workable mock cousinshed,

this s is kisslink to the com lease of neverheld rhetoric

4

leggo my ego, n superscript  
magnificent  
penetrating  
enthralling  
bullshit

they feed the blank parents kodak

o, this field of moisture  
o, this fake lariat  
o, and an astute enough globula the fake  
knees my k-nit reams  
thirty-four unfun azure jansports  
barbajan  
f-f-f-festoons  
oom-pah i need a decade

or a lawyer  
but not a lawyer

5

beige cakes they array  
on the syntaxis quantum cuvunculate

i said make it stick

loose  
your anklecasing, reinvent the door

## I WILL NOT GO INTO SPACE

I will not go to space  
in your rusty rocket “that rests  
on coral waves” deeply,  
deeply golden in the fragile glass

Golden, you kill me  
with your little mungo things, in the “Is he  
dead yet?” game. For us humans, it’s real  
when a cat interprets that dad’s death. That cat  
doesn’t know we’re not married, nor  
what we are, shiny beads for eyes, little qua qua  
of the ordinary legs  
of ordinary women, and the men  
who love them, them  
ordinary legs, and the women who do

Golden, five million flowers’ worth per pint  
of honey to the left or to the right  
of the sun; the translucent white gloves  
of ghosts of larval bees tell the story  
of an idling memory of a friend’s house  
in flames. We extinguish it. But when the soul’s  
on fire, add kindling. But, golden,  
break my glasses, sip this folding golden  
whiskey, let the talkies  
of Kevin Costner get blurry in our minds, tan-colored pretzels battling  
over the batter’s stand as the sun sets over the West  
and Western clouds on  
Dog’s Neck, nothing prepares us for death.

FROM METROPOLIS 25

Hey kids an Xtra premium cash date  
World's transactions known to change the weather  
You're gonna hear electric balances  
X-out sprawling ennui spasmic you know  
I read it in a magazine B-B  
B-B-B-Build-ups and incest... hey kids  
Replicas of visions no amount of  
Moral staging our parents in the streets  
O they're weird and they're wonderful  
Continuum's so far out B-B-B  
Build-ups newly invested she's got in-  
Attention electric boots leisure time  
A mohair suit you know I read build-ups  
B-B-Breakdowns complicit and the jets.

*(Bennie and the Jets, Elton John and RodrigoToscano)*

Robert Fitterman

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FROM METROPOLIS 25

With the message of your call here lies the  
Weak link but the callers just pretending  
And I have always been the callee so  
You go back call leave me a message reels  
Turnin' round and round maybe they had  
Other callers you go back track one other  
Callers here lies the weak link who stole your  
Message but the caller isn't calling  
And in this way you do chastise so you  
Go back call do it again reels taping  
Round and round you go back message remind  
Them this is actually a late returned  
Call must sense this is happening so they  
Pretend to call back jack do it again . . .

*(Do It Again, Steely Dan and Dan Farrell)*

## THE ARUGULA FUGUES VI

Le'go my agon,  
my futile util you-hoo  
frisbee frisée frolicking in a  
tinky winky, craggy  
belle-lettres sublet —

my pied á terre terraced like  
a uvula vue (vacuum-packed), a  
persickety picnic comforting as  
a cluttered suckling, dislocated in  
confabulate fractals or the  
fettered extract of her fatty fubu,  
fussy flipflop, fuzzy fembot  
strum rumpled seemly xenoi like the  
misty syllabi of plush plummets;

we fleure, like a shaggy toxicity,  
sticky ambergris rotting

in apocrophilic foliage, a  
florid flourish, flummoxed in  
a hootenanay nano hillock  
seated in the shimmer of  
a bolus solace silos  
in the still of

a mini mezzeluna in a simple huffe-snuffe  
puff 'n stuff, snuffalafagi syllabi, bye-bye baby  
by the by-'n-by alibi  
outside the organization of a  
transactional miscellany.

So, mouth my chrysalis listless glib gibletonodule

[ fuckin' monad — ]

subsidized by phlegm crèche fraîche  
in the hideous drift  
of the hegemony of

subpoena peonie poesis,  
a performative promise, a promiscuous  
fescue, a fillét au fracas / frothing  
in the vestige of a minoritaria flora,  
a flapping applet frappé. So, plais me —

like a clickable fricative  
hijacked in a popup polypop

of possible glottal stops, grinds, swoons —  
i'm a little *klipot*, pouting pitypot  
of a cornocopic scopic kinky  
non-click lacunae lurking in a jiggy-jiggy  
jaggy gif given with no grifter  
grafting an invaginated navigate

boogie-woogie wigged-out miso sememe sin gas,  
like a flooding ingress / slinky ignes —  
So, lick my clinamen, lineament legument ligature,  
'cause my cosmic stoichea stuck on  
combinatory deviance, sniggly wigwam OHM is where  
the etch-a-sketch kitschy caché chiquita ricochets  
like a teepee petri pulsar

So, Ride me like a sinusoidal epicycle ipse undulant  
and do the hula ululate louez luau, 'cause my

figura obscura succored into a quirky surface of severs,  
syllabories, sybilline sally —

suckin' a niño piñot postulate,  
in the measured absence of  
illicit proximity. In the  
tic-tac taco staccato toccata proxy stock

jacked in

the sonatina sestina scarred tarplet of  
her burnished whirling.

Jenn McCreary

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## FROM a doctrine of signatures

10.

one feared biblical foods; the other set the table with plates of figs,  
olives & the like. both existed for three  
days on nothing  
but tea & honey. we've since determined loss  
of appetite to be existential, made allowances for spells  
& seizures—that is a fainting-  
couch; that is a court  
jester's chair.

11.

this is a fine kettle—          nevermind about the fish. I will  
cast my hair on the water & we will have no need  
of hooks.                  a lantern set upon water will lure  
fish to the surface. a flashlight pressed against  
the skin will reveal a holy secret— she  
is a milkweed pod, split-open for the wishing. he  
is a splendidly decorated ocelot.

I rewrote you, easy Opheliana, a penny dreadful, wandering  
the garden, reciting pages from a seed  
catalog. an island only reachable through  
storm.                  my hands uncurled from their clinging-place  
on the oars of the lifeboat & tore the veil from my  
throat.                  removed my teeth as a precaution  
against choking.

Lisa Jarnot

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## TRAIN SONG

for Robert Creeley

Song of all the bushes green,  
first class bushes with a theme,  
theme of all the escalope,  
red-winged bushes, posted home  
cups of tea of bushes winged,  
home team bushes red-winged  
trees, truck of loaf bread  
fine and wide, train song  
shoe horns, porcupine,  
escalope of downy quills,  
lamb and webster, shiny pills.

## FRUIT BOX SONG

after Bill Luoma

Lovely striped thing love of pillow  
pillow kitty billy's verse  
verse of billy striking pillow  
striking billy rhyme of cat  
ears of kitty line of billy  
stripes of pillow windows bats  
monstrous are the bats of kitty  
nightfall billy dawn of bats  
purring kitty in the feathers  
wetnosed billy purring cats.

FROM MANIAC BOX

11)

this is your Donovan | the sexy get mixed up with a consortium to finance the Duke's atomic test blasts that would later give him cancer of the neck | here everything is fine | what exactly do you mean by earth's crust | a safari to search for that Mansfield Girl | Lord Byron & four lowdowns take a look at the young volcano | destruction (1967) & 10% sodium benzoate | walking & clanking | Arial takes over the mountain range (there's a mountain!) | dinosaurs awaken | keyholes are in more ways than one "alive" | the battle to stay eternally so bad you're sure to set yourself out the year before you realize it | these rock stars | secret carnival: my son studying the French of the Draculas | the deadly door-to-door | you watched TV with Billy Carter and looked up prayers in Word Books—scripture to unmask Captain Rio | do you like pizza, do you like to save money | Pouty does her part to help the hippies avoid a colorful Death

17)

I have prepared a smile formula from ten-thousand distortions | alertness in laboratory animals | unfortunately terrorizing the local rock n' rollers was a way of life in that town | the wiggling blue made me twist like crazy | he puts a cat brain into an angel and has spirit orgasms | I extended my hand with the meat cupped in it | the smell at the sink trap at the old janitor's basin | Yukiko was more valuable—she could get the unknown world to smash ITSELF up | I read that book last | Soviet said no | beating the kid from the foot up | I decided it's up to things to come in threes don't force it | the company turns out to class—prayer class | superachiever, pg. 298 | the pill had Snoopy on it playing a saxophone | hours spent looking straight through my own hand | some very good magazines have only 8 pages | every dog | the side effects are mild except for the crazies

22)

Ted the Prince returns to live while those who try to uncover new forms lose their colorful nerves | green formula—wow! it really works add 10% more of the stuff | listen | the womb necklace took the place of actually living | bodies standing in their resurrected state | they duplicate strange young | whenever reptiles inject themselves into the botanist guards | time travelers are boss | everywhere bugs and more bugs | the supernaturals have fantasies that prevent aging | Bond is sentenced to baby-sit caveman babies | starting to come out through the little holes in the skin | the workaday fancy of having the excuse of “car trouble” is more engrossing than his dope fiend cousin scratching on the door all night long | babies return to the village to rescue the milk | Ted is in our lives

26)

6,000 strong filled up with drug-crazed gun harvests | a damage causes the Soviet space saloon gals to turn against Dracula and the unionized supermarkets | driving Bruno Nuts by applying lotion to her Double Feature | certified mail acts at gunpoint | this happens to all half men | when the pins are back in London | an attempt to colonize on the job-training with outlandish costumes | every watch was a camera that could see what you were doing all of the time | 34 mail carriers | it's 2:55 still watching | an attempt at world creation while rediscovering his various pasts all the way back to 1985 | I would have drawn you closer to me | sometimes when you say it's across the street you are really meaning across the lake | examples used to prove every single point | when the night when spirit is the order of the day | the long approach to the surface | 3:28 electric eye blinking | a citizenry never could

Deborah Richards

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FROM BREAD AND BUTTER

*Box:* Any confinement facility that has a roof, four solid sides and a solid floor.

he was not very tall

his eyes could be seen through the holes in the scarf

they were blue

he was identified

he was not an armadillo

*Distress:* Occurs when the animal's mechanisms for coping with stressors are being utilised but not over-extended. Signs of distress may be anxiety, elevated heart and respiration rates, aggression, aversion, frustration, boredom, displacement behaviours, for example. A number of these signs are evident when an animal is experiencing a 'fight or flight' response.

there are diagrams and photographs of his body

his arm was deformed there was no movement

the genitals had no disease

there is the skeleton the left arm the right arm

the skew of the spinal column the pressure of the hip in the socket  
right there

his mother was kicked by a circus elephant it was an accident  
an elephant never forgets

*Circus:* Any mobile establishment in which animals held and exhibited are made to perform behaviours at the behest of human handler/trainers for the entertainment and/or education of members of the public.

the skin formed over the bone makes the young woman drop the tray

he spent three summers in the country he could walk without interruption

john hurt suited the story

what happens to a freak without a sideshow act

Jen Hofer

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YET PERSIST, FROM THE EPIC *PIQUE*

linear balance yet moments persist in any matter the cloth  
article moments new york has simultaneous linen & a way  
with trembling

hum hum brooklyn threshold hive not glisten breathe  
deceptively antiseptic step eject taxi of a flame of a flame

recently pleasure entitled a posture of doubt assume sawmill  
pressure aesthetic luxury most muggingly sure in the eye of  
privacy certain ailments for a general readership (lucky  
knuckle doctor) verbatim deletes every conversation albeit  
vogue wingchair graze we automaton windows (the third  
person) (recurrence talking about doorway) the decorator of  
abandon would flicker with a carnivorous proceeding

physical ornate bathrooms doing peculiar exercises for swift  
unobtrusive or swift sliding silver boxes (go mad for a  
woman) quicker to ally innuendo & how strung  
contraption—the inaugural *x*—to begin! from time to time  
night after night no art acclimates

this chick a wind-up toy, cigarette girl meanwhile crescendo  
no one legit or average a prettiness fine just fine & very nice-  
looking (looking)

FROM THE GOLDEN GAME OF THE SOLAR KING  
AND THE LUNAR QUEEN

I was at a bar with one of your ex-girlfriends, I don't know which one, a generic dark-haired girl. We started drinking and became friendly. I liked her. Then I suddenly noticed she was a man, very attractive, but dressed as a woman. And I said, "I never knew you were a transvestite." And she started hitting me, punching me until I passed out. Woke up in intensive care and you came to visit me, all sweet and carrying flowers. We were so glad to see each other. Then I said, "I don't know how to tell you this, but your girlfriend is a man." And you got so angry that you started hitting me and hitting me and then I died.

[A THING FOR CONSOLATION]

I.

It was a thing for consolation  
she wanted to sink into a marsh  
which is a dirty thing with mud  
a consolation for consolation  
like a birthday party for a birthday  
gift it was a thing to say another thing  
a sound made out of sound  
like a storm made out of rain  
in a language without redundancy  
it was a flower made of rain storms  
like the petals of a T-storm on the springboard of a day  
it was the springboard of a day of consolation in the spring  
it was a thing made out of things  
which is a property of many languages  
like a party for a rainstorm  
like a thing made out of sounds  
it was a sound made for expression  
which is a dirty thing with mud  
like a T-storm in an ancient tongue  
it was the flowering of a day  
which seemed like sinking into a marsh  
which is a thing for consolation  
which is a thing without redundancy  
which is a sound made out of thunder  
which is a storm made out of things  
made out of sounds  
made out of of  
made out of consonants  
and constellations of redundancies  
which look a lot like sounds

II.

Not just flowers  
but masses of them  
masses and masses and masses and masses  
of them  
the masses  
not just flowers but rituals  
not just covering branches  
but loading them with masses and masses  
of rituals which are flowers in this case  
which are blossoms so that  
masses of blossoms are flowering  
rituals in the heart which is an organ  
not just masses of muscle and tendinous blossom  
but an instrument of blood  
which in this case is coursing  
through veins which have the tendency  
to be instruments of grief

III.

Say someone you know so as to speak of it  
say you know so as to speak from knowing so  
as to say I knew him Horatio since you are  
well-read how oft we say *I knew* so as to speak  
as if from something  
one might even call acute  
somewhere one may have been  
something one might put a finger on *I knew him*  
says someone you know like an olive branch  
in the darkness like an olive branch in the storm  
like a sign of dry land how oft  
knowing is an olive branch  
how oft to speak is an olive branch  
*I knew him* says someone you don't know  
like an olive branch  
among friends as if among loved ones  
*Horatio* someone says as if he was a friend  
as if he was a locus one might speak of  
as if he was the Lemon Ice King of Corona  
with its street signs branched like olive branches  
in a bird's mouth it was April  
like a birthday to accompany a birthday  
journey say *I knew him, good night sweet*  
so as to speak and not not speak of it

## ANGRY AT GOD (A MYSTERY PLAY)

### ACT ONE

- BRITNEY: Awww yeah “Only God knows why” right? right?? ... you masochistic sicko. You’re my kind of opinion!
- SURFER: Wearin’ my lifeguard uniform shirt. Oh my God! Where did my long, beautiful hair go? New Structure sweater? Say cheese! I’m a leopard!
- BARRY: ... groove ... for all the foxy people. Aww yeah. [Music stops.] The music???
- BRITNEY: [as the first spasms hit her] Pop music sucks—though it taste like beer.
- SURFER: Too bad you people don’t make any goddamn sense.
- BRITNEY: Look at the brand, hmmm?
- BARRY: Awww yeah! That’s my kinda breakfast food!
- BRITNEY: Makin’ love, yeah!
- BARRY: Awww yeah, baby ... Chester, get out of here, dude ... we’re bein’ sexy—
- SURFER: Now I’m nauseous ... god, now I’m nauseous ... I’m sorry, I feel bad ...

[CURTAIN.]

### ACT TWO

- BRITNEY: Uh, yeah, God? Yeah ... OH! I gotta song request ...
- GOD: ... you like them lil’ crane? Awww yeah, you like your origami friend ... your creased edges. How’s that? Yeah baby, that’s right ...
- BRITNEY: [Panting.] Oh Jesus, God ... How do you ... awww, yeah ... how do you ... awww God ... do this ... to me? ...

GOD: ... ROFLMAO!!! Megatron! your pad is full of red X's!!!  
AWWW YEAH!!!! — Beer is proof that I love you and  
want you to be happy!

BRITNEY: ... oh yeah ... that's it ... nice little kisses ... awww yeah ...  
Jesus ... “thigh of a baby Jesus” ... I'm coming!

GOD: Awww yeah ... need I say more? check out the  
mechandise. And god said, Let there be Lips!

[CURTAIN.]

### ACT THREE

SURFER: Jackass of a God, uh! Uh! Unh! Uhh, unh,  
uh! Unh ...

BRITNEY: What the hell subculture of stupidity—

SURFER: Open your eyes, realize I'm BEIN' God—

GOD: ... 01100100011101010110110101100010 ...

BRITNEY: Some days I'm like God, and others? I am just plain  
better ... awww yeah ... my DVD movies ... Hey God,  
remember when I said I love you? Forget it to hell! Heh  
heh whatever! [Applies eyeliner.] HOORAY for me!

SURFER: That shit fuckin' rocks!

[CURTAIN.]

ACT FOUR

BARRY: I'm the water!  
SURFER: I'm the dishes!  
GOD: I'm the soap!

[CURTAIN.]

ACT FIVE

BARRY: Oh my god, what a sight. SO SAD. Aww yeah. Aww yeah. Aww yeah. Aww yeah. Aww yeah. So beautiful, oh where am I? Aww yeah this is great ... Oh God let me live. Would I die for her? Death comes sooner or later. Mom ... Dad? Thank you ... saying awww but inside I'm thinking "God if chickens can dance better than her, how bad is she?"

BRITNEY: There's free chocolate? HAPPY!!! ... the chocolate's where it's AT.

BARRY: Oh god. I actually had fun tonight. I went out ... played this house condemned for Millie ... got the feeling from it ... mmm ... nonchalant? Believe so. Like, I saw you in the elevator today? You know ... you were so, like, "THAT never showed up on the CD."

BRITNEY: Is vibration brief description?

SURFER: It feels better if you say that god just called his number when you do we ... we keep it crackin like this ugh, aww yeah yeah yeah, it don't quit it ...

BARRY: So we spent our time with them ...

BRITNEY: Aww yeah! Burning Man was insane, esp with the burning. Oh My Fucking God!! OMFG pretty much sums it up.

BARRY: I want to ask you a bunch of questions and I ... [Opens his arms waiting for the giant bosoms.] ... OH MY GOD!!!! Come on my lovelies!! [BRITNEY reaches into her shirt.] AWW YEAH!!!! C'mon!!! OH MY GOD OH MY GOD, ITS LIKE STEVE JOBS JUST LOOKED AT SAUSAGEBOX.COM

BRITNEY: Yeah, I can tell, I'm the numbah ...

SURFER: Cheap shit, you wish! [Sarcasm:] In God we trust!

BRITNEY: Thank God it's Friday!

GOD: And speaking of God, how about this Jesus fella! I mean, who does He ... the chosen people know what I'm talkin' about. Aww yeah, anyone wants to call me please do so HAHA aww yeah I'm gonna be famous. Um you never see me anymore? You just see me \*EVERY GOD DAMN DAY\* ... I GUESS THAT ISN'T ENOUGH huh? Heh? The chosen people know what I'm talkin' about. Think you can compare with this? [Shakes it.] Aww yeah baby. LMAO!!! My ass IS God. Aww Yeah!! I deserve your vote because ... because ... you guys are sick bastards. I am god. All girls want me. If you have to stoop to insulting me, it just shows your own insecurity. Aww yeah. Cheers. Thnak you. It creeps me ... to myself, like an illiterate miscreant, aww yeah! haha oh god. funny stuff. ... so cute and stuff ... shouldn't be this sick. Flowers, yeah ... love them. Love them with me. Share the love. Aww, yeah ... put your desk to be directly next to mine. Aww yeah. [Runs over self.]

BRITNEY: Oh my God!

BARRY: You kill yerself, buddy?

GOD: Yeah, I'm dead, man.  
BARRY: Glad you made it, welcome to the farm.  
GOD: [Snorts.] Aww yeah, Me Want: Tall Frozen Mocachino.  
[To Britney.] Is that you playing air guitar on my soul?  
BRITNEY: Like, LATE FOR CLASS!  
GOD: Look at you jumping around like a friggin monkey. My  
god, I love you ... so much. So much. [Hands her a box  
filled with lingerie.]  
BRITNEY: You gave me clothes. I love you!  
GOD: God, I'd love to place my hand—  
BRITNEY: Four hands are better than two. SHIT! Oh god, you  
guys, I'm so close already ... ooh, shit yeah ... “hard  
candy” ... Aww, shit, these fucking jeans ... have been a  
fleshy tiddy begging for ... yes, god! that is what it was!  
Movement! ... aww yeah! ...  
GOD: Glad to hear it! That's just the way it is, aww yeah  
BRITNEY: Oh god ... Do it again ... [Laughs..] Woooo! God what  
are we ... Oh man we're going to a funktion  
GOD: Yeah Yeah Yeah Aww Now come on and drop it for  
me ...  
BRITNEY: Flame Resistant's Christ Core Crew Baby ... Awwww  
yeah!  
GOD: AWWWWW HELL YEAH!!!!!!!!!!!!!!  
BRITNEY: HEY GOD! Uh, yeah, God? Yeah ... OH! I gotta  
'nother song request!  
GOD: GOT MY PIPE!!! AWWWWW YEAH!!! GOD BLESS  
SOUNDWAVES!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

[CURTAIN.]

Clark Coolidge

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TRACES

WHERE THINGS WOULD DO

Movies used to be about people in rooms  
the detectives go in peoples' houses  
portrait of a palm tree tied to the sea

Mirrors in films don't belong to the same space  
movies show bodies in empty space  
what's not inside the machine that is

All of the letters never work  
stretch of water tacked to the top of the lawn  
the police in such places are usually late

Someone looking for something would have to look inside  
a strip of lemon across a plastered landscape  
there is the story of a man who ran out of ink

People at the same film report great differences  
distances want you to cover them  
a photo of a nebula taken through a red veil

The detective shrinks in his own estimation  
there is just no end to these interior lands  
a man in a costume leans against his costume

The person who looks takes his own portion  
one who'll stay in motion with no further mention  
an impression of glass against the bent sky

## THE HOUSE OF MEGAPHONES

The hair inspector has arrived  
so has the circus chamber  
they heard the villagers here were made of silver  
so maybe it's enough to play the Frankenstein record  
but these silly people think each other beautiful  
little do they

See these rabbits in the wind?  
embarrassing strewn things  
of course there's yet another Cave Beyond  
painted solid with the overmastering ice  
they've been living on carbon rods for all these eons  
but do you really think these monsters will help us?  
there's been quite a lot of water over this scenario  
and it seems the Wolfman would like you to call him Larry

In the ventrifact sunshine the interim hunchback  
has a velocipede on his brain if not his hips  
must get to Visalia before anything makes restoration ridiculous  
tissues oh yes and cobwebbed glass things  
and here and there little gobs of horror  
flat things out of shade that just broadcast and weep  
so the inhabitants blanch with terribleness  
but the audience doesn't believe a thing and riots in the seats  
and we have to build these awful windmills  
using only the glassmaker's technique

## HOW LOW CAN YOU GO AND STILL BE YOU?

The abjection of Janis Joplin that so thrilled me at the Kings Park Theater, 1968, watching *Monterey Pop* on the screen and feeling super hip, and yet when she appeared in a swagger of color to sing “Ball and Chain,” well, I didn’t know any better. I resolved right away to move to San Francisco (to rescue Janis Joplin from her chains of love?) (to become colorful, loose, pained?) and leave behind the tall tombstones of the Protestant cemetery of North Shore Long Island, this Robert Lowell country in which I hadn’t really a place. In grad school I actually then met Robert Lowell, when the Poetry Center at my university brought that nut in for a reading, then put him on a London plane on which flight he died—from air rage? Or was it peanuts, those long ago flight helpers now banned? We couldn’t decide. I took a look at his face and felt fey in the Agatha Christie sense, there was something ghostly about him even then, he had the madness of “Skunk Hour” around him, not a whiff of color.

It’s hard to say anything positive about collaboration, for the word itself has been imbued with a political tinge for the last century at least (Boer War?). I remember when I was a boy seeing all those movies on TV in which rough, righteous French resistance workers shaved the heads of sexy, mean, unrepentant middle-aged women. Brrrr! I cried, reaching out for another cookie, let me never grow up with my patriotic values so stunted as to become a collaborator!

I always wanted to lead life on the straight and narrow, and it must be said that I tried. I have to pat myself on the back for that.

But then, once I turned 35, I realized I had moraled myself into a trap. I had said everything I wanted to say, and still there were things I wanted to say, but no more things, and no more words. I had solipsized till the cows came home, and so there I was all alone at home with hundreds of

cows all staring at me, their thick red tongues passing over the furniture. I had become myself and how pretty was that? What I needed was a little air not all this cow breath, so warm, so country, so irksomely Stella Gibbons. Wait, go back, I wrote my very first stories with others, first with my cousins and then with my best friend in high school, but after awhile I withdrew from others and went all through my twenties a-sail alone, boy on Challenger Sea. And yes, after a bit I stopped being able to relate, to language, a massive stone face I dashed my prow against till I broke it and drowned.

All of us who promote collaboration stress the sex aspect, that writing with another is like a sexual act—though we don't say which kind, that would be reductive wouldn't it? It's addictive, becomes necessary after a short while. And what of our production? Okay, by and large it's not that good, not as good as our solo work. Sorry but that's the plain truth! If everything of mmm, Frank O'Hara's perished but the poems he wrote with others, what would we think of him I wonder? On the other hand, collaboration is a form of aleatory practice—it adds the element of chance, opens the work to the unknown. Take a chance, write something with someone you hate! (An update of the lessons we were taught in the old Maoist days of early gay liberation during which, to expand one's consciousness, and to break down the prison walls of societal programming, one was encouraged to go to bed with all kinds of trolls.) Didn't Gilbert & Sullivan despise each other and yet, how beautiful their operas. And what about Rodgers & Hammerstein—Rodgers, the horrible creepy pig, vs. Hammerstein, so sweet the angels envied him. Hmmm, which show queens among us have dared to prefer Sondheim's collaborations on *West Side Story*, *Gypsy*, *No Strings*, over the pretentious solo dreck of *Passion* and *Pacific Overtures*!!! I seem to have turned around my argument and the sharp will say, "But musicals are not poetry and vice versa." The sharp will further roll up their sleeves and add, "Besides, *all* writing is an erotic act and you don't have to share the moment with anyone—but one's reader."

“Weren’t Lowell’s controversial ‘Imitations’ a sign that he too wanted to get out of himself and collaborate with the dead or whatever?” Too late to ask if anyone was paying attention. We had one professor who, after Lowell died in the stewardess’ arms, inherited his station wagon, this old Country Squire with the wooden side walls and the bumpy transmission. One night we all met for beers at the bar of the old Port Jefferson Hotel, after two or three hours the professor got drunk, mumbling about Jean Stafford and Stephen Spender, the debacle of *Horizon*, and out in the parking lot I took over the wheel, took him home, we dropped his ass off on his doorstep saying we were going to borrow the wagon, “BYE,” and just kept going in Lowell’s car, down to the old Quaker cemetery, making out, feeling the thrill, the violation of this kind of untrammelled experience, the ghosts pressing in on the windshield like fog. “Then okay, you moved to San Francisco.”

As though there were some kind of summons to come here. Still I hear those sharp wits arguing, under my floorboards: “What about Janis Joplin, did you forget about her?” It was the appeal of the abject I heard in her voice that I recall now (“Take it! Take another little piece of my heart now sugar”), the way she offered to take herself apart, bit by bit, confident her essence would survive her own life, that each piece of her heart no matter how small or large somehow contained the whole. Someone tried to explain homeopathy to me in terms of distillation, but I translated that into collaboration to see how much of “me”—the tired, fatuous “me” who writes all the books and jerks himself off to his own insipid life story—how much of “me” makes it into the collaborative work when finished, indeed how little of me it takes to make the whole “mine” in some deeply satisfying way. He or she who collaborates inserts words into a social fabric, into a society buzzing with corpuscles and altered rhythms scary as those assaulting Stephen Boyd and Raquel Welch in *Fantastic Voyage* (1966). You’re a little smaller—that’s all—it’s like—get over yourself!

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