

Quarry

Tanis A. Franco

A Thesis in
The Department
of
English

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts (English) at
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

March 2016

©Tanis A. Franco, 2016

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY
School of Graduate Studies

This is to certify that the thesis prepared

By: Tanis Franco

Entitled: Quarry

and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts (English)

complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

Signed by the final examining committee:

Andre Furlani Chair

Danielle Bobker Examiner

Stephanie Bolster Examiner

Sina Queyras Supervisor

Approved by _____
Chair of Department or Graduate Program Director

Dean of Faculty

Date April 15 2016

Abstract

Quarry

Tanis Franco

Quarry is a form of deepening the embodiment of queerness. Quarry is to query is to queer the quarrying or extracting of useful material. Quarry is concerned with queer social spaces such as parties and bars, public spaces, private spaces, and contested or abandoned spaces. Sarah Ahmed posits that “spaces are not exterior to bodies” (Queer Phenomenology); bodies interact with space, interact with their landscape, and the queer/trans body further inhabits/disinhabits this space because it is fleeting. The instability of space and territory is inherent to queerness and this collection intends to excavate this notion. The transit of Quarry is the same as the excavation process: the collection moves from the external voyeur in social spaces, to the external excavator in nature, to the internal inquirer. Excavation of space, excavation of self, and voyeurism are ways in which the speaker tries to understand experience, though that experience can sometimes be disjunctive or faceted. The speaker in these poems moves from body to body: at once celebratory/revelatory, at once anxious, at once lamenting for the loss of friendship, love, or community, queer bodies inhabit their intensity and disorientation if only for this moment.

Table of Contents

Anthroposcopy	1
quarter life crisis birthday party	2
borderland	3
halloween	4
clouds	5
stone butch	6
cal says	7
the thing about me	8
deep	9
joan dark	10
gisèle vampire princess	11
february downfall after new year sound friend	12
pebbles	13
hsp song	14
to two people ...	15
defining text	17
voyeur	18
leave/taking	21
after you told me there's no telling	22
hypnic/twitch	23
trigger logic	24
projections	25
automata	26
the park	27
That there shall be other tents ...	28
Dead Horse Bay i.	30
(a ship	31
dead horse bay ii.	32
the ocean taught me its smooth talk	33
Quarry	34
face ts	41
Underground	42
a spark that starts	43
in theory	44
Alternate reading of <i>Wuthering Heights</i>	45
reconstruction	46
flesh of my flesh	48

Anthroposcopy

the skull is a cage or carriage
with skin stretched over like a map on a globe.

the forehead is a plain scarred with grooves
from a plough. the eyebrows are islands of leaning

spruce trees. irises are twin dormant volcanoes,
the pupils are craters of ash.

the nose resembles home but every pore
is an exit, welcome then say goodbye

to a virus you contracted. the lips fit together like a clam's
shell, the tongue inside is the meat.

a shallow cave is dug out of the clavicle. the ribs are a trap
set inside a pyramid.

find me a body to grow old with.
skin falls like a sandstorm, scatters and shifts.

the hips are an arrow at a crossroads pointing to shelter
but the legs keep going, are agitated travellers.

the heart has slid from sleeve to inner
thigh. how must one remember?

quarter life crisis birthday party

on the night of her long johns themed birthday party
in the mildewy basement where the mold and cracks
were covered up by hanging rugs and strung red lights,
i danced near her with a new girl just to make her realize.

later in the cold kitchen some of us stood
in our winter boots passing around a cloudy jug
of apple cider whiskey. her housemate was in his pyjamas
a tear was on the inside of his glasses

all night long. we were still too young to love anything
properly. she looked across at me, eyes blue like faded denim,
her red lips stretched in a smile showing tiny coffee stained teeth
clashing with her purple long johns.

borderland

cal and i pull over at a 24 hr tim hortons to pee
goes to the women's single stall restroom
hey hey he can't go in there!
the cashier looks at me with big bagel eyes
why not? i say, and we guffaw
leaving without buying any doughnuts
and speed away in my pick-up
high from escaping
the gender police

halloween

two ghosts embracing tightly
under their sheets
 leaning against the bar
 pooled with other peoples' gin
as a band played on stage, *size 0*, someone called them,
skinny white kids with sequined bras and black wigs

two anonymous ghosts
 small keyhole eyes
 sheets blanketing them to their converse sneakers
 tied together like twine
slow dancing to punk music

let's leave them like this-
a frieze painted on a grecian urn,
 masked lovers,
 still, ghosts for this evening only
 nothing can press against nothing

clouds

after sar and i's set was over quick quick i needed to get drunk immediately. nerves and shaking dissipated with the addition of alcohol created a doubling eucalyptic effect boiling me into curmudgeonic essence on the couch, between warm shoulders of friends. the evening was full of different collisions intentional or otherwise happening in different quadrants around the space but we chose to cackle at instagram and write long sarcastic hashtags. i was then able to float however now my reflection is clouded. remember when at the door we 3 stood in a leaning triangle and talking about what were we talking about, ah and i said ah i read a poem that made me think of you today and just then our friend got a phone call from someone she met on tinder conveniently and moved away and we looked at each other for how long for eight? slow seconds your shy smile seemed pleased looking up at me and we said nothing. i forget how we moved from that moment. you remind me of a feather but it is a feather that is an extended falling moment that i can't recall if we really stared at each other contentedlike or it was just your face in that moment that pinned me, like a soft black feather settling upon something powerful. an illusion clouded in front of me or it did not, the point is.

stone butch

we are not allowed to love in this small city. we take it easily.
approach with caution. don't jump in. get to know each other. ask. ask
and you shall receive. friends before lovers. bros before hos.
don't date friends. don't date friends of friends. friends and lovers tangled
like a nest of mice. cover your tracks. others will find out.
keep your friends close and throw your lovers into the fire.
coming together is dangerous. unrequited love. silence.
silent love. the love that dare not speak its
name. warning signs. slow down. stop. ice cold. hardening heart.
love locked out. shield yourself. hunker down. draw blood
from a stone. stone butch blues. winter of the heart.

cal says

in this world there are essentially two types of people. there are creeps who write poems and then there are jerks who take mdma on your birthday and forget about you, candleless. cal the lighting bolt to catch at exactly the precise moment. happy thirtieth birthday. now that we are getting older it is impossible to know everything about someone, too much has happened in our lives. back when we were twenty not so much had happened; over time it would have been possible to tell someone about yourself.

the thing about me

i am taking myself on an epic romantic date. guatemala, spain, peru, panama. goodbye. me myself and i. i don't know when i'll come back. when i feel like it. the thing about me, and i'm thirty, is that – i can do these things and there is no consequence. i am unattached. romantically, i am queer. the thing about me is – i learned autonomy. i can do anything i like for example right now i congratulate myself because i am eating dates while bareback on a horse on the way up to the top of a volcano. i decided to do this just today. the thing about me is there is no limit to self-growth or achievement. the thing is you can't stop reaching or you will be boring. it's terribly exciting and sometimes it's alone. sometimes i think if i went the other way would i ever really be able to leave with no consequences, to be able to go to the edge of a beach on an island somewhere and contemplate my aloneness, to really sit in myself? i don't mind it. the thing about me is, roaming and self-discovery extends until at least my forties. i don't age; i have no age. maybe it's this volcano. forever young, forever free, forever bold, forever me, forever forever forever

deep

deep adherence. deep apartments. deep aesthetic blend of theory and practice. deep bars. deep black boots wool socks
deep inside. deep blood. deep boxes. deep burrowing tunnel. deep cloven footed. deep cognitive behavioural. deep
comforter. deep commitment. deep commode. deep couches sinking into. deep desk drawers. deep digging. deep
dish. deep down drain. deep drags. deep essential oil. deep fence post pounded. deep folded. deep form. deep
fontanels. deep footpaths and fountains. deep freaks. deep fridges. deep gallop. deep garbage dump. deep
guilt. deep hearts. deep history. deep humidity. deep identity. deep immurement. deep jugular. deep
kissing. deep knot in the wood grain. deep light. deep line. deep metallic. deep musk rose. deep
nomenclature. deep object. deep ochre. deep parc ex. deep performances. deep play. deep
pockets. deep processing. deep rapture. deep reading in the back of a polish cafe full of old
men, realising the gift of tongues. deep scallop. deep scalloped surfaces. deep scars.
deep snow. so deeply appreciative, so deeply concerned, so deeply grateful. deep
stainless steel pole firm. deep steaming bowls. deep springs. deep submittal. deep
summer and publicly deep swimming pools. deep taboo. deep tar. deep ugly.
deep underbelly. deep vagrancy. deep winter. deep work. deep x. deep yes.
deep zodiac. zirconia deep. yeast deep. xxx deep. waning moon deep.
vagrant deep. underbody deep. ugh deep. tanned leather deep. take
deep. stream deep. stockinette stitch deep. stainless steel deep.
deeply so. rundown deep. red curtain deep. reading in the
back of a polish cafe full of old men, realising the gift of
tongues deep. quarry deep. pint glass deep. passage
deep. ocean deep. musk rose deep. metro level
deep. knot in the wood grain deep. klepto
deep. jugular deep. gorge deep. garbage
dump deep. folded deep. fence post
pounded deep. fat deep. essential
oil deep. diptych deep. cat deep.
b u r r o w i n g t u n n e l d
e e p . b l o o d d
e e p . a n a r c
h y d e e p
. a l c h
e m y
d e
e p
.

joan dark

transexual / villainess
goth lady / deep lez
at her service / hobbies include
eating / killing / wearing skins of dudes
she hails satan / got a new set
dark soul / mistress
transfemme women / cum claim yr space

gisèle vampire princess

blooming lizzie's lover
gaptoothed rubyfruit
virgo sailing in the bushes

silk shirt dress coat
four a.m. chrysanthemum
sterling vanitas fingerbowl roseblood

hands embroidering the stars
tsunami hair waves
down her ass like a castle

gazelle zinfandel zealous brocatel
applies red lipstick after dark
lets it fade through the night

february downfall after new year sound friend

new year swelled in spoiled apples
abundant pins of people in crowded corners
and around your tarot table black living room snubbing candle fury
delicious speak wicked lashed tongues ours-
green bottles shatter hurtling, arrows no target.
i am a bubble floating transparent unable to read time or pebbles
only watching for hidden unsaid flies and nothing, i find, nothing.
blue gas flame madonna hood
life fire tasting air that seeks to spread out
your versed mouth drops chrysalids and jewels
on globergina gravelstone ground, a fairytale, no, real-
(once i sought your emerald sharp knife friendship love
and you went somewhere else, deep drawn down into yourself
into the warm womb bathwater in february deep winter
and then you wouldn't return my texts. how i wish that our opaque
souls were similar but you withdrew like a bird
defending its nest of self birthed power).

pebbles

what is in the ground - what can be taken from there? what can i scoop up - what can you dig? are there other things - where does the word come from. skip a stone. pick a pebble. kick a stone, all the way home. the sound of pebbles hail. i stood under a dry waterfall and i asked it to hail. won't you tell me what you , i said. won't you just rain on me. will you tell me? everything you've been meaning to say but are to. fox, come out. the kidney stones. everything that is in your , the disappointments. for once if we can be as large and mean as the sun. it gets bigger and it does not care, expanding out to meet us. i ask that my friend – you swallow me. i would like to be the answer to something.

hsp song

i need protection when i sleep. i need protection when i eat something cold. i need protection when i drink something hot. i need protection on the second floor iron spiral stairs. i need protection in the subway. i need protection walking in a crowd. i need protection waiting in line for a coffee. i need protection when i check my email. i need protection when walking and doing another thing like reading. reading is its own protection. i read on the metro; i read at home; i read while eating. i need protection at 2 pm. sometimes i need protection while reading. i need protection from wanting. i need protection at a bar. i need protection at a dance party but that is not even possible, so much protection. i am ok in my room. i am ok with domesticated cats. i am ok on the phone. i am ok at the movies, mostly. i am ok with a little blood. you would think i was hardly living. you would think i would regret needing so much protection. i do not know about that; i have considered not needing so much protection but i can't go back now. i suppose i will know whether i regret needing so much protection on my death bed. when i die i would like to be reading my favourite book. however i already feel a lot like death when i read my favourite book. i have already experienced that then and there was no regret; only bliss.

to two people who held each other intensely outside a bar for upwards of twenty minutes

my intention to sit on the dirty
rock ledge of the bar on the edge

of the sidewalk away from the crowd inside quick
-ly turned into a study of you because

i looked over and there you both were in
the middle of the sidewalk connected

like that. it was fall, one of you wore a
shearling coat with colourful embroidery

and one of you had short buzzed hair. of the
various stages of the embrace when

i first onlooked it was still, heads bent in
-to shoulders, arms wrapped around like a belt.

it seemed like you were happy to see each
other. you did not move from the middle

of the sidewalk, not for people walking
by or for the barred glass door that swung o-

pen next to you each time a smoker came
out. it turned serious, your heads pressing

temple to temple and now eyebrows straight
and concentrating, relieved, like the threat

of something terrible had passed, or a
letting go, a last. the smokers were drunk

enough maybe to not notice your in
-souciance of public space, circling you

as they were, creating a hazy wistful
stage of smoke. your hands started petting next,

at first a slow comforting up and down
the back but then they turned to wandering

around the shearling coat, down the waist to
tailbone, up the side to armpits, complet

-ing large circles and beginning again.
circling hands seeking then questioning then

longing then exploring then guilty then
still then constricting then tight then willing

then exhausted and limp. the study turned
into a kind of projection in which

as the holding unfolded i became
your third. the we, that was me, and i was
just as confused as a heart is confused,

thinking soon we must separate, soon we
must leave, soon we must let go, some part of
me is still stuck there with you.

defining text

the human subject finds the secret of its being
in imaginary pairings and acts of separation

evocative of physical love
and traumas of birth or death.

the hidden point of otherness
is where the monsters dwell.

the dwelling reflects an identity that perhaps
we do not know at all who we are.

a vampire is an outward projection.
a vampire belongs to two worlds.

a vampire is a metaphor and metaphors always signify
in excess of what they mean.

generally suave, urbane, rustic, and/or crude, they do not
uniformly display powers of sexual seduction.

but they share the power to move between
and undo borders otherwise holding identities

into place. no wonder vampires are a trope;
no wonder gayness is a gate.

humans have long sought a way to reassure themselves
that their own identity can be preserved.

voyeur

/

every door and every floor to ceiling window is open
studying people in their bodies

walking in the bar with a leather jacket cigarette swagger but it's too hot for leather
which way are they headed?

bois against the bar their hips like eagle wings, breathing / open
it is about existing in other people's bodies for a moment

the bar breathing and so many holes in tank tops breathing
to whom/what are they facing?

more holes than windows
to what extent is the body aware of its intentions?

night black/dark, bar cool/dark
as owners are we aware if the body generally floats in the direction of what it wants?

holes trying to breathe, half in/half out, all hot, no breath
if you study a body in a bed or in a karaoke bar will you learn things about your own body?

partake all together, leave the door open, invite whomever
mysterious instrument, what solar calculator is this?

/

across from the bar on the second floor
there is a balcony hanging there a suspended stage

a svelte boi lives there with long black hair
and parts the curtains when visitors are there

sometimes plus one and sometimes plus two
romeo on romeo on romeo julieta on juliet on julien on jo

summer shows on nights black and dark, hot like breathing a drink
have become pretty regular

it is as if we are connected by the same air,
bats returning nightly to the same tree in a version of sleep

the boi rearranges for us to get a better view
the olive couch is pushed closer to the balcony

like a great open mouth
something pools in my lower back between shorts and stool

glasses of rose wine on their coffee table
the curtain slips out its ankle

they share foreplay leaning on the black rail
mouth on neck on hand on hip balancing cigarettes

poised between fingers like snipping scissors
smoke slipping in their ear in the still night like a tongue

he's kissing all our necks
the bartender, the busser, me

they undress each other like
bananas

the distant rolling thunder of the cash register
as i watch

the clash and spark of hipbones
striking each other like rocks

crack me open a club soda and spray me like a wave
who i am doesn't matter

the busser is saying something
and jabbing a finger on the wood

touching is not actually touching
(fans push the hot air around us)

touching is the act of atoms resisting each other
ergo touching is resistance

leave/taking

glittering eyes spiralling to heavens know
revelling in rotten just dried worms un-

derneath sparkling rock. the natural
and the narcotic inducing light and tiny pains.

the joys of flubbing out
of releasing the lines of our bo-

dies and letting them liquefy into others.
the boxers on the rug, crotch facing up,

do you pick them up? never mind, don't tell.
like a freak natural formation you can't stop

looking at someone having worn your boxers
and getting them all wet. we are just like spiders really

having left behind fragrant constellations. i release a web
and i catch you. you borrow, break free, flick

off your foot. go to work. i stay in bed. maybe
i'll see you again. so much more pungent when bungled.

after you told me there's no telling

i felt myself turn into a bat

right there in the silver sheets
my fingers elongated doubling the length of my arm

and between them unsheathed a thin membrane of brown skin
that connected down to my ankles.

you drew the duvet close to you and fell asleep as humans do.
i was cold because the blanket had shifted to your side

but i folded my new skin wings around me and was warm
even smiled a little curled up as i was next to the wall.

i think i like being a bat.

hypnic/twitch

every night as i hold you close
selected evolution prevents us from falling

your sternum cupping my hand and my mouth against your nape
makes us able to readjust in our sleep

my breath flows back to me in a cycle of in and out/in
evolved from sleeping in trees long, long ago

and i breathe no new air, like i breathe nothing
a response back to wakefulness

containing thunder i hold you who is storming
primal nightmare, deepest reaction, a vestigial reflex

as you fall asleep before the calm
the evolutionary explanation remains unclear

waves slip through the circle of my arms
though accompanied by an image

Trigger logic

A trigger, someone, someone else, and a room. should there be someone else when there is a trigger in the room. someone was there already, someone else is new, the room used to be, and the trigger came after the room. the room was always previously empty. except for someone. it used to be someone, a room, and empty. then came the blunt either/or possibility of a trigger. is it off or on? is someone here or there? now that someone else is there, the question is should no one be in the room or should someone be in the room when there is something present that can go off.

After it is pulled it has to decide, someone or someone else, one is going to leave the room: someone leaves the room and they survive, for the moment being, they outlive the trigger outside of the room, alone, as it was done. if someone else leaves the room first then the room is how it was, someone is alone, as it was done. if the room is how it was and it is empty, just a someone, it is kind of nice, it is comforting, because that is how it used be done and it is easy and it is sleepy.

There can be someone else if someone else knows what to do but if someone else says i do not know what to do it is better that the room is empty; it is how it used to be. i don't know what to do is the same as the room being empty, someone else may as well not even be in the room. nothing but a trigger between a someone and a someone else in a room.

If both someone and someone else and the trigger in the on position decide to stay in the room, or simply can't move, either someone else pulls someone out, pulls and pulls, as if pulling a house by a thread through the opposite spinning direction of a tornado, which is unnatural, and against biology, or if someone and someone else decide to stay in the room, or simply can't move, and the trigger is then ignited in someone, and the trigger is now ignited in someone else, then it takes a great amount of force, a great amount of force, the greatest amount of force for someone or someone else to pull themselves out, and then again must enter again and pull someone or someone else out as if pulling a house by a thread through the opposite spinning direction of a tornado, which is unnatural, and against the laws of physics.

These are the logical possibilities.

projections

on second thought i tried something that was not. i brought my camera thinking i would take beautiful pictures, it was a place to take beautiful pictures. i felt a need to try and capture these. capture something through the lens of a camera that wasn't there. absences. ignoring underneath. look through a lens instead, like a binocular, try and find something else, find them even in a tiny hummingbird, the size of a period on a page, through a lens. snap a photo. i wanted to tell you but i couldn't, so i took pictures as if to say . they came out. overexposed blues and greens of mountains crayonic. thought snapped the perfect moment but then hand to scratch nose. it was all romantic though, just wasn't to you. suppose it was my mind craved. what is romance anyway? embuement, colouring in anything and everything that reflects, confirms; wonderful, them. so in love themselves. they facet and love it.

automata

the challenge is to find an action that is not automatic. automatic action is a natural function. it is also programmatic. therefore robotic. problematic. the challenge is not to act programmatically. the challenge is to become an artist of everyday speech, words conveying thoughts precisely. the challenge is to say what you mean, without clouding speech with too many parts, subtle tones indiscernible as a whole. the challenge is to find an action that is intuited; that is practiced: i do everything that i mean and i mean everything that i do. i say everything that i mean and i mean everything that i say. the challenge is to find an action that is premeditated; the challenge is to find every action having meaning.

the park

there are so many moments in a day, in a week, in a year when it is hard to understand a feeling. but now in the park, it is summer when it should not be summer in early october, there are screams and chatter coming from the pool that has reopened just for today, and i am sitting against a tree. rare challenge to face the sun, shadows behind. but the wind is cold; confused day, hot and then cold. perhaps this is doom. trying to assess where i am as the sun warms the skin of the legs before me, browning into terracotta. the sun is deepening the skin, seeping into the legs before me and a welling starts from the base of my spine that is connected to the base of the tree. i am reminded of you, who is not here, though the sun is doing your part. it is not fully equal, fully the same, but almost. it is enough: your replacement. and now i face the sun inquisitive as one considers a lover.

That there shall be other tents unfurled at midnight, other moons, other Fire Islands

*If as a child I'd known my whole long life was going to be painful, I'd never have
consented to go on leading it.
Edmund White*

The most beautiful moment of my life has passed
already, and like a room it is empty. I
can't recall that moment, half of it went to that
old lover along with half of the rent money,
half of my bed.

Fire Island, an island unrolled like a long
long scroll, recounting endless stories of one night
stands on volleyball courts, quaking dance floors with bodies
merging in the dark pauses of strobe lights, and blackout
wheeling nights waking up in someone's private pool
behind a house made of glass. Boarding a ferry
full of fairies, being taken to a land of
couples of same gender, couples of transgender,
couples of no gender, orgies of genders. Where
pairs of drag queens are delivered in jet boats, swaying
when they plant that first stiletto on the dock. A
village built entirely on stilts above the sand
crabs, one main boardwalk connecting all the houses
with their mailboxes draped with flyers for daytime
tea dances, for Bacchanalia in the night.

But I did not share the most beautiful moment
of my life with them, or with the bears that my old
love and I stumbled across on the beach as we
searched for some brush to hide our tent while they were crooning
an Unchained Melody with a portable
karaoke box in the moonlight.

Now that she is gone, I am unsure if I can
say it happened. For no one else witnessed when
we unzipped the tent and a cloud of steam floated
out and we tripped a few steps over the sand dune
and tangled ourselves in a floral sheet as the
sun percolated over the Atlantic. We
were finally alone and we were slick like seals

and there was sand in the creases of her eyes. We poked our heads out for air and there over the dune was a deer, contemplating us. A deer on this gaycation island? Never mind, that deer will not remember me now and I can't talk to it.

Fire Island, throbbing with bass from the moment you roll out of your beach towel - do you remember me, or is your mind like a heart drawn in sand close to shore? Surely it won't be the last time we meet - surely there are more jet boats propelling to secret sapphic beaches, surely there will be more sunburns that make us toss in the night, reaching for a lover.

Dead Horse Bay

Thousands upon thousands of bottles, only by boat, was reviled for near the bay, a millstone is beach is usually empty, conjuring a when horse-rendering plants still surrounded the Dead Horse Bay has a long its name sometime in the 1850s, cap burst in the 1950s and left over from the 17th century, garbage incinerators. Century, garbage incinerators. From the 1850s until the bay are one-inch chunks of Dead Horse Bay sits at the Not true at Dead Horse Bay, again, and replaced again by new bones were later dumped into the aren't quite gone either; found throughout years old, litter the shore. Litter the shore. Other scavenging another era's trash. Another era's trash. The horses beach. The horses beach. Since then garbage has been when Dutch settlers used the water been torn down, replaced, torn down horse-rendering plants, fish oil factories and Like most of New York City, into the ocean from Dead Horse beach. Dead Horse beach. From the New York Times: dotted by more than two dozen by the 1930s, the trash heap horse bone, a somewhat unpleasant reminder beach of glass: leather shoe soles, and buggies – thus horse carcasses pieces of metal and plastic. Metal and plastic. The was capped, only to have the – became scarce, and by the plant left. The plant left. It was during this the trash spew forth onto the that is the perfect setting for of history are all but forgotten. All but forgotten. Hardy bits of trash pepper this the 1930s, the carcasses of dead western edge of a marshland once quiet, eerie post-doomsday kind of scene As the car industry grew, horses Horse Bay began to be used where remnants of the past litter buildings and people, and the layers into flour. Layers into flour. The bay was given broken and intact, many over 100 at the site. At the site. The chopped-up, boiled leaking continually onto the beach and era, around the turn of the the putrid fumes that hung overhead. That hung overhead. century, that the marsh of Dead for tide mills to grind wheat the beach today. The beach today. Along Millstone Trail manufacture glue, fertilizer and other products as a landfill. As a landfill. Filled with trash York City streets were used to horses and other animals from New water. From New water. The squalid bay, then accessible much of old New York has 1920s there was only one rendering history of changes. History of changes. Over the years, rusty telephones, and scores of unidentifiable. Scores of unidentifiable.

(a ship

vulnerable ship in the night ambling
in deep waters, parting different waters
continuously, like a knife entering
water, but not affecting. when you told me
about slow i saw a ship in the night.
shortly after i read a poem in a book
in which there was a ship in the night.
something is happening here if you are
no different, and you are not the same. slow
to embark, slow to come back home, a slow
never. always to deeper waters, colder
and farther. safe pool on a ship, pool within
a vast pool, never entering the real thing –
sharks, octopi, stinging coral, eels, trash, and chemicals.)

dead horse bay

once there was a secret beach
in brooklyn. we biked past traffic and
garbage trucks and burned down houses
on crumbling roads. we walked down
a long sandy path like a hallway of lavender
that opened to reveal a crescent of tall bushes
skirting the beach thin like a waning moon.
the tide had half drowned a motorboat hatched with lover's initials.
we were picking for rare blue bottles and horse bones
one century old swept away from the glue and fish oil factories.
we played like that day was the apocalypse,
a cloud like an aluminum lid sealed over us
as the sun fought to stay up just above
the horizon of the bay.
the tip of the beach curled into a ridge of rocks that jutted
into the water like a jagged arrow.
plastic bags and strips of cloth were strewn around
a mound of a rock that seemed carved into a bed. someone
must have lived there before, but there was no one now
except us two. we found a small shark's face
flattened on a rock, jaws agape, just the skin and teeth.
if the world were to end we
would come back here, we said
as we combed through each others' hairy legs
looking for ticks.

the ocean taught me its smooth talk

falling down the beach, my lover and i
found a turtle shot through its shell,
its feet open like sliced arteries,
an exploded diagram of pink, purple, and red
(the colours of love)

 and so i'll do the same to you
my starfish, except

i'll also give you good
head, tides lapping up rocks
and swirling eddies overflowing
in blue-silver twilight

 but isn't it good, my little clam
to dissolve at venus' feet
 into foam

Quarry

Quarries
usually
operate
for at least 30 years
You can remove
the quarry building
but the hole
is permanent

materials from the Lake Cherie quarry were used in the construction of the Trans Canada highway in the 1950s it gradually filled up with water and became a popular swimming hole in 2013 the developer, Ben Wygodny, began draining the quarry with the intention to build 100 single-family homes there he was ordered to stop on the grounds that it was a protected wetlands area that included wildlife draining the water and replacing it with landfill could take years and 20,000 dump truck loads of dirt

*We don't really know
until we pump
it out
Nobody
knows
how
deep
it
is*

Materials that quarries are mined for

Chalk

China clay

Cinder

Clay

Coal

Construction aggregate (sand and gravel)

Coquina

Globergina limestone

Granite Gritstone

Gypsum

Limestone

Marble

Ores Phosphate

Sandstone Slate

more mine

mines mining methods mines mining machineries
mentioned more mining means metallic mining
mine materials may maximum more
mine mining mine mineralogical
most mine may moving mine methods marble
mortars magnum mainly mechanization
monitoring mining mineral mentioning
method method maximum modify
model mine manager mine minimal means
many mining most mining measurement
manufacturing most minimize mine much

Hazards of a quarry
Dangerous goods and substances
Death
Noise
Explosions
Electrical hazards
Rocks falling
Asbestos, silica, dust
Vibration, UV radiation
Heat, cold

swimming out from the mound of sand and flat rocks jutting out into the quarry, to the other side, i was being watched the sun was going down fast and soon it would be gone, fretful, frenetic september all of this felt, not understood i swam to the boulders on the other side and climbed up warm wet rocks watched the topless people on the other side, smaller now than 3 pebbles, sat thinking of what to do next i wanted to jump from the cliff into the warm pockets of the emerald water, smooth jasmine emerald fluorite silk opal cold, pond on mars the pebbles were talking but also one pb was looking in my direction, at this distance only were we really able to look at each other pb was considering something and looking at me, was squinting with eyebrows pinched to further see better, pupils letting in too much light i wanted to wait until the water was one smooth ellipse that i could facet myself into but the water wouldn't fizzle out, it bezelled in little skips and hops our eyes taut like fishing line

face ts

or or or at least i thought your faces were
 they looking? but your eye facets, were they
 pretty sure not though, though not sure?
fascinating, faceted of you're off.
what can you see and you tell me
though pulling slowly and the facets faces
face facets face face
precisely in the moment facing
though refracting, disconnecting
pull apart facing into facets me
detail no detail, that perception
like our faces our percept, a different
though not facing reflected no though
t

Underground

deep underground there are private pools.
private, pearled clubs. one of those places you'd think,
how did i get here. but they exist.
floor to ceiling tiled in hand-sized tiles, emerald green
with a raised palm leaf shape. quiet, no metros;
it's below even. subconscious. empty too but for an incessant drip,
sounds like a question. there is just a pool
and nothing else. a sunken rectangle. the water calm,
unchiseled. you are thinking, i wish my friends were here.
i need to come back.
the feeling of a dream you'd had all your life. underground
secrets. a thrilling aloneness. but guarded.

this time you get sucked into the drama.
unfortunate because you were an element, malachite,
just before they pulled you out.
they want something from you, now that you've shown up.
rats. and women with high cheekbones and blush.
beams. never, never have you had the feeling of so many people
not listening to you. no, no, no, no, no, you say.
if you scream they laugh. this is what it's like
to step outside your bubble. there is frustration,
and so many bodies piling in front of you. all demanding.

in an anteroom. shyness. coy. flowered wallpaper.
red lighting. the beaming women with long hair. two,
whispering. you motion, i cannot. the women have a secret.
their cardigans brush together. in their hands.
you have it too. a flood of relief, you are recognized.
you marvel at how you've found others in the most unlikely
of places. going back to the pool feels good now.
sex seems possible, though still cautious.
and you think, can i ever get back there again.

a spark that starts

*Such distress moved in with muscle and bone. Its entrance by
necessity slowly translated my already grief into a tremendously
exhausted hope.
Claudia Rankine*

fires are always, in a sense, burning. they might be so slight we can't see them. there is always the possibility of a spark to light a fire, they are always waiting to happen, under rocks and trash and sand. hope is the slowest emotion but it is indefatigable. i've tried to extinguish some hope about you but it flares up again and again it is a molecular translation i can't stop from happening. why does a virus, unwanted, do a thing like blooming out of nothing; why spark at all if you can't finish becoming. and still; and still. remember running as fast as you could up the stairs from the basement? think of a basement now, its dirt floor and rocks and unwanted clothes thrown down there as having potentiality. to burn.

in theory

you construct plans
you want tattoos
you have lots of things in there that don't need to be
you are preoccupied with a revolution
you'd rather have fucked for a cause
you are definitely not smiling
critical discomfort
you were at peace today for one moment
you feel problems fragmenting already
the global prospect makes the facticity of individual human lives contradictory
you can photocopy something similar
your skin will clear up
it is possible to dig a hole and come out the other side
you do the opposite of what you mean
you've taken you and made a fantasy
myth is the ontological experience of time
to have seen hungover greyness
archive your second thoughts
disjunctive strategies
you've forgotten your flashlight
it is day and there are two hours left of light
you express gratitude
think about the best possible future
you are too wild
human societies tend to produce an objective dislocation of the scar
you know what poison is
you swam alone
it is a backward art
hold to a name

Alternate reading of *Wuthering Heights*

Nelly, I am Heathcliff.

I mean, I *am* Heathcliff.

Essentially, I don't even need him.

I don't even need him because I am my own man.

What I mean is, I am going to become a man.

Heathcliff is going to become me.

Catherine

Cahterine

Chaterine

Hcaterine

Hecatrine

Heatcrine

Heathcliff

Heathcliff

Hathcliff

Chathlif

Cathlif

Cathy

reconstruction

the way the body heals in breaks and bonds
the way the body heals in breaks bonds and
the way the body heals in bonds breaks and
the way the body heals bonds in breaks and
the way the body bonds heals in breaks and
the way the bonds body heals in breaks and
the way bonds the body heals in breaks and
the bonds way the body heals in breaks and
bonds the way the body heals in breaks and
bonds the way the body heals in and breaks
bonds the way the body heals and in breaks
bonds the way the body and heals in breaks
bonds the way the and body heals in breaks
bonds the way and the body heals in breaks
bonds the and way the body heals in breaks
bonds and the way the body heals in breaks
and bonds the way the body heals in breaks
and bonds the way the body heals breaks in
and bonds the way the body breaks heals in
and bonds the way the breaks body heals in
and bonds the way breaks the body heals in
and bonds the breaks way the body heals in
and bonds breaks the way the body heals in
and breaks bonds the way the body heals in
breaks and bonds the way the body heals in
breaks and bonds the way the body in heals
breaks and bonds the way the in body heals
breaks and bonds the way in the body heals
breaks and bonds the in way the body heals
breaks and bonds in the way the body heals
breaks and in bonds the way the body heals
breaks in and bonds the way the body heals
in breaks and bonds the way the body heals
in breaks and bonds the way the heals body
in breaks and bonds the way heals the body
in breaks and bonds the heals way the body
in breaks and bonds heals the way the body
in breaks and heals bonds the way the body
in breaks heals and bonds the way the body
in heals breaks and bonds the way the body

heals in breaks and bonds the way the body
heals in breaks and bonds the way body the
heals in breaks and bonds the body way the
heals in breaks and bonds body the way the
heals in breaks and body bonds the way the
heals in breaks body and bonds the way the
heals in body breaks and bonds the way the
heals body in breaks and bonds the way the
body heals in breaks and bonds the way the
body heals in breaks and bonds the the way
body heals in breaks and bonds the the way
body heals in breaks and the bonds the way
body heals in breaks the and bonds the way
body heals in the breaks and bonds the way
body heals the in breaks and bonds the way
body the heals in breaks and bonds the way
the body heals in breaks and bonds the way
the body heals in breaks and bonds way the
the body heals in breaks and way bonds the
the body heals in breaks way and bonds the
the body heals in way breaks and bonds the
the body heals way in breaks and bonds the
the body way heals in breaks and bonds the
the way body heals in breaks and bonds the
way the body heals in breaks and bonds the
way the body heals in breaks and the bonds
way the body heals in breaks the and bonds
way the body heals in the breaks and bonds
way the body heals the in breaks and bonds
way the body the heals in breaks and bonds
way the the body heals in breaks and bonds
way the the body heals in breaks and bonds
the way the body heals in breaks and bonds

flesh of my flesh

i.

the body is a holding for something, i know. cal and i were watching *american horror story* together, the season that takes place in a travelling freak show in florida. in it there is a man with lobster hands and his mother is a bearded lady and his estranged father is unusually strong. we got to talking about freak shows, debating really. to prove a point cal says, *look at me - i'm a freak*. he says this matter of factly. i felt bad. i did not exactly feel like a freak – i liked what i was. i knew of this fascination; i had read barbara gowdy's *we so seldom look on love*. but i understand, now that i, too, am jumbled-looking. call me frank for short. the lobster man had his hands cut off and he died of sadness, or normalcy.

ii.

the lobster man had his hands cut off and he died of sadness, or normalcy. the night before i did not care because there was nothing that was going to be lost. the anaesthesiologist was nice to me. his arms were thin as twigs in winter. the room was too-calming blue and the table so padded with its arms spread out like wings. cal would think the crossed table was funny. i laid down and the twig man said, *this is only going to pinch for a second – it's for the anxiety*. that word spiked me within but it was quelled immediately. they did not even have me count backwards they just put me down. i felt nothing for hours. though when they woke me up my first words were, *i forgot i was here*. i was having a dream in which i sat in a sunlit alcove and i was writing at a wooden desk. i was in the middle of a good idea. it was no matter that i had willingly put on a blue cap and laid down on a padded table.

iii.

i, too, like my friend, have willingly put on a blue cap and laid down on a padded table, have willingly had my arms strapped to its wings. am i a freak too, my friend? it was the surgeon who crossed me out and wrote - was it botched? i will not know if the surgeon did his best. he performed his job and kept me alive doing it, sewed me up again. the basics. i chose this. i have a new body that someone is going to look at for the first time. cal is going to be the first person to see me. i got to make this decision; for him to take it all in, the bumps and scars and the general unmooring. passing a lifetime of looking and judgment. once stared at long enough a slashed body becomes normal. it is a dare really, an extra hurdle. there is always a surgery story – there is a gate to pass and the surgeon is the gatekeeper. is it getting old yet? i believe in the radical statement that is to say that i decide how other people look at me; but then. the body is only a vase for holding, i know.

Acknowledgments

The following poems have been published or are forthcoming:

“Anthroposcopy” - *Polychrome Ink*

“cal says” and **“gisèle vampire princess”** - Metatron ÖMËGÄ Blog

“voyeur” and **“the ocean taught me its smooth talk”** - *Contemporary Verse 2*

“projections” - *Cosmonauts Avenue*

“(a ship)” - *Vetch*

“Alternate reading of *Wuthering Heights*” - newpoetry.ca

“flesh of my flesh i-iii” - *Matrix*

Notes

“defining text” borrows from *Metamorphoses of the Vampire in Literature and Film* by Erik Butler.

“hypnic/twitch” borrows in part from various websites on the evolution of the hypnic jerk.

“That there shall be other tents unfurled at midnight, other moons, other Fire Islands” quotes from *The Beautiful Room Is Empty* by Edmund White.

“Dead Horse Bay” was created using an online William Burroughs-style Cut-up engine and an Echo Chamber, from The Lazarus Corporation.

“Quarry” borrows and erases from a few mining websites.

“a spark that starts” quotes from *Don't Let Me Be Lonely* by Claudia Rankine.