

connaissance de la fugue

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ABSTRACT:

This collection compiles three distinct forms: the lyric poem, the haibun, and an invented form I am referring to as the 'code poem'. This thesis examines states of homelessness, insecure housedness, and attempts to encounter the underwriting impulse to run away from home through these various poetic formulations.

Often associated with a journey, the haibun seemed a fitting mode through which to translate some of these experiences. The inclination on the part of haibun writers to alter and omit aspects of their journeys render a vision of these forms of travel writing as being "...discursive creations rather than simply transcriptions of experience" (Carter 195). It is in this tradition that *connaissance de la fugue* persists - timelines are plural, the issue of then/now abuts the question of how the concept of we/us shifts, or is in conflict with the remaining 'i'. This 'i' is manifestly the writer recording observations, very much skewed by distance, time, and imbricated subsequent reads and responses to situations that, when immediate, seemed entirely clear. To know what it is to run away - to have a knowledge of the fugue - is the propellant engineering the motion of this set of quasi haibun. Obvious travel is not always taking place, yet even in scenes of settled domesticity there grates a discomfort: disease at the excess of stability, disease at the state of housedness - a state forever changed, redefined, by the experience of homelessness, by repeated *fugue*, by the knowledge of it.

Fugue states, of course, filter in. The fugue in this context is a form of forgetting, erasure. It is fitting, then, that the original job description that sparked, named, cohered this collection has been altered in the time since this project began. Dans La Rue, a Montréal organization that works with street involved youth, posted a call for applications for a role at their drop-in centre. Published in French, the callout asked that, amongst other aptitudes and qualifications, potential candidates must possess a *connaissance*

de la fugue: a knowledge of what it is to run away from home, to take flight. No succinct term for this exists in the English language - we do not language running away in this manner, therefore we do not speak of it or think of it in the same way. This project is interested not only in the impulse to leave and the subsequent knowledge that experience imparts on the subject, but also in the channeling of those subjects that occurs when they interact with the system of homelessness, of street life, of shelter life and all of the social work interventions that both sustain and constrict the *fugueur*.

The included code poems represent a series of sustained narratives. The mechanism of the constraint determining these pieces derives from the field of machine translation, specifically practices that involve an intermediary, an *interlingua*. The ideal interlingua analyses and codifies all possible characteristics of the source text, organizing meaning and producing a holistic, semiotically informed translation. This project represents an attempt on the part of the writer to enter into this relay, intervening on computer code and 'reading it' semantically, morphologically, and intuitively in order to produce a written text that is 'translated' through that code. This text draws on a knowledge base of autobiographical material, specifically a personal history of homelessness.

The source code selected for the work titled 'script mall' is an appropriated slide recovered from a database of academic PowerPoint presentations, originally titled "Sub-language processing for phenotype curation" by Hong Cui via the University of Arizona. The application of this experimental poetic process to a selection of code already intended to be a computational structure for sorting, organizing and narrativizing data has produced a series of texts that each respond to the innate cues or gestures perceptible in the code. Using the same process, source code from the website of Dans La Rue has been excerpted and interpreted in a corresponding manner to provide the basis for 'improving mental health' and 'the unlit lamp'.

A form of homolinguistic translation, this interdisciplinary poetic project violates the typical flow of information through computer code. By occupying the impossible: the 'mentality' of a component of machine translation, the writer becomes the ideal interlingua. This is an experiment in translation, an

experiment in wresting an unmastered language by interpreting familiar words, symbols, and morphemes in order to force the code to communicate a monstrous, inappropriate-to-academia or seemingly 'untellable' personal history. The constraint-based nature of this work demands a complete co-operation with the structure and progression of the machine instruction. The resulting series of novel poetic works explore personal narrative through the semi-alien yet unexpectedly inquisitive interpreted logic of the appropriated segment of code.

Throughout the collection, theories of place and place attachment local to the field of environmental psychology offer ways of thinking place in the context of the *connaissance de la fugue*. This work is interested in the transposition of the 'third place' (a park, a public area) for 'first place' (the home) that may manifest during homelessness. The hyperbarren represents this inverse landscape: homes seen from the outside, homes escaped and recreated in the manipulable space of a backpack or even a leather jacket patched with wards and sigils: signs of association, of protection - the mark of the other that is also the mark of the insider.

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LEGEND:

language locked in
place

here in french the flight
is fugue. this is where i make
sense of movement to franco-
ontarienne to anglophone
québec. here is the
shepherdesses' crook around
my mother and her father's
neck.

here words are formed
in exclusion and from terms
run consequences. i ran long
before i came to the edge of
french. a backwards reaching
hand recalibrates... the
runaway becomes a trace.

the untranslatable of
place

that which for now is
named **the hyperbarren**. the
vast waste that is travelled
through without destination.
purgative expanse of
autobiographemes.

from here is made the
sideways feint - the heart of a
thief wants ever to take.
computer language holds
form, visible scaffolding
invulnerable to weather & at
the same time vapour. the
unspoken code that shapes
the page of mtl's main org for
runaways. milled, divinatory,
each urge obeyed. this

recollection: steel pins in
place.

if running away is at it
is said then a 'from' is
posited. **grammatically**
'from' exists and is made of
bricks. the speaker puts a
triangle roof atop the
maquette. this is the
connection to and from the
set.

in social matters the
audience is always
implicated. the subject
implied, the watchers define.
much of this is the shape of
early age shoved into relief
by lights and **stage**.

here identities run and
gambol and how surprised
the subject is to find their
own self fixed so early on.

how like a string all
badbad things that ever
happened do seem. this is a
product of arrangement, the
fugue refutes such strangling
sense and order. leaves mid

the impulse to run

must be understood as a
condition of employment.
this is **local to mtl** and even
more so **local to french** and
even more exciting this
condition **no longer exists**

it has run from me in

the time it took to write the
bulk of this.

conveniently **the fugue**
state knows no past or
present and instead stands
like a building around which
history clamours and passes.
in **dissociative** flight the
subject is characterized as
gone or in motion or in transit
but experience suggests **she**
is become edifice.

the **script mall** being all
of the above plus glass and
cash and hosta plants.

even buildings have to
work. the loping cycle snaps
around upon the subject who
exists within the closed
system as she is lifted from
the place the powerful define
as floor (she calls it
fundament) and carried
upwards jaggledly.

this is training - this is
the capital product of the
connaissance de la fugue - to
*become a service provider, to
become an escalator.*

here lies buried the
expectation that there was a
place to run from and a place
to run to. hence the **graves**.

french requests no place
only that you make yrself a

mist and exhale. instant
ghost. until, that is, yr
fogbody is captured and set in
place. the **apartment** or the
university being traditional
containers.

the shelter contradicts
all above, for those arranged
in bunks and drawers there
are neither home nor -less,
they are **wards** or **wild** or
worse but all are in **training**
to become only one thing

ever there is only one.
and on the other side of that,
the other only one. the 'that'
being a **desk** of industrial
proportions.

THE HYPERBARREN

**“A philosophy of the street in which nothing happens, outwardly”
Bhanu Kapil - *Ban en Banlieue***

HYPERBARREN: legend of

what location am i speaking from. here is tempering all things. objects and observations shot from here emerge harder, the exchange being that they wax less durable. the crumbled matter is cast behind, ash now local to the past. archival materials may be accessed via a process called recollection, a method that exists in some opposition to tempering. recollection raises and reassembles that which lies in dust. particles are not put back perfectly and as such serious transcription errors are to be expected.

here is the location i am speaking from: a fixed point, or one i am attempting to affix. the place is montréal and the apartment is rented. the artifacts to be recollected are strewn across the hyperbarren: this is a repeating landscape that plops up malls and city blocks. it is flat and plain and blowing with trash because when i walk there i litter.

i exists there, leg on a stalk. i plod through soft cement fields that feel as though a long and violent sun has just been killed by sudden cloud. all places water comes to gather are grouted and tiled, coins collect themselves against the cold. barrows of brass dollars and delicate dimes heap beneath the fountain shrines. a loping speaker system bleats, ambient electronic on repeat. above that there rides the harrowing wind: tastes of ventilation ducts, of dust and tin.

it is a birthless expanse, pivoting at the turn of the season. revolving doors slap the circulated air and clap me by as i pass. nothing grows but hostas here. i suspect geraniums might also root. old plants, those most suited to the close indoors of malls or assisted living facilities. streetlights take to the concrete glowingly, they often crop and cuddle in fungal huddles marking the damp edges of endless space.

here makes hard the things of there. hard things do shatter when admitting light and air. behind the present tense of place the hyperbarren deeply waits. one crumb of asphalt drops from now and falls to then, arriving there. i kick it as i stalk the square. the piped in music overbears, singing ever 'this is where'. this is where i practiced begging, against the shore of workday legs. the waterline of office hours marked in grit against the foundation of the bank i sat with my back to. higher, closer, suddenly over. crepe of evening flipped to cover we beneath it.

we was here, was made on this cement. we was here
the sharpie scrawl says. i kick along the crumbling pavers
that tossed back chunk of place. solid, real, this piece of
there. holdable, handleable, gravel gum and hair. how from a
distance, outside the system, i am come to be recipient of my
inheritance. how teenage i in black and sighs constructed
such great structures. what gifts to give to some unknown
unmade future i who now must find a safe place to live.

ashift, the hyperbarren roils. what was marked for
remembering jerks, recoils. the touch is too hot, the eyeballs
too greedy. every act of assessment an act of shoplifting.
take less, you must take less, there is nothing to give. sucked
dry of syrup but still lit up with electric. not abandoned but
balancing on the fine point between hostile and hospitable.
much remains to be seen. still the looking is painful to both i
and the place.

washed of addresses, grey-blank of face. ribbons of
roadway coil and embrace. salt of the winter can be found in
trace. signal of anxiety, marker of place. **salt** at the backs of
the boots of the dead. salt to the knees as i lay in the bed.
plastic sheathed mattress, institutional bed. springbroken
mattress, junkie house bed. little sleep is had on the
hyperbarren, it dizzies the head. a slow supple ripple comes
up from beneath. deep bubbles through tar topple sleepers
from sleep.

this suggests something rotting and massive lies under
concrete. this assumption is false, the hyperbarren is whole
and complete. thick beyond dreaming, whole and discrete.
boundless abounding a long reel of streets. the undersong of
home, hyperbarren repeats: this is where, this is where
inertia's long brush sweeps.

to know is to name, the convention decrees. the live
sod of sorrow must transmute to peat before titles can be cut
out in soft combustible blocks. the reek of the burning, the
weight of the smog. there catch the names for the things that
have passed and they coast over the barren, what bleak
shadows they cast. grit of the winter and dust in the eye. coal
of old violence will propel the exhausting sigh that powers
the turbines that keep on the lights.

HYPERBARREN ONE: the marital bed (if i am a bright housewife)

i came to this university in order to be closer to this wooden table
to be near to this table
to be here in this graduate room which composes me as a row of lights composes me straightly
i came to this university to be nearest to the hustle, to shake hands to suck dix and get small bags of
money back up on my back
to be under the straps of this baggage
to be inside this bag and carry my own weight in the appropriate ways as it is appropriate to be weighted
and to carry.
i came to this university to be a pillar
a soft madonna, a blanket ghost stood whitely against the columns of dead.
i came to the university to be a soft column, a rare pleasure
an accomplishment, a doing everything perfectly.
to be near to this table
to carry this weight
to make soft my hands and shake them free of money
to culture an incredible anger
an incredibly sensitive anger.

HYPERBARREN TWO: my own bed

i draw the curtains
and haul myself in for we are entering
that indecent hour where i can't see out but you can see in.
i make a lash of the memory and whip myself to tiredness,
to appreciation. for money, i make a gash of the memory and
whip myself to froth, to an unsafe visibility.

i lie all at once
in each bed i have ever had. i shutter my warm face and
catapult closer in, aware of the blaring window at the foot
of me, of someones crossing the pavement and of the light
i might put out. a bright lead from my sill to the street.

i lie long
and each sleep is had under the animal glaze of glossy
marble pods. the rolling glance of glass eye balls upon me
even though i close and pleat and pin the sheers, the shades.
at the edge of the bed on my palms and knees
i card the bottoms of my feet, scrape each against the face of each.
in boots even when i bare my feet.

i lie still, i turn. i turn in, deep.
like, and with, a biting bug. snug in mission wool and polyfill.
crushed flat between asphalt and nylon and the grease
of my own sore selfcase. i cease
the looking, become a packed crate. an object of the city. it is certain safety
to be overlooked. the right amount of security light does so protect
like mosquito net the abandoned body from the drinking celebrants
of bank or yonge or saint clair west.

i lie flat
the hyperbarren never comes to a complete state of rest. office
buildings sleep deeply, at angles. cars sleep in mounds along the
street. the communal moon sleeps as mashed potatoes do
on hospital plates: instant and discrete.

i cannot bear the public bed.
no rest or restoration can be cultivated on the bare plains of a plastic mattress.
nothing grows from the salt of a social worker's cracked brow.
though i did adore the circular hum arranged out from the
celestial spread of security lights and ever open sobs of snores. one night
while watching from the arrow slot, car headlights split the parking lot
long after smokes and checks and shit/shower/brush/lock.
the agent assigned to my name and file returned from leave and crossed the ward
and came quietly through the fire and safety door
that split the gendered dormitory floor by metric of 'for us' and 'yours'. he leaned over each

of my bunkmate's sleep then sat, on crackling pissproof vinyl,
down beside my swollen feet. the chickenwire windowglass split the moon and too its
light as he told me a few things about becoming a man and asked if i would like
to see the slashes in his cheeks. i told him i could clearly see.
he left soon after. never touching me.

i know to lie low,
to sink below the litterline, to soften into pavingstones like they were not
cement but softest darkest ancient peat. to say over to any other huddlers
that it is preferable to slip inside the silt of the metropolitan night,
to lay outside along the line that divides the late from the lost
the kind hand of drugs always upon us.
not slit by the thin razors of self-surveillance, recrimination.
not like this in a hoarder's heap
of soft sheets and luxury electronics and tenant-controlled
electric baseboard on-demand heat.
an object amongst objects, a local to my mailbox, staircase, eavestrough, lease.

i lie eyeless in my easeful now. untoothed too. i bleat.
i rise a chyme of recent meals and think on them, on the price
of vegetables and the price of meat. knowing means naught.
i have stopped giving when asked on the street.

HYPERBARREN THREE: the bed of terrible wishes, the pissed on bed

the hare is a cup. the reaper reseeding.
the wheel is recursive. the fortune a fable.

lay three shades of bastard rider-waite
on the blanket in a row between two torches
and with yr longest blackest nail devein
the outcome there described
in terms of painted kicking hare
who runs along the scythe that swings
in countertime to fortune's world-sized
torture wheel.
o plus while i am working
out precisely what that means
if you could please pass by the pharmaprix and pick up my scripts on yr way over
for a reading that would be so
solid and great of you.

assemble yr undead and present them to me
line them up like lenses
that i may see what lies beyond this bus stop.
paint a fouler face over mine, greet the line.
intimidate the error.
o and if you could get me a spot at that call
centre you night-manage i would appreciate
the cheque and the fluorescents. gold star
vocce on the line for usa answering yr
complaints from dot ca!
it is important to smile when you say.

the desk is a slab. the asshole a graveyard.
the street is a bed. adulthood a factory.

to take is to have, to have is to hoard.
make a bread of your histrionics and eat it with me.
ici we bind ourselves with different bandages.
different balms for fresher blisters.
if you wouldn't mind just
taking a few steps back i need the space
in this moment. give me that and i will
show you how to then get in to me by way of
gifts and flattery.
you be the wit at the table and i will
copy how you sit.

bring me something red, something bridal,
something rotting, and one thing that is stably true. bring me a ring and a ladder and a bucket to shit into

and i will initiate you, addressee.

ever should you think of me. as we are both now thinking of the we
i made of us.

to you i will pass on my most best mystery:

how to puke up poppies

with glory girlish soundless grace - to arch balletic

and simply place

yr contents gently down,

thus.

HYPERBARREN FOUR: deathbed

in particular, you.
complete the carriage of us to them
by folding neatly each anticipated hurt
father to mother, hem to hem.

substantial death deals substantial wound
and the immediate death is a bully to the working spirit.
don't lose hope. lose yourself out of enchainment

get to know your aims, sight truer down the bowing barrel
that is you. will be evergreen as you. will weather and winter
and in the end untrue the icon of you. defeat will be organic

will organicize you in a manner no diet or maxim or ritual could ever do.
unspirited corpus. lovely lonely old you. lose yourself out of signification in
pursuit of some you

wild green youngness is the shoot, sight carefully. aim true.
make a baby of yourself i guess. swaddle the ghost you are growing. the spectral
plant that demands mention - we cannot break these terms of each other: ghost, spectral.

here are the holes of each body that wrote on the world before you had grip of the stylus.
here are the works that were done on the field before you had sense and subsumption.
here are actual places where other people walked down the ground before you did that.
and here are their deathbeds. they are rectangular tiles. white cement on the path

sleeping at the bathhouse, here are your dead. pushing out a paper, here are your dead.
sitting in the clinic, here are your dead. they are your dead. your dead. your very own dead.
have another cigarette. tread harder on the grass. press the buildings around you
down with the weight of your head

be only and alone but be hopeful, be a pine. redwood. fir. balsam. push sap and fuck only in forest fires,
only at the occasion of your own complete conflagration. think how long it will take them to put you out.
think how many of them will come to put you out. no, not burning, but fucking
(for _____, the dead)

HYPERBARREN FIVE: the neatlymade

the desk is a slab. the asshole a graveyard.
the street is a bed. adulthood a factory.

work is a wetnurse. the womb is a purse.
posture is patience. endurance is graft.

the body a calendar. the blister a pack.
the chair is a corset. the punk scene's a shop.

the call is a look. the home is a script.
every fist is a cunt. affection a wage.

the houseplant a hearth. the willow a drain.
the hothouse an arbour. the clinic the common.

the balm is gilead. the mirror is PrEP.
community is foodstuff. the declarative a trap.

HYPERBARREN SIX: the desk

the flat figure of the assumed position:
human furniture, the desk accepts and conditions
the space between speaking human faces.
claims are laid along with tickets and receipts and
font fourteen printed intake sheets. hands were lain
down in various states of breaking hold.
across the desk, which is itself a dense indrawing of occasion:
breath catches on the writing surface. obedience pools beneath it,
salt of roads and delayed water of winter are witness to the snoring and bluing of
all things beneath the waterline of the magnificent desk.
all work waits for whatever takes place
at the desk is necessarily work.
take a seat, with you in a moment. in this moment i am with you,
the seat is yours to have forever. for as long as you like.
you can sit there with me
it is a long time before anything happens.
when it does happen, it is work.
we sit across from each other now, at the work. the work is between us
and it is a stabilizing force. it is heavy with cabinets, this work. bluster
of records, here we will keep no real part of you.
less vital than a diary, the record you submit to me here at the occasion
of our working. we construct together - a we is borne out on the longest
limb of the tree. we are far from the drinking root and long from the
polished desk. some place between the sawmill and the boring insect.
it is only a small scene, our four hands move against paper
morning birds at roost atop a broad flat branch.
together, we will find a place for you,
we will get you housed.

HYPERBARREN SEVEN: the inflatable bed

i came to this university but am beholden to the past:
burning down and down owhite water
a lost clog cast into the lot of the consumption complex
i wreathe to weave to slight owhite water,
the frush of whose foam pleases girls completely.
compulsively choral, the cabaret of blanched horrors
heaves and rushes with a rapid fit of hydrangeas,
happiness overcomes the frost and each apology bursts,
babbles small flies, pleads for grease, for release.

i came but
can only produce the ichor i brew out of overlong sleeping,
a brook of fatwax, a thrum of catarrh, the waste of my throatbox
pressed to gold plate and made current.
it is with these tokens of exchange
that i had intended to come and sit by the good wood table
and pick up dropped seeds with my bent thumb, a smelt run of
paperbacks piling against my long shore i had hoped to
uncrease the money caught between folds in the excess,
ribbons of white in the caul.

i am out here doing a bad imitation of you at your best. least bluff,
blown away. builder's fluff bleeds out of my bottom body, clothes away.
i am the first in my class to go trinkling crystal vases through her fingertips.
cuticles nipped to the quick and pink about it. seething out and snatching up a thing to recess with it
behind her comfort. seasons of shade.
thissss voice i have certainly practiced, the fag-end of a theatre
technique that shakes the bodily vapour out of each leg, long muscles lie unbrained. bored at play.
the face reverts to lake and will stutter light and refleck only the psychotic break which leaks the warm
egg of heartbroken decision onto every
dried out face.

when i go they will find only pr0b:
the porn that never was but still became the breaking stain the
cup of crushed space
strained wavebreaks clap
a bowl of bursting breaks
an ancient and harassed place.

politely i find i must excuse myself on account of the dust,
being a result of the mites and my neglect to navigate or entomb in memory
the leadshot i had expected to eat and enjoy. even now agonized song cruets forth, bitterling
with crumby edges, squealing after having been forced
to repeat the words of the world from the still-warm
human pages of joyce's deadalus' good homer, who is now held in my

unwilling possession - cyclic deep storage belowly bound to only
earth or peat, not mind. take note:

WE ARE YOUR MAD

TRYING TO CLOSE A COAT OVER THE PAST

now be sure that in your suicide you slash one leg backwards into history, a swimmer kicking in the last.

HYPERBARREN: *bleat*: the lambing bed

phasic then: demotic on a lunching bench
supposing another cigarette

phasic now: the widow sweeps
her walk in cardigan of white
acrylic knot by plastic broom
bluebristled, both, both in bloom.

frayed from work, just now returning
by public channels
transit to some place
unfixed. **shelterside a woman
forgets again where she left
her apartment**, cannot return.

a bubble of air passes, announcing now
the path from plastic rig
to inner carriage
and out blips another one
before softmint green and
unprepared paramedic eyes
not wet with worry but with work and
care taken to ease the point out. quick
like that rabbit. fast as a cat.

phasic then: it is july outside
day darting through oil
slow
and we are abed. you are by me, injecting
testosterone into your thigh
and hating it
and i help with the needle.

phasic now: a man of unknown age
throws high his green apple as he crosses
below my window. catches it against
the junction of neck and chest,
holds it like a baby's head.
how high they throw us
when they are sure of return.

HYPERBARREN: *bleat*: the calving bed

woe and world-big sorrow
salt in the tea and the tread
of mistakes against me. all
faults come for the neurotic,
find her out and shell her.

rushing and late to the
working world. first clamour
then lists. come trade off
with me. you teach the engineers
to speak and i will do yr
portrait in radishes, bulbs
and laps of mustard greens.
how is it even that growing
things push up from the
soil in times like these? here
all is salt and snow and branch
and gravel skittering on streets.

widest most encouraging
brush i paint you with i will
a mouth from stillness and
out from that a ribbon of
resistance. fool to spoil such
fine materials, some tutor
says across my smock. not wise
to raise the worry there
or wrinkle up the eye. best
be statue, still and giving
angles.

best give generously of oversight.
light letters sent into the void
hoarse after calling so many
times. hoarse prose, unquick:
winter stables built of daub
and wattle. that's shit and sticks
and mud if yr able to scrape
any up in a season like this.

i find myself:
fallow, pretty word.
stubble of crops cut back
to the scalp. eaters of hair
at their boards folding bread

and kissing each loaves with
the side of an onion-dyed egg.
ukrainian graveyard
chapel small as a chicken hutch
how we beat the red pump
to haul groundwater up
laughing in stockings
splashing our legs
with the liquor of bodies.

HYPERBARREN: *bleat*: the foaling bed

fugue would have me
run this through: the subject
melody meeting again in
ranging register. i have
tumbled to alto on account
of cigarettes. before i worked
the desk i worked the counter
and across that i spread
little and less. before the
counter the bank of phones
and there i took in american calls
and american insults and american
praises and i rode the late bus
home along industrial barrens
thinking soon to toronto,
o me and my money.

fat bag of cash it was
thousand and change
that i held to my body.
interprovincial move
merits no great clamour
save for when a person
is sixteen and leaving.

to go out and not remember where it was you were headed

lost lot uncounted, thrown
against the foaming gates
of the hydroelectric dam.
so i wandered, useless as
a dry cleaner's thin ticket:
underdressed for the wind
and not bound to any
school or place. acid rises
in the neck and alleys fan
about me offering here
and there a quiet
spot to vomit against
the cobbles.

think less of the discomfort
of others, of final lights put
out under cups or pillows.
unclip the family dog from

nylon lead and run her off.
overdraw from each account
and kiss your daughter
in her cot bed then drive
as agatha christie did: away.

HYPERBARREN: *bleat*: the kidding bed

or don't. caress and pluck
your carcass. **lift and swaddle**
each instance of fat. note
the bones if you've got those.
puddle yrself and make
salt of what gathers. this
road is the narrowest possible
path and there is a fee
to be paid out at the instance
of each waymarking stone. these
rocks are owned
you are renting this crossing.

ferryman meets **the**
unlit lamp on the
corner and again
all things concede to
convene at the ex. only
in the past will all
ways cross, so it is here
that the unlit lamp
takes her **sore boots** off.

marked all over by manners
politeness shows out
whenever clothes
are rubbed away
by polishing. ancient noise
that burst of apology.
first song learned,
sung out for company. if
you brush against me you
are company and i apologize
for the state of the room. if
i startle you in the grocery
aisle with my strange face i
apologize, truly sorry.

post at the gate. pricked
by the working world
the day is a thing of
thumbprints and it
is a wonder she rises at all
but she did. wild, she did.
no accountant registered

her but she did. no schoolbook
made of her an example
but steady, she did.

haste, bouncing
shortcrust of concern.
there was a moment's
rush and at that tide
i rose and wrote. now
over me grow rugosa
wild and gnarled and
shot through with wasps.

some call must come
and i to it. indecency
or riot anything please
but obligation.

HYPERBARREN EIGHT: in faith

will i remember
each place
in faith
where i lay
or washed
or ate.

gone from me
returned keys

outside of me
air then walls
then city

orderly
as should be

no open
hours

only hoard
of privacy

carpet
over board
owned
objects

title
lease
receipt

and fault

my own
belonging.

lonely
hold

of cloth
of wood.

reorient
again

be stood before
novel
door

flow on
salt runnel

brine
tile

dig
burrow

begin
more.

HYPERBARREN NINE: come back to bed

look all you will
i will not be caught awkward
bent half-dressed before the glass.
i am couth to spite myself.
bumbling but mannered, polite at my faultlines.
fault found everywhere, friendships lying fallow
family overturned for privacy.
from the lines thin liquid leaks
and from the hairy heart of me
runs pity to my swollen feet..
such stillness has come over
me in recent years, such luxury.
in this wet lull i am
hustling for excitement.
i shore up against the storm of still
on stacks of thrill. cracker cards of dry novelty,
they crease my tongue
and when i try to whistle
would you look what comes:

CODE POEMS

SCRIPT MALL:

red will be rose
LEGEND blue will be cerulean
purple will be pansypetal
black will be acid green acid

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="utf-8"?>
<statement id="1.txt-11">
  <structure id="o28" name="phyllary" />
  <structure id="o29" name="series">
    <character char_type="range_value" name="atypical_count" from="5" to="15"
    upper_restricted="false" from_inclusive="false" />
    <character char_type="range_value" name="count" from="1" to="5" />
  </structure>
  <relation id="r11" name="borne in" from="o28" to="o29" negation="false" />
  <structure id="r12" name="proximal to" from="o29" to="o30" negation="false" />
  <text>phyllaries borne in 1-5 (15+) series proximal to the florets; </text>
</statement>
```

OUTPUT: open bracket edge: the leading wedge of the first incursion. this pink holding is the vanguard. it is pink as pink is bubbling up rubbergum, as it is effete and forced and piggypride skinpack around my body right around to my fatback. opening, holding, enforcing: the gloved hand of the mall security guard who walks me whitely away from the crowd before announcing the pat down.

xml version: this is the ecstasy and the miel. the honey and the amphetamines which dribble my seams indelicately, ever-heaving, ever-sea. cerulean blue, even. even too. xml represents the kissymouth holdface that waits becs and smiles 'l' leaving 'l' a long lip 'l' sidesmile of the proper mouth, xml is the article descending from the given: the staircase, the escalator. xml. mall escalator, closemouthed long line. oiled chain each steel cartridge chinked together a staircase an ellipsis a foldable machine a waterwheel. steel waterwheel.

xml lifts the carried, cartridge bodies waxpink and wane, up and over, around again. one side of her back pitted by boot treads the other smooth and caressed by darkness and abandoned pools of undermall air. tastes of circulation in there. dip and recycle, raise them. xml. smile progress: kissyface tko, uncontrollable laughter pursed into the teeth, longlip closemouth sidelong glance of the lips. conservative, cycling, presenting as unbothered and steady.

she is closed in by the security wedge, the edge of the open closed in between the angle and the inquisition. that is only her left. to the right of her a version requests historicity be adequately controlled and displayed.

equals, acid green. equals the acid of green mall, spring babies heaving on the paved over heather begging for better moneycoins to put on their eyelids for eight to ten hours not counting the rickety denouement. acid green equals.

"i.o." is the moon of jupiter? i.o. is the generalization of personal debt. i.o. is the ownership of fault and dismay, uncertainty excised and i'd to the eyeballs. the first of her kind, i.o. goddamn is a hunted raped white cow who is now a cool moon. could any ever be more loved? adored? whitegowned? i.o. transits, xml wants only to confirm. to lift and carry those upon her craggy body cyclically upwards to i.o.'s eye level that they too may glow with self-sufficiency, ownership, that their rapes may too be so transformative as to phase their open carapaces to belle luminescent vaches white as pharmaceuticals, to bleed the carried of their instances and raise them, render them, planet them.

encoding is real basic: this is the part we just went over. xml carries her burdens, escalating them on shaved steel to be known be transformed be put into i.o. - the encoding is a little weak, because xml doesn't entirely grasp that hers is a form not a function, and i.o.'s busy on her own and

plus she's like a fucking hundred million space kilometres away from the mall.

acid green states that the encoding is in fact informed by utf-8, whose name, like all names, appears in quotations as a hypothetical sense of that old dog self. it might be that their names aren't fixed, it might too be that xml has a fairly limited mechanical perspective on the whole thing and can only guess at sorting who from who when the only input she's got to work with are the flapping tides of pressing bootbottoms and the occasional bright intrusive tumble - the odd cascade and the slickening of her gears are a pleasant condescension to error. the unexpected taste of sliding steely metal seepage, the surprise of her entirely self-possessed pace being microaltered by the increase in viscosity. she dips lower with each long circular breath, wetting herself better, lapping.

still, utf-8 is the unobtrusive tumble of f8, the body which breaks along the way. the voyage, according to xml, is long and carefully planned. according to utf-8 whose f8 is to break up her fucking nice face on the moving staircase it's a long and miserable way back to the starting plate. metal foot of utf-8's grandmother's sewing machine unreplaced, she's strung all around with the garlanded faces of 'oh god' and 'are you ok's, and they help her to a bench by the pissy coindrop fountain and she dabs her fucking nice face which is open now, wide, xml benevolently smiles and continues to move towards the inside.

against a corner unlike the others, a private corner, an edge of the known, a statement: justice its def better than injustice, i will have it and i will have it serve me. so the statement ids the scope of the scene: carry utf-8 to a hospital and for fuckssake get a mop on the second floor escalator it is covered in blood. over.

acid green equals the hypothetical I the imagined 1 the nun who writes with text in hand, interstitially. eleven times threatening: we'll put it in together. and the structure is simple: atrium glass planes overhead and boilers exhaust below. what more could you wish for, stars?

xml lifts up good o28, supposedly, who names herself PHYLLARY and taxonomizes the diverse scuttling beetles of the spectacular capital lift occurring. phyllary (o28 to xml, who knows her true nature but will lift any body any time within the constraint of this programmed behaviour she is obliged to adhere to because if she didn't she'd just be a flat loop she supposes...) phyllary, whose first orgasm was only nine days ago at age twenty eight (29 to xml who counts the lunar calendar as more truthful, but who will carry any passenger as she is obliged to do, as she is formally dedicated to do). phyllary records the passages of the moment, she fits herself into each phase of the moon visible from the breathfogged skingreased glasspane boxtop. hot like a greenhouse in here but cool too for the air circulates through a system quite apart from both xml and phyllary's own doing, an appreciated one.

phyllary closes herself off between i.o. and the soothing lift of the escalator. the machine beneath her feet is steel and grease and she gets on and off with perfect ease. something is a little different about it this eve, the gears run sweet, she notices. she notices much, except for the fact that she is not an observer but a collected item to be observed. she has hair and shakes it now, shedding filaments down into xml's catchy teeth, threads of which xml darlingly dutifully eats.

outside of this, the structure is one of rebar and insulation, ductwork and cream yellow industrial painted service chambers. access is unguarded, more or less, save for the earlier bracketing of the security guard who takes upon himself responsibility for each individual within the apparatus. democratically, the sprinkler system agrees not to release their sensitive wax nibs, not to piss in three sixty the thousand gallons of chlorinated city water that each is a personal guardian of. hold back.

the identification of o29 is no challenge for xml. this one steps on with hesitation, and once on so beats out a repetition. the rubber rail batted no more no less than fifteen times by the first three finger pads of o29. it is typical, she thinks, to be the series. it is so typical to be the series. it is typical to be series. the series sorts the typical into an order of types and sequentializes them. xml ascends with the thumping spool of o29 reeling along her long and eversharp back. the series appreciates the angles present, the repetition, the order, the systemization. series ascends, o29. she last came with someone else, down on level one, a digging rut of good metre had out and in and out by the bank of intact phonebooths.

the character, closed on her own ideas of herself, reiterates her own type: she is only and not like other. she is one who possesses range value, whose location and wealth are broad and she fits wonderfully wherever she goes for she does not go where she doesn't fit. coming out from inclusive, from adjoined to inclusive, she doesn't know herself to be false nor does she name herself false as o28 adopts phyllary in order to impress her friends. the character is of a type and range and value that does not consider herself vulnerable to friends. this is false. she's fairly false. xml carries her to the flat wall, the closed angle, the upper floor of metal framed marble. xml benevolently raises the character type to the second storey and leaves her there. those feet felt like air, she's false.

now the name of the atypical count, as the character of great range and value imagines herself, not named but titled, the name of atypical count is a family honorific that is passed only through invasions. the character, from five to fifteen, has endured the anticipation of what she considers a broaching. she will not report, she is false. xml models the mushmouthed held back laugh, the m smile for the character. the atypical count notices nothing, she is false. she is raised to the second story and delivered from the process without another word.

now the upper level is restricted (xml knows this to be false but is encouraged by security to limit access in hours of low stimulus). it is supposedly grown out from inclusive, this is also false. xml the wise

hypotheticizes this like all names or designations: she will not select inputs or orders or carriage, though she will always reserve them as possibly untrue, unreal, false or not known. the designation holds the place of the body above the bootsoles, each body slashed on each side by the marks of possibility, the double slash.

so it's like false, and the upper level is for rich kids only. s'cool. above, xml senses, at the limit of her program, *that those in subordinate positions in social systems are frequently adept at converting whatever resources they possess into some degree of control over the conditions of reproduction of these social systems*¹. xml exercises this, cycles it. she runs drier.

the character, property... property's a characteristic of an object. ownedness imbued into the owned object, the character owns her own object completely. she is the first of her line to do so, xml senses, politely releasing her again to the level of the othered. the property can possess other properties, this is the capital structural property of the mall. unbound by the wall, the angle that is pressed against, a corridor exhausts hot wind breathed from the open mouth of the eatrium. animal grease weeps from the traps regretting the way it has been. the breath moves up against the underside of xml and at the particulate level, where she is most cognizant, she senses the incorporation of animal suffering into the stingy evaporations of the human suffering she lifts on her back and places elsewhere. occasionally, anachronistically, one character may choose to run backwards.

this descending clatter is connected: acid green caul fat, acid green venular tubing. acid green is the medium in which all toxic bodies are suspended, according to xml. she continues to pool out this substance, spitting it in additions and implications onto all the individual articles who move along her.

the meaning of r11, our own dear eleven, is related distinctly to the text held much earlier. xml doesn't exactly forget, but it is not in her process to track backwards to retrieve the fallen text that eleven now hurries to collect from the grid of xml's beautiful speculative steps. our 11 is borne in, a precious thing, by xml's own body, of xml's own knowing. our 11 is owned as the mall itself may own: property presently occupied by text. she moves liquidly from o28 to o29, knowing, negating. accuses each of their falseness. xml agrees.

ultimately xml does agree. kissyface pucker for this new decree: yr all fucken' false, get off of me.

and the cerulean inner walls of xml's belief close acidly, now greenly, around each trembling leaf. species best suited to grow in shopping malls are : girls, half-time girls, bois and hostas. their conditions for belief are: water's wet, boots're too big, food's trash, sun's to eat. the conditions increase, xml's writers are lifted each unto each, a folding of steel planks that make way for the brief. a moment of repose, susurrations, tapped

keys. our11 holds the rubber in her small hand, a thief. each mall has a thief and each thief has a mall. this one sleeps below the grinding wheel of the people mover, this one breathes in her sleep, sleeps in the lapse of the <'s busy survey, evades and exploits.

small rat, good black eyes, r11 reads what xml returns. r11 loves and knows each of her structural smiles: kissy kitty pucker, bitten bitter laugh smoothed to a rind and the long studied lipline of holding inside. our11 writes off the other girls with a wave of her little rat hand: false bitches, don't trust. get their cameraphones if you can. phyllary unnoticed, consciously, the touch. phyllary lifts herself away from such. but o28 is quicker to grab for her sides, pats herself down, checks out her prides: bank card, id card, bus pass, small mirror. copper ring, silver change, foil winking ball wrapped tightly round tar. there are priorities she knows, this is exactly what they are. but closing, xml, closing she insists. must slow the pace, slow the printing, slow the way of the lift. negation, false. who gives one single fuck?

now the text. it's opened in the corner of the left of what's left. the security cameras glitter lenticular stars in a sheetrock white sky. sleepy babies, all carried, now elsewhere, now known. the text of r11 was dropped, left at home. inconsistencies itch, but they do not slow. xml states this much:

phyllaries borne in 1-5 (15+) series proximal to the florets

become phyllary, her, not the atypical count who assumed herself the protagonist. phyllary will be composed, in part, for having been so bold as to take three names in the course of her carriage. original self, interpellated self, chosen self-marriage. imposition enters here: the pulse is steady, xml grinds and our11 is ready. phyllary is borne in, one to five hours per session. each day comprises fifteen plus hours of lessons. from the preemptive machine engagement of the air circulation system which tickles the sleepers and kicks every bitch in her belly as she falls (o28 is hurt in the face, will say it was a fight to spare the disgrace). phyllary is borne in, over segmented hours, constructively ordered she is sequenced into flowers. open ended, semi-coloned, xml allows length in the lead: spooling out, drooling out, an essay cast in epoxy in thick acid green. proximal to the florets, near to the bunch. phyllary so defined is exalted, recalled. xml deeply processes the context and thrall in which those carried are concreted, bound, materialized. the angular jut of closure prefaces the slanted wall, the text shuts. there it was. close bracket. that's all.

IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH:

```
<header class="internal">  
  <div class="container">  
    <h2>  
      Our actions    </h2>
```

2

in the prodrome there is space: here, i am learning about fugue states. of persistent morbid jealousy. post trauma. tacrolimus induced. resulting from prednisone self-medication. familiar transplant patient meds: i am wandering into dear incised-upon carlo here at this strange address. the flâneur, the loiterer, lingers here too. performs agonies of idleness as the fugueur does pass.

fugue describes the motility of subject. musically, the recurring mobile trill of tune is named the subject melody in a compositional fugue. the subject strays, deplaces, depersonalizes. the teenage fugue just wanders off at lunch hour and does not return with the bell.

still, in the space preceding the outcome some conditions may be wrestled and overcome. in synthetic singlet, shining with sweat, they are wrestled. crotch to crotch, conditions are flipped and pinned. forced to the ground with the body. held there with the body. the conditions meet the body and are held against the lowest plane, made still. fixed, as such. resolved.

<
after a couple of breaths, i get the lid off. the box is cedar, a polished place to keep human cinders.
opening up

header class

the header has to read something obvious, something about class. i come from fiscally well people, for the most part. sound of bank account. i am not so sound. long ago i was one of a we and we tried to sort out whether class carried like sound. i supposed then and now that it did so.

=

this means it flows like a charge - comes through in two parallel bars, conducted so as to reach me in the here from way back there in the then. arms across change, tubular vein. through and running the subject of this i is made-

"

-between little winking fingers of the hypothetical, between marks, between instances of pretend and say-it-were-so.

internal

here's the internal: i sat on a picnic table in the centre of a pen of inward facing barbed wire. this was a shelter and the table was for smoking at. i sat on the eating surface and my bootsoles went where asses ought to. this was the end of summer, the beginning of the school year. as i grow older i will tell it differently, i will age out of excitement and into acceptance. for now i am there rubbing the zitty back of the very thin girl whose mother drank under the weight of her unborn being. the worst of it always yet to come in that place, the day always turning over into cold vomit or other night messes. here is supposed to be a story about something that happened but i am peeling away from it because it is class that will describe everything and i am not sure about that, i am not sure about pushing that back into the world. when i think about being in the world, staying in the world, i think so much about how what i describe to myself is in fact an age. the realm between poles where you do not need help or adjustment to fit in, to feed yourself, to follow a waiter to a table and read the list of edibles. this is a short and stupid age. there, so far, has been so much trying and reaching and dropping altogether. already i feel such pity for my father, he is aging fast. his teeth hurt him all of the time. this hurts my teeth. i must cancel my therapist's appointment on wednesday in order to work on this. not on my teeth but on being able to get to the precipice, to tell this bit of the story. winding inwards, i am on the narrowest road possible. i am waiting to smoke a cigarette, i am waiting to eat something. class was there in the way i spoke and it outed me so i changed it, i dropped the words and i practiced looking stunned and sour, i imitated myself into something large enough to fill the space required. my voice was warped by speech and drama school. i studied theatre in that era, was always rehearsing my voice. how did i modulate my tone exactly? how did i ready myself for that punitive role. shuttered tongue, blank everything. monday morning

of the nonexistent soul.

"

outside of this the flinching double wink of quotation marks threaten disclosure. everything contained by the flick flick of the pretend, made smaller by it.

>

i shut the box early, before hope gets out. the trick is that i know hope lies at the bottom, i have practiced that myth. i slam the lid on the skirts of disgust and despair and they squirm, hateful minnows in a painful net. mine for the moment.

<

another long series of breaths and i get the lid open again. anxiety exhausts pollution. she fumes black sorrow.

div class

i know thoroughly that i cannot speak because the class division is too great, i feel too sorry for myself. in fugue these scenes recede, separating themselves from the meat of me. undine on the lunar beach. shores of nothing washing up out of the dry sea. o others o chorus o speak this for me.

=

the dividing lines bifurcate me wholly. i am whole parts of distantly related nothings. i am waiting to pee, i am waiting for my library books to come in. i am running outwards to nothing, meeting nothing on the other side. this is the balance that rests between my two bright i's. the channel that flows in both directions at once, leaving myself and arriving at performance.

"

flicking dismissal, observe the permissions of fable: here lies the pretend, here emphasized is the supposed.

container

i am supposed to be writing for myself some kind of container. it comes out funeral urn, the deathwish presiding in dramatic makeup over the party leftovers. the deathwish is gorging herself at night, her actions private and held inside. the deathwish lies her neck down in traffic at the corner of lincoln and saint marc. the deathwish is backed up against the wall in a hospital gown, the deathwish is walking home with

her boyfriend at the time, walking with carlo and
feeling fairly alright. she comes towards him and juts,
rubs out feelings. wax crayon final letters. she gives
much to the world and comes away with little. she
gives little to the world and comes away with much.
"

all this supposedly, all this in fact false, for it is held
within the hypothetical double flinch.

>

i shut the box, repeating. i close the same lid again.

<

a cycle of breaths taken in through the nose and out
through the mouth. a cycle of wishes pinned like
tissue dress patterns to my arms and back. a complete
cycle respires and again i crack the lid, letting out the
antithetical.

h2

hate to. hate to do that. hate to survive myself. hate to
you, addressed as mail. hate to the world, my only
gift. hate to run out of vitriol, hate to leave, hate to let
you do that again. hate to go. a quick hate had up
against the wall. hate to bow to convention and hate to
act the same way every time. hate to let out the breath
i have been holding. hate to see you suffer like this,
what could i say to convince you to come home? hate
to come home to nothing again. to the lights out. to
the dogs gone. to the empty cursor that is not blinking
but going away and returning spitefully, showing what
it can do that i cannot. hate to pity in this way my own
self. hate to admit it but it's true, that thing you said
about me so long ago. hate to draw a portrait in this
manner but it's actual and happening and isn't
slowing. hate to sit by myself in the other room while
you two talk. hate to produce this much and get
nothing out of it. hate to put in the work and come
away with more owed time. hate to owe like this. debt
on all fronts. hate to cool as i do, against nothing. hate
to fear a gender, of all things. a category so large it
cannot be conceived of. hate to let this fertility run out
to nothing. hate to talk so much to the moon and never
really get anywhere in our relationship. ultimately
who cares. again, getting nowhere.

>

shut the lid on hate, her pointy fingers crimping in the
lid. tonight maybe i will buff polish and paint her
nails.

Our actions

from outside of i the voice observes: Our actions.
summer stone fruits that must for winter be preserved.
make the season wait. our actions have impacts, our
actions precede our words. our actions drag steel
shovels down the roads, our actions clear gravel salt
and the late approximation of snow. our actions are to
tread and sow. our actions are the alberta of the social
body, our actions are crossed over with abandoned
bodies. our actions grow the grain of next day. our
actions do not take into account the creeping
consequence, our actions do not carry those who
cannot keep up. our actions move on without you. our
actions incorporate you willing or not.

<

bracketed by box lids,

/

the backwards slash of the jumper from the bridge. her
last act above the water being gesture.

h2

hate to go, hate to stay.

>

shut the cedar top on that before the splash.

space and light filter in, enlivening the filth of
recollection. dreary sludge of days worked up to
scummy froth. the ladle dips **a cup of strained space**
breaks over its lip. we are supposed to be hungry at
the sight of it. grateful when we eat. postures of
appreciation, stalagmite structures under calcite drip.
grow tall so slow you do not mark the change. long
widows standing at security windows, workers bring
relief and shadows. our conditions must be overcome.
youth must not pass into statuary, must be gardened.
tender rows of dogroses at the edge of ornamentation.
maybe on a big enough paper i could draw it all.
illustrate like blake the circling structure of the hollow
hall. the standing figures and adenoidal call of helpers
looking for their target populations in the pre-sexual
dark. this place smells of nothing, of water. romance
passes by at a clip. goes on looking. printed word
evades this place with equal skill.

enchantments pass within this space. what am i
architecting, other than shame? a quiet place for
shame to stand, a tunnel below and between selves. a

place for loaves to lie unleavened, white moons of
milled fields. dross into cake, cake into flesh.
execution always on the other side of cake. place for
comatose prose. place for stillborn poetry. smoking
sporeclouds burst from paper bellies, ribs reach for
each other wanting only to close back in and so go to
sleep. unfulfilled circuit. treasures of doubt.

THE UNLIT LAMP:

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3

<
shadow puppet of a rover dog's mouth
open and begging against
the whole stupid bedroom wall.

/
open story broken by a slap, slanting from the up right
to down left, a right-handed slap. no strike like that
was ever felt till eighteen. anvil-hard, it lands. it is not
pain, but surprise that effectively casts off the i.

ul
stupid mute i make out of you, unlit wick. unbright
candle. shape yr wordless wax, all quiet and vapour.
men interrupt the unlit light.

>
a man's arm closes around the wick, her cotton cord
runs short and does not come up over his elbow when
he strangles her.

<
shadow puppet of a crocodile's mouth
curled up and cruel against
the whole unprepared bedroom wall.

/
this time the slap is invited, the small matter of love is
butler and opens the front door for the man who is
pleased, who poses against the frame knowing how
like a photograph he appears. again it is a right handed
slice that comes in from high and concludes left of the
chin.

li
she is lit with sinister purpose and her french bed is
also lit. she sleeps between the seats on coachcanada,
between the cushions of his girlfriend's couch while
she is away at business. the lit wick spits when made
bright, taking her place sometimes on a futon in
ottawa and sometimes on a mattress in toronto and
sometimes on a polished floor in either place. silence
growing underneath each fast abandoned bed.

>

in her own elbow she closes over herself the covers of
her flesh, indecipherable from hoodie. they are one
and the same, these bags that contain.

<
shadow puppet of a fox's open mouth
chatty lipsmacker licking and snapping
against the whole foolish bedroom wall.

/
the slap is expected and therefore not delivered. a
moment's hang then it crashes across her whole front
face, slashing right down to left, crushing gums
against labrets.

ul
the unlit lamp makes no light at all but talks
ceaselessly until interrupted. from here, the finger
across the lips and the statement that 'you are really a
dumb bitch' is made in such intonation as to
inflect/inflict agreement only. here pass the last
eyeroll and eyebrow crook to ever peak the unlit
lighter's face.

>
bic unflicked, she gives a weakling peaky arch of an
overplucked brow and that object 'her' is fucked on
knees on carpet. bent everywhere.

<
unbent then bent the other way. these were not meant
to be expressions of this nature.

/
the slash is best described as the anticipated kind,
having little to no lasting effect. evaporating like a
rice cracker on the roof of the mouth - leaving the
trace of a tacky sting when pulled away from.

div
what fresh bitchery is this. divertissement is so
described by its fourth heading of the oxford college
dictionary (plastic wrapped second hand store edition,
dating 1949) as being *a series of such performances*.
and so it is, in sequence, a longish string of mostly the
same thing. each instance made into a carnelian bead
and pushed with little sweat further down the line of
cord. each piece repeating the fold before-

>
each knee bending her fat body down to floor.

<
a shadow puppet of a jack hare's mouth
made open in anticipation and cast
against the whole hated bedroom wall.

!
leaping love and excitement. the entire carcass lifts in
joy. dust falls from shelves and bus tickets flutter to
the floor. needles fall from tables and pitbull puppies
scatter joyful underfoot. garbages blow over in the
wind and expel beautiful unwanted plastics out over
dundas and dupont. some small contact. some notice

given. upbright light flutters in the breeze of flattery.
obsesses in the cool shade of being parted. grade
eleven is repeated this time in etobicoke and for
photography class the unlit wick is hardly dim. she
develops black and whites of him and later on her
small room's floor she grieves on them, dropping cries
all over darkroom captures of that flat slick body.
romance seethes and all else recedes.

--
the cn rail rocks all it passes. the unlit torch lies on her
one inch mattress in her six foot room in toronto
proper, trackside address. she flicks her d-cell
batteries and checks to see if she still glows. she does
and it is quick as ever. through her racks the sway of
train. the whole house shudders and downstairs
roommates roll out their rigs and unfold little folded
papers. sachets rattle hushy whispers all around her
heaves the train. it flows below her bedroom window
and shoves the house like a shoulder in the gut that
stutters over and over heaving here passes the freight
of the country at night.

/

some space is given before the next strike so this one
is composed mainly of remembering. of talking over
email on the size of the bite or the slime of the
underwear or the fux had last night. when it comes it
is samely and shapely and right, entering high and
then driving across and down through her fight. she's
fisty and struggling and that's no matter.

.

the end breaks in before it has even started. the
conclusion interrupts the unlit lamp. she is in ottawa
being taken out for a bowl of coffee by an old friend
who says that you must stay away, stop, do not
continue. she is listening in a sense, in the sense that
she is split and parsed. diverted into her grammatical
parts. her active verb does not nod or agree, but
wrestles patiently against the warner waving flares.
can everyone not see that she, the unlit firestarter
stick, is possessed of great and boundless PWR? that
she will not fail out of her love and so succumb to the
violence inherent. that the lamp cannot be put out like
that. that the light comes from elsewhere? can her old
crew not see that she is first in her series, first of her
kind, unprecedented and beloved and by the very
nature of her she is infinitely changing? will change
all she touches? can they not believe her? not perceive
her strength of will and supernatural ability? not taste
the ion charge in air when she and he are in company,
not tell the mutative power of her desire? can no one
see or appreciate her intent?

navbar

so preceded by a conclusion the unlit lamp is thrown
into her own grammar. she does not want to check her
structure, not at this very fragile time - she is still
growing her structure to accommodate him. this will
not become interesting until much later when she must
reformulate her shape in order to break apart the
image of this fuck. held like a breath inside her chest.
still there, but only when she sleeps or bends. being an

alcoholic he is drawn by magnet to the bar. and she,
the last goose in his vee, trails him there with her fake
i.d.

-
the dash comprises all that passes between the
cigarettes and glasses black floor stuck with beery
lashes. herein is held all turns and passes, arches and
slithers and industrial music for the masses all very
much the same and still in fashion to be drilled in the
bathroom while the bouncer watches else leaves
smoking and righteous and pitifully still lashed to the
prow of the ship that his dick was the mast of... -

collapse

and after the dash holding all: the collapse. predicted
already by old knowing friends the collapse is
excremental in tone and volume, each time. he pisses
the bed drunk and she wades through the snow
throwing ice at his windows until he lets her back into
the house. he rapes the mouth of her friend and she
passes through that like a breath, the portable phone
against her unlit ear as he drives chef's knives into the
counter to perforate the news. the lamp is complicit in
every way.

--
and the bus rocks her too, not unlike the train. in
transit back to her bedroom and highschool again.
stuttercut across her whole body the lamp is pulled
through the night. she's out front of the vehicle
beaming halogen bright. she's hitching from herb's,
the truckstop midpoint. she's waiting in kingston for a
connection and a light.
doubled up on the greyhound she's reflected in glass.
face like a flashlight done over in shimmer, the flat
waste of the highway side rushing out and within her.
darlington nuclear's treasured teal glow. the purpling
yellow smog of mississauga predicting toronto. along
the tracks and back to mattress.

>
she binds an arm across her eyes to shut out the
moreish day that tries to come across her face.

<
shadow puppet of a camel
long lips open at the tips a sour and disapproving kiss
against the whole enclosing bedroom wall.

/
a right handed man with much experience in the craft
slapped the ass of the unlit lamp. it makes for difficult
sitting in the class titled 'society culture & change'.
the still-dark wick is shifting weight from swollen left
to welted right when as a group they turn to chapter
eight, let's say, and there is a photo of her street kid
crew from back in the day. daisy and eve and marie
from hull just there on the page explaining antisocial
behaviour in runaway teens. the ever-off flashlight is
just out of the frame, there's a scrap of her shoulder
and she remembers the day. money for photos, more
money for a touch. throw an arm around tourists and
hold yr rat up for the flash. squeegee on king eddy and

get an older punk to buy a 2lit of cider. go down to the broken bridge and try not to get grabbed by anyone. crew up with other younger kids - twinkies were anyone new to the street. backmemory backwash of poseurs and creepers and boots cut off feet.

div

this is the divertissement repeating again - this is the chorus, the hookline, refrain. another bead of experience shoved down the string. synchronous, selfmeeting, the inevitable ring. divertissement is entertainment, the little show on the side. the bubbling up of coincidence that infiltrates chronology and pride. in lockstep the lamp is carried backwards. unwelcome long stride. unwelcome conforming rhyme.

>

quietly she closes the textbook on the meat of her hand. while teacher talks she palms the page across and away from the spine, it burps and rips and comes out fairly neat. the brand new book depleted of one instance of the edge of her image. no longer a portal, the page is folded and placed in keeping with other precious objects that for many years will remain to upsetting to visit with. it will be lost on purpose in some future decade and sorely missed as it will always be suspected by others of never having existed.

<

the unlit match cracks numerous texts open to that page in the coming semester. she steals most of them and gives them away to friends in the smoking section. her fame increases and she gets swollen on that.

!

once more the leap and flush of love sparks bright below her and cures the deadheadlight of her bruises. passionate sorrow heals what ice and advil cannot correct. up jumps the body and the voice comes to meet it. upright and upbright like no other drug can incite. away and springing. all things grow in her and she is a bed of pansies she is a row of lilacs she is an entire fungal bloom that carpets the quiet wood and phosphoresces to itself at night.

--

in toronto the train passes by and pleats the night in even measures of space and time. the house on bartlett hitches in time. plates of cigarette ash rattle and pitbull puppies whine. across the unlit lamp rows of lights spark and dim as the grainer trundles by. it is summer by now and the heat of the room is too great for even heroin to suppress. dash and line of dirty sneaker prints pattern her mattress, all of the living are out on the roof. some housemates are pigeons, some are cats. one is a dead bulb, still one more is a knife. the weight of the train sluices air and all the attendants are quiet up there. they open their arms and take a bath in the air. small bliss then the last car recedes to remainder and all too soon it is over. august plops down atop them.

everyone pitches for the lamp's greyhound ticket but characteristically the busride is abysmal. electric blue sloshes in the chemical toilet and the unlit wick is sick into it. each lash of acid met in happy handshake by a sweeping slash of blue. she heaves and heaves and tries to keep her head up out of it for this disgusts her deeply. sick on the bus. anathema. six unceasing hours until ottawa.

/

a man who favours his right hand slaps and squeezes our lamp's face. he turns it right, then left, and spits into her ever dimming eyes. love leaps from somewhere and strikes her from behind.

.

preceding all, the conclusion. the inevitable end. she is kneeling by his computer desk and he asks her to read this email composed by two exes of his. they have twined like tree and vine to hold each other up to the light of some monitor screen somewhere in a city far from here. both have gone far in years and clicks and are reflecting back some small part of his dementing warping influence upon their own quite separate lives. they detail at length what he broke in them. he feigns a wound and the unlit wick condescends to lick the place he claims to be hurt by their words but the lamp knows she knows she knows she knows.

container

the body is a container that holds all it has known. it pours out sore knowing when pressed for its ghosts.

-

the dash is the exit of all sense and prediction. the dash is the mark that outlines the incision. here rest all the inflections of those who wrote over her. here rest all the corrections that she made in her shape to fit better the outline of his popular name. she is the form around the blast site that the dash describes. precluded the container collapses. slaps down on its contents. disperses paper money and needle tips and rent receipts and stolen wallets. exhausts years of weeping yet to come. the unlit lamp leaves for nowhere, uncontained and contrarily sore at every boundary. of herself she makes a fluid. she runs across the table, down the stairwell and through the buffed hallway of the greyhound terminal.

fluid

more liquid than ever before. this busride cannot slush her anymore. she is decomposed, ungrammatical. kilometres whip beneath the unlit paraffin lamp that is her wet and caustic self. cities peel out from under her seat and when toronto rises to meet them she slides lowly below its reaching hands and excuses herself through the sewers and back up the toilet into her place by the tracks.

--
when the car pounds the rented house she is for an
instant replaced back into her body which is stiff from
disuse. the train makes a high wheeling scream that
folds into thudding and under that beats the deep bass
of repeating. repeating repeating. repeating repeating.
repeating repeating. repeating repeating.

>
lulled shut for the first time in too long the lamp
sleeps. out like a light. out like the streets.

HAIBUN CYCLE

TUMULUS:

let us make it september or so. late august, certainly not winter,
but without flies so indeed perhaps into the change of fall.
night of blue character, billowing evening tent held up in peaks by streetlights.
iron crowns on globes of orange pricking back the nine o'clock.
the landside aperture of atwater metro is rung around with parc and monument,
draining off around the back, becoming a small black lawn before the old children's hospital.
below the statue hums the shadow of protest rally point energy,
hi-fizz buzzy loudspeakers amplified the call of (what was her name, the woman that led the protest).
i am coming up from the hen, which marks this as 2006 for i am travelling up to my apartment
at the cross of lincoln and st. mathieu. more on the den of ghosts across the street,
more some other time. this night is concerned only with the flow of light
from the glass house of the metro entrance. glass doors trimmed in grey rubber
beat against their frames. pivot and pound. hot air from the tunnels and human ammonia.
piss and tile dust. subway cars rush and breathe heavy below.
at street level one door is caught open, a man is lying there on the poured cement step.
of the crowd i am in, most walk around him, taking alternative entrances.
shoulder to door, forcing their way into the fetid wind.
i am walking slowly enough, and not into the metro.
i see the woman step full heel onto the man's upturned palm.
she carries on through the gate and the grounded man does not move.
he is dead here. this is when i realize. uncharacteristically i do nothing,
i raise no sound about me. i carry on home.

house of displaced lords
tunnel or barrow below
no matter to them.

PAIRS AIDANTES:

assertive weeping sometimes holds me by the face, drills me there.
the things i have done the things i have seen done the accusations i could raise.
we are expected to receive help and then return it.
we are expected to donate the same amount of blood we drew from the spoiling bank.
we are expected to emerge as flies do as youth services workers as travailleuses de rue,
we are expected to bear backpacks of dull consequence of condoms and socks
we are expected to stand with one leg outside in the weather the other in the drop-in centre,
i was so surprised to find this was exactly the measure of what i did.
warm animal of the filing cabinet, rocking mother of the funding report,
master of the sign-in binder, author of the rules of respect oh holy graven flip chart newsprint sheet.
age of soft markers hard boundaries.
impotence of credibility, wormcasts of experience a pay stub and a pack of cigs.
age of marks and graves - pious guilt the size of a bulletin board
against which i pinned the printed photos of the newly deceased.
sentimentality rushes and wanes, corresponds to gluts of public funding
then to the florid recess of that changeable money.
standing outside the drop-in even you could tell that i was staff, thready, frayed, harassed.
embarrassing myself over and over, the point long lost off my needle.

to travel between
last evening and tomorrow
try sleeping outside.

GREAT PORT:

great nighttime port of the eastern end. district of merchant sailing ships slash bodies.
i know no name for what lives here, only that that the large low beast
cannot abide the anglophone wastes. against the pier of lamps and shops
bangs and rocks the hollow hull of the conceptual ship.
the *connaissance de la fugue* is tied and moored
against the shore of **Dans La Rue**.
it is the working day and i am rowing toward the hulk.
i push my slip down ontario street, traversing the span between papineau and plessis.
in practical terms i am front-line staff.
i have made the transit from us to them and now command my own broad **desk**.
o laminate spread of board and screws, ever before and beside me.
what trails behind cannot be pinned to the cork board,
what trails behind me cannot be committed to the resume.
all that rushes in my wake overtakes me at the threshold of DLR,
as in the pause before my meeting i am left adrift within their keeping.
smoking room for youth in trouble hauls me in
and though i guide my desk in first i am found out before i start.
my rowing song of 'do not know me' falls down in stutters, sinks below me.
sudden as the sea there comes recognition, someone smiles across me.
someone else asks if i am looking to score, we can split on a point if we go out to the corner.
no matter my desk and no matter my folder of flyers promoting our services for positive youth.
half the length of a pall mall and already i am being drawn backwards
into my own wake where foams the churned up trace of us.

you will find the meds
for fear, they do not work on
hunger.

CLINGSTONE PEACH:

in an effort to enter adulthood i arrange myself in rows,
following the floorplan of the discount store
where i stand and hold clingstone peach in syrup in a dinged can.
dollarama dinner. i am not sure if i am feeding myself
or filling the food bank for the drop-in i work-in.
phasic shifts like acetates overlay and overlay,
writing that day onto this day. i am alone with myself, exercising consumer choice.
not to bring the slash of blame to everything, but there is much to critique.
there are reasons i cling. workers so define the stream of possibility:
eligible for services on account of boxes ticked.
services required to survive, therefore tick boxes in the order prescribed.
when giving the right answer the subject often has time to wonder:
do you think deviance zoonotic? that it might pass between herd and staff?
in all places at once i think about shelters i have lived inside of,
visions of us as pigeons in a locked box battering against the security glass.
one guy with eye of hematoma red all over, face bashed in
post supper altercation over the rights to a plastic jug of tang.
in the smoking pit beyond the kitchen i held his bald head when he tried to go back in
i swallowed his fight and sat out with him
we smoked his belmonts until the wind blew out and he went up to borrowed bed
as before, i can find no neat exit back to the present.

what use direction
when it comes in this way: rude
and always looking.

THE MANEUVER:

i dismiss myself, disintegrate the younger me.
teen rage had pinned and caged in a bedroom scotch taped
with small black photographs printed on the old dot matrix:
goth stars slumped in chains or scrawling lipstick across their boy-shaped faces,
a swath of fishnet held in place by nails. i didn't understand my enemies yet,
was still picking my way up the crumbling path towards the precipice where i imagined
i would be able to see out. or is that now?
for then i was demigod, possessed of sight (or so i thought).
golden and long lines that lay across the walking way,
i had only to follow the string whose braided root was in my belly. the way was always forward:
black curve of the river lit by the lights of parliament, hardly a beacon yet always ahead.
the matter was only ever one of getting there. walking long in winter once
i saw a black dog's severed paw embedded in the roadside snow,
black pads, curved nails and nothingness beyond the wrist.
always moving towards: to stay is death beyond death.
sitting high in the rearmost possible seat of the number two bus,
soaring down somerset, turning on bank, near sick with the giddy swell of the approach.
the rare lift - no one drove in those small days,
only parents and they were loath to take a person to the gathering place.
incredibly, once, my mother bested me
(the days were early, the discord young enough to admit novelty):
i was set to leave again, there was nothing anyone could say.
i had packed my shoulderbag and painted my face and stood in coat and stocking feet
having just upended the whole house: the mastermind had caught me out.
she hid my boots, my only pair - steeltoed twentyholes, my protection, my pride.
i stayed that night, stood long at the door.
dressed completely but completely lost without my horse, without my sword.

a famous priest who
was humiliated when
his horse threw him off.¹

DOGLEASE:

in a hunting scene on a laminated placemat three english dogs
emerge in sequence from the stream the riders cross.
ahead them nothing, behind them horses.
they are the same dog, surely. same avid eyes and white collared necks.
their progression is meant to suggest force - propulsion:
forward raging after the fox, not duped by water, not shy to cross.
in a hunting scene on a city street three anglophone selves stalk and rush.
here the trick is housedness: acquire apartment, settle the lease.
conceal all signs of outsideness, extinguish early the cigarette.
put out quick all lingering lights, lick finger and down the wicks
that trail smoke behind along the alley paths.
here i slept and here i pissed and here i banked and here i worked
and here and here a smuggler's map **alit with lamps**.
the landed gentry of montréal survey me, lift and weigh me.
their hooves do not agree they kick up stones in the tiled entry,
not dismounting on account of me.
great postures made upon my part i cross the stream and do not lap from it
i bay but never bark. i am ever shocked when one does not take me for the fox.
on cheque and page i sign my name, cautious of embers, storybook again:
little match girl flicking sulphur: will u have me, kind lady, kind sir?
take me in up off the street? pauper peasant pigeonmeat?

the average weight
of the unlit lamp is near
in size to sadness.

APPROACHING THE SHELTER:

encroaching on the temporary home for the poor
coming up to the entrance of the shelter, at the doorstep of the shelter.
between the security doors at the first outward facing aspect of the shelter.
to walk to the shelter. to take the bus to the shelter. to grind out here paste
and make of wheat and water the pages of the shelter. icing the temporary
home for the unhoused, the edge, the external aspect, the face of the shelter.
the composition of shelter: roof, subject melody, cinderblock walls, windbreak,
inward facing barbed wire: here the yard, **the cement lawns of shelter.**
what you are smelling is yr own hair, cigarettes,
grit of containedness fecal, lachrymal, cubes of oily exhaled air
supplication and shelter.
invoking shelter: spell-sized whimper, worldbig weight.

warm though the rain is
my paper jacket deems it
always in excess.

MEET THE MARK:

in order to be assisted a body must be placed into context.
the mathematics of difference: risk behaviours + demographic = target population.
resource sorting formula thin ruler held by every strain of social worker:
try to move over a little to stand nearer the centre, there.
now be still and take your time but please tell the right combination of lines.
flag and indicate. signal and lie.
*“The women’s stories in this study indicate that many seek assistance for multiple problems
but learn to emphasize one and conceal another to gain acceptance into a particular shelter.”*²
arcane methodology, passed by paths as numerous as gout weed’s roots.
fibrous knowings running thin through government ground.
explicit tellings, the stone girl lets the flesh one in.
you do like this. you say this when.

she came down with force
the matter was never again
mentioned in her life.

WOMEN RESIST:

*“Women resist social worker surveillance and regulations they find onerous or unfair in a variety of ways. Because they rely on the shelter to meet basic needs like housing and food, however, **resistance is often covert and individual.**”³*

the cold beluga across the desk is asking questions i am answering a list.
heavy web of correlation: broke, unhoused, split from station.
said satellite to captive whale: can i keep my stuff in here?
said captive whale to satellite: only if we intake you tonight.
my garbage bag of artifacts carted from apartment last.
my garbage bag of place and person, i must house it. only this is urgent.
school in the morning and shelter at night. in the centre, acts of transit.
my economic shelf that of female underage middle class white.
in my partner's mother's kitchen just this week
she asked me what cooking meant to a homeless teen.
i told her of how i recovered a text from the trash: the joy of cooking, en complet.
said that wherever i went people repolarized the magnet of family.
the pull i felt that drew me aside, that included me there.
the opposite of the linear shelter model, street fam protects but does not guide.
there were no outcomes offered, though perhaps stages were applied.
apprentice beggar, apprentice skid, apprentice junkie, apprentice kid.
my hands inside her stainless sink i offer up some trace of it:

after perigee
the satellite comes home a
biddable daughter.

BERM:

hi i am the artificial border the terrace between land and bank
and it is at me you must stop or else spill over
going on and being unaccounted for. it is lunch in second
highschool and i emancipated teen, unusual parentless being
am being presented with the very brown bag of signification.
i imagine her name to be laura and she smiles at me and her teeth are bleached
where mine are dark from cigarettes and burned through by cola breakfasts.
this is theatre school in suburban toronto etobicoke to be exact, and i am living
down on chapman in a one bedroom basement, at that. we are three and two of us
sleep in the kitchen bed backed up against the shuddering and mothering fridge.
it is lunch and laura who has been wary all this time
has suddenly come to understand an edible version of me at that time
and she has brought from home a double match of her packed lunch
probably made by her dad in the morning standing in some sunny kitchen
one that no one sleeps in. it is peanut butter and banana and i thank her
extra gracious, i give her that good feel that comes of charity
to cement the practice in her and she doesn't eat with me, i think
instead i ate it in the pit the smoking section just out back
and think that this is not about where i got to but the urge to go
i ate that urge between bread that day and every other day
until again i left.

here is condolence
mailed out from my history
unopened and old.

MODEL HOME:

fine haul of humiliation, this pillowcase plastic sack of frozen minestrone.
youth services staff have imparted it onto my humped back.
to carry back to the place by the tracks to feed the others who cannot come out.
too much darkness being had, away over there in the mock **model home**.
they give me condoms, lube and rigs and cookers, two tokens for the subway car
a+ cause my fat body cannot slip between the stainless post and stile.
the sack defrosting on my shoulder drops water down my leather layer
as i, provider, make my way up to the door that covers the mouth of the source
the feasting hall of phantasmic hordes who never eat.
no mortal food passes these cursed lips, instead vapour and indrawn sighs.
young and ill our pathography published in bilious cursive, the stomach writing against the surface.
i cross with careful ballet pattes the topmost layer of teenage mulch:
dogshit, tampons, needles, butts, brown clothing hard as ancient shrouds no one will touch.
someone ought to strew fresh rushes and bedstraw, increase the romance of the place.
dear citadel of damp brown mice, guarded by pitbulls and of course by the ever present us
into which i am resumed, i take my place amongst the nodding lords of runaway lore
o we who made it to a house. when i leave in the morning for highschool
the sunshy spectres gather on the curb with crotches out and breakfast beers
they holler at my backpack asking 'do you have enough cigarettes for class?'
i never did and would turn back as even now i am turning back.

have another
cigarette she said and
burned off her left braid.

TROUBLE WITH TELLING:

trouble with junkies is that it's an oral tradition.
sure there exists the litter of recorded lyric and printed page -
this we tack around the entrance ways, we swag in shared rooms
to make sure of ourselves, confirm our location. but overall
it is a culture of half-told story and bitter wish.
what marked me most was the practice of locomotion.
so like homelessness but without the raw white fear and pain.
mute winter, slush in the shoe - no matter.
she cannot speak to me. i will not speak to her. this season is on block.
there are so many entranceways to sit in, a train of carriage cars connected:
clinic waiting room, clinic exam room, subway channel, subway car,
shopping mall atrium, payphone nave, pharmacy counter.
all under the lights, the warm hand of drugs always upon us.
autobiography does not count. after-the-fact does not count at all.
nor the lush fantastical needle porn, the cinema makeup and the heartbreaking song.
none of it goes in for at the time all is first-hand.
end user. user interface. user experience. the user. that's you.
and though no outside breeze will ever shake the papers
posted around the entranceway, the shrine of the shared bed,
the preparation of each poet poking herself with a needle is evident.
expertise - knowing what to make of it, better than a local.
practice so becomes a place: come to here are newcomers, are vacationers,
there are the locals, there are hospice beds, there are the dead.
after is equivalent to out, and out is precisely that - outside.
outside is blowy and temperamental, is full of its own people and positions.
outside, after, off of drugs - all belonging to someplace else.
no point but the sharp one, the immediate rush of the response:
let else concern themselves with else.

what else could this be
but science? why else record
each breathing instance.

PRONOUNCING ASPHALT:

once, by thumb, i went up to nakina.
treeplanting camp beyond the pasted trail of highway cement.
much standing under sun in pea gravel and strong rooted plants of the wayside.
a field of medicine and i ignorant, in it trying to find someplace to shit.
surrounded on all sides by nothing - no tree to crouch under, no cover.
through me still was rushing the whirring sidelong stream of travel seen through a car window.
and i, moved by all that moved by me,
stunned or still or chatty depending on the requirements of the driver.
the price of passage being the performance of good company:
safe companion, little hitcher with patched camping pack and pulled down black cap.
my rings of steel glinting crusted on my sunsore face.
burnt and marked but moving ever north.
flowing through mosquitoes and blackflies in a minivan driven by the man
who goes between the float plane and the medical centre.
caught outside between rides, the hell of endless walking
to avoid the storm of biting flies, they slightly slower than my fastest stalk.
i made figure eights, infinity loops, directly on the empty eleven.
moose standing on the road between the lanes, the trucker says this is their way:
they come out at the close of day, the breeze of passing vehicles blows for a moment the flies away.
blown back from me: regrets, uncertainty.
it rains only once but hard and huge and i pull down a rig and ride upfront.
this is the man who explains the moose. he also explains their weight and force -
enough to split the engine block of a colliding transport truck.
one ton ungulate coming through the screen - if we were a car we would have been
obliterated but we are the size of freight,
are huge and bowling forward down the channel of pine and fir
and northern evening summer sun, orange and fizzing with insect life.

the bear saw me first
looking for somewhere to piss
white flag of mill pulp.

WE CALLED YOU 'SKETHER' - DID YOU HATE THAT?

o how i think of heather, dead.
all i had to do was leave, slip past my mother as she slept,
mind the creaking wooden steps and carefully reset the spring
of the screen door so as not to set it screaming.
i met heather by the busses in front of shoppers drug mart where we gathered.
we had devised a business plan: buy and sell a book of acid!
reverie, of course, instead we bought and ate a sheet together slowly over that semester.
but in first blush of good idea after having scored we went by bus to her parents' house,
her curfew being perilously close and i myself with no intention to return at all to my dark bedroom.
she unpicked the lock and cracked the door and told me to copy every move:
high steps, like dancing, we climbed the staircase carpeted in plush martha stewart sage
i thought it easy, not like the snitching wooden stairs of my mother's house.
i thought it easy until i noticed the white and glowing plastic lozenges:
hand-sized shields with diode gems, small electric sentinels.
in her room she whispered to me that the house contrived to trap her -
alarms not set to snare intruders but to track a daughter's movements.
her bedroom window did not open and though in fashion i did notice
that the horizontal stripes of alternating black and white
of her designer brand wallpaper enforced a high-end prison theme.
by sixteen i left the city and heather had been sent to rehab,
every effort made to grab her, pin her, hold her back.
pissing about on the internet one night i was directed to her memorial site.
it was facebook that informed me she did not break out of her twenties.

i could have wrung
the tears from my ink black sleeves
basho said to me.⁴

CONSIDERATE OF OTHERS:

when coyote killed himself cherry told me he had called
first for a pizza then he wrapped the cord around his neck and hung.
i remember he once cut a dread there in the alcove on rideau street
he sawed it open with a little blade and all inside was algae green
and how it made the kindergoths scream we fluttered fishnet strangled hands
about our black mouths reincorporated into our true form of chorus.
coyote considered being found for him it did not stop at death,
but went on into afterhours delivery to open door ambulance and landlord
useless nitrile gloves deflating impotent apartment keys the feet of men
and the purpose built hooked blade that cut him down: trade name ResQHook.
i was in that covering shelter of horizons home for youth and my days
were spent in arts highschool. english teacher ms. kissoon her daughter
also in my year a shy butch kid who never approached, her mom a force
the one that we all loved and feared she stalked our single flip up tabletops
looking out for truth rifling us for homework. i don't recall how it was
i told her that in another city a death and i here,
only that the next day after class after my paper on voltaire
she drew me over to her **desk** golden varnished teacher stock
and little paper boat across little white envelope of light
she passed me money for the cost exact of one bus ticket
to and from a circuit i remember that
she said 'come back'.

no thing ever stops
no complete state of rest
dear line without limit.

IMPULSE TO RUN:

drawn along in the impulse to run is the steady assertion of the place that is here.
to go is more than stepping outside, to go is ongoing. in a state of run the go is constant.
it is the very opposite of joggers who cycle their route and return to the same place.
i think if joggers left more often, took off in the morning and did not return for a spate of days,
i think i would understand them better as a whole.
within the assertion is impulse. see it not as a queer blip, it is instead the speech
of that most holy organ: the quivering instinctual gut.
when i walked the bank for your body i took long intestinal loops
up and along the thawing shore. cruelty of a cold spring
that came too late most apparent there in the dead reeds and dog coils.
some of the searchers followed the phantasmal bleat out onto the killing water.
two men in a canoe looking for your jacket or long hair.
lashes of grief. your mother declining a thermos of tea.
it was you i brought tea for, you who liked that. you in fugue and secretly dead.
the openness of it equal in size to the sorrow strangling both your brothers.
great grey goose from the shore bank barks, paperwoman in hospital shoes
who both watched over and was at the same time you.
i knotted myself onto the cutting string that so caught you up at age thirty three. same as i
i want to see the sameness more than i don't want to know it.
handfuls of you came up out of the water. even joggers stopped their routes
to gawk across the tape as the cops pushed the zodiac boat out.
over months there emerged suddenly enough to hold.
at your funeral someone joked and it was gruesome.
where was your inappropriate guffaw? i suppose we buried that as well.
i am holding up, am holding still
i am amazed by how heavy the bags are today.
it is false spring in january and the elderly are all gone out for groceries before we freeze again.
gather and recede. wash the litter from the streets.

shoreside to my own
great waste: i flake off each time
someone passes by.

BODY SAFE:

tic. the shoulder that raises and drops, hefting a backpack and taking it off.
tic. scrubbing my nose with my hand, checking my pockets for crumbs of tobacco.
tic. moving each summer, packing and leaving for the first of july.
tic. walking all the time, not settling long. tic. sitting ages in public places.
tic. halfway sleeping on the sidewalk over a heater grate, two boots standing up before my face:
pillars through which i view the world. my safe is my body.
all value is kept against or before my body. my body is my safe.
in unsafe states my body remains my vault and safe. tic. in present day,
i am waiting for it all to be lifted from me - taken away.
all objects of value are kept within my rented place. in unsafe states,
i return to my rented place and here make efforts to convince myself of the state of safe.
i wash naked. i eat fresh food in this place.
i keep electronics and a library of books. i put my little wages into the upkeep of the safe.
in therapy i ask for constructive tools, for bolts and nails.
my worker tells me to perform this spell of protection
“i am here. i notice where i am. i am safe. no one is harming me. i am safe”

serial pupae
the unlit lamp
digs and recovers.

WE IS:

relational, composed by other. the still self marks out a bright line against the crowd,
ass to curb in a pissy alcove fixed against the movement of human water.
the passage of the occupied against their protocol against their day.
if i sit out against the motion of you i will make then a broad and gathering you, i describe you.
if i fall and break my head in i scatter that you into a flurry of selves,
unhelping selves they may turn out to be. if i loose the coil of weeping
i do a different act, i move on you like drugs.
i push you back together into a flowing crowd, i reunite you with each other just like that.
warm into each others arms or rather back to brushing sides
politely pushing across the pavers neatly avoiding me as i fall back to quietude
at home amongst the workday rush not even panning not asking, as such.
all can be in the streets they are composed to be venal
throughways of activity, passage and entrance.
behaviour in the street observes certain scripts: the place for madness is the street,
is most visible and most acceptable at the level of the street.
is this because it can be passed by in that human time it takes
to ambulate towards and then away from the unconventional sound and display?
the sense of the crowd improves, soothes. agitates and listens too, perceptive organism that it is.
to be unhoused is often to be pinned in place, to claim where none or all may take and sit there long.
to be memorable until that becomes dangerous and then to ravage the hair body and covering shrouds, to
change until you cannot be found. or else drive down as churches do, spikes through history.
to be homeless is to sit down where others, those with clothing or posture to preserve, will not sit.
the street workers squat as they open their backpacks of granola bars and ziplocked sox.
the street workers who are chrysalids who came up out of exactly such
they do not squat but sit for this is the difference between school and knowing.

they do not squat but
sit, showing the split between
school and knowing.

TRANSPORT DESIGN:

i was never homeless long in montréal. dispossessed certainly, at loose ends
between tides. then, as now, i pick my face in between spates
of things to say that ought to go down and be said. briefly let's talk transportation
modes: within the city of origin, only busses.
each line written carefully, each line describes. repetition of routes: scripts, traces.
number two is labeled 2: CLICHÉ
and the ninety seven 97: SIMILE
and the eighteen bus 18: REFRAIN
in the tradition of these things, there can really only be three.
the eighty six is a secret bus that actually takes a body nearly home
so does not operate poetically.
passengers plump out the description. ragged winter travellers meet the line,
having waited long in the slush bank to be transported.
once collected each baffled body is pulled into description,
now being preprinted and defined as orderly, and in direction.
there is a place called forwards and we go there together, shaggily.
graphic analysis contributes a rope of different strings.
along it we are borrowed into the braid of destination.

at last in winter
the box of light approaches
admitting me in.

CLICHÉ, SIMILE, REFRAIN:

lifting up the outskirts it is night of course and it is suburbs
these two forms dictate to me and i patter on my steno keys
recording the exact nature of the pathless blocks that pang
with dark eyes their similitude the tragic chorus of prebuilds.
long tread against such soft cement through pigeonless lanes
i did not grow in a field such as this i did not fuck anywhere
that clover would not propagate. dead and wet vermiculite
skittering over bordercloth and i only looking for a covered
place a hedge a bench to lay beneath and sleep some hours
until the sun and the first of the city busses.

pitch up and wait out
the weeknight coming over
short lawns and long hours.

ON AND IN HOMELESSNESS:

it is a state - one is *less* a home. is a state of rest - at home in whatever shade the body lays
a negating state in which one is located, in which one is perpetually wrapped by the name.
the state is that which shelters the homeless, if it shelters them at all.
the state is plural, populated. of those sleeping in institutional beds
we do not say 'sheltered' individual, for this means something different.
nor do we say 'asylum seeker' for this means something different as well.
in polite terms of social work we say 'street involved', that a person is 'street involved'.
this term leaves wide the aperture for others previously not admitted.
come inside all those who have touched the out be counted and made statistic.
make measure of beds, of states of rest: half on the street half on a trick's couch,
half sleeping in the macdo the other half of it had in mom's house
during the day while she's at work and unaware equate in weight
to the value of one *lit simple* saved for those observed by, observed to be in
this particularly involved state.

too alert to my
circumstance i find only
letter slots and locks.

SERVICESCAPE: ⁵

sharing values with the place: the unlit lamp places her value on the counter,
exchanges it for conditioned air and an unpissed seat.
two hours pool on the formica table: not free, but cheap.
place attachment suckers on: climbing vine of unchecked need.
the affinity that shelter engenders strangles if not carefully cut back.
how strange to stand with shears in hand when approaching some familiar spot.
not ready but capable if required defines the unlit lamp quite well,
describes the action of her guard.
like theatre, she thinks alone, scrim lit through different coloured gels.
how red the rage of someone else how blue that stranger's posture.
each diner leaves a print or trace, a crumb or crumpled napkin.
one elder man with care removed the screw top from the pepper.
the unlit lamp, entranced, observed him lick his index finger.
he drove his twig into the core of the blackish powder,
he drew it back and then recapped and then replaced the shaker.
quiet move of what, she wondered, sexy thrill or protest?
no stranger than the lamp herself surrounded by her luggage.
little fixture in the booth pretending home and comfort.
rough waitress kind enough to leave the unlit lamp to spool some hours from one cup of coffee.
folktale bride when asked to spin some gold thread from the strawpile:
the unlit lamp sits up all night her boot thumping on the treadle,
twisting out the prickling temporary cord that for a time ties back the weather.

no home of my own
i was not interested
in gathering gifts. ⁶

WHAT IS IT TO KNOW THE FUGUE?

a dint in a steel water pitcher. a price tag left on the back of a chair.
sleeping close to boots. sleeping long for the sake of it, thinking while dreaming in there.
giddy danger. sometimes excitement, sometimes fear underwriting it.
what if the impulse comes up and takes the body and the few belongings of the body out again.
what if the fight is unwinnable, if despite digging in with all force there will be no resolution.
departure derives from mid 15th century elder french - it means death, to leave by dying.
we who left, where are we now?
are we all in libraries, waiting out the rain, reading that we are expected to be dead?
how can we be found, we who built that us so carefully. nest of spit and sticks.
to know is a low posture: an outsider's lope. to look at the ground while walking,
as much as a person pleases. the working world/the walking world viewed from curb-height,
cut from below by the cup of lower eyelids. the sun does hurt when addressed directly.
much more than tomorrow, today is long and invincible. you will not finish it,
you will not work it away, you will not see it through.
in the gathering basin of downtown stillness pools around mailboxes and in the city square.
bathe in stillness, shoot the shit. seek a cigarette.
it is fine to sleep while someone is speaking. it is fine to get up and go stealing
then come back and share or not, as it pleases.
a price tag left on the back of a chair. it is from the renaissance,
it was someone else's chair before it came here for seven bucks and fifty phased out pennies.
so too the fugue: it was someone else's fugue before it came here to get you.
the arc of escape already described. cement and rebar, a tension bridge.
to leave at all is to travel it, to already be described.
a dint in a steel water pitcher. this too from the renaissance, had by else's before all of this.
survival can be poured from it into glasses or mugs or open mouths.
while in the pitcher, waiting to be spilled out in measures, experience made a mark on it.
turn the handle to better display the place experience drew back and kicked.
sleeping close to boots is an act. a long one, luck withstanding.
this is done out of some fear, that which underwrites ecstatic thrill.
all sleeping is counter to fugue, is too an act of fugue. all sleeping is confused,
ur-impulse, running along and below. sleep as though breakfast is already sorted,
as though it will not be six o'clock before sustenance comes.
as though no cop will come and sweep you from it.

sweep of the leg, these
disidentifications
kick out and connect.

THE HAIRY EYEBALL:

the traveller is naturally the stranger, the outperson from outside.
this is a precious and expensive seeming cloak to draw up around the neck and shoulders,
make high the back and swathe the belly in darkness.
of course, of course, recrimination. of course i was a stranger.
of course an interloper and non-belonger, of course i was other when i sought out
otherness amongst others.
i moved through it, writing ever in my little book of folded paper.
moved between it. showered and bathed and ate in the midst of it.
did my homework alongside it. took a slate at three different schools (four if we count
correspondence). slung my leather jacket over my round shoulder and walked through it, watching.
this is the privilege of looking a little strange.
hair and makeup. sulk and size-up. bandage and binder. bruise and blister.
outside motions, impolite poses. over and undereye shadow. we most watched
may watch all with liberty. free to stare at you, fellow metro passenger.
free to make connections with my eyes wherever i please
as i feel always the grease of eyes rubbing all over me.
extended on long stalks and sticky about it, eyeballs prowl me.
you look and so i look.

people see my face
as they pass on the walk
and i am lit double by their looking.

MY WAIL MEETING YRS:

so upon departing, someone gave the poet a paper rain coat.
also a folded hat, a wooden cup, a cake of ink in cloth.
i cannot imagine further, i remain at the paper jacket.
what would it be like to take shelter under my computer screen?
texts advise me that the pages of the coat were oiled
meet and proper for long walking. when basho and coterie arrive
to cross the flooded Oi river first they find an abandoned toddler
and he leaves the child what food he can and writes he mourns the work of fate.⁷
i damn him from a distance of years my curse landing only in the water.

no i won't talk now
on the verge of my own death
i prefer to grieve.
i prefer the grief.
i prefer the cold.
i prefer you leave.

SEL:

i am practicing my gentleness, washing salt from things.
in winter salt trails up the back of all, salt sucks and chews its way to the top of the pant leg.
salt at the back of the calf, salt stain peaked like a church.
i wonder now if this is a practice of the past, as what i wash is decades old.
is salt no longer popular as it once was if instead they scatter some new grit
across the frozen walks and roads that does not come up so to the knee?
am i pooled in soft detergent recollection rinsing salt from what once was?
in my efforts i make concessions, understand myself enough
to not attempt to froth salt out from the word 'homelessness'
there salt settles long and forever.

six sheets
of newspaper in each leg
will do for pants.

LAST FROST IN MONTRÉAL ESTIMATED TO BE MAY 13, 2017:

i once was walking every night: myth of the ever-moving shark,
ever onwards to avoid collapse, winter when unhoused wills ambulation.
blood of my legs moving lest it set to stern gel and release me of my toes.
constant travel until the water of spring came up around me in the streets.
from my housed present, i can only recollect.
order and gather beside me the artifacts of experience past.
with a pang i record: i am indoors checking guesses of when the last frost will be.
see i have these morning glory seeds that want to sprout in warmth
between sheets of wet paper before they are transferred each to pots of peat.
the seedlings then will be set outdoors against the sagging frost fence
that marks the periphery of the place i rent.
the hope being that the vines will grow and take the fence
and split me further from the litter and reek
of the ruelle that runs behind jean-talon's broad street.

slipping out from me
intact and guiltlessly, love
has happened again.

STABLE GRAVE:

it is likely that the seeds won't catch, that the plants won't take.
that birds and squirrels will pick off those few who do survive
and that this summer will be like the last: bare to the trash that blows in from the row of dumpsters.
one neighbour stopped by twice last season and leaned over the broken gate to ask
where my tomatoes were, where were my zucchini.
i waved him off and dug in rocks and glass.
'next year' he said 'i bring tomatoes. you put in' he pointed down at my garden patch.
i did not say 'i am shy to eat out of this ground.
oil and lead from the mechanic's garage. piss of the dishwasher who comes out twice a shift
to water my borders in his garbage bag apron.
unknowable poisons of industries past.'
i am moreso stunned from saying that i struggle to settle
and truly take this plot. that i can romance a grave as stable and still
but cannot love like that a home when all inevitably
will be lifted and carried, be it this month or the next.
i have caught a compulsion, i am trying to rest.

migraineur fortunes
all read the same: no limit
to perception or pain.

SPARE ROOM:

double bed and chest of drawers. window that opens, curtains that draw.
shelf of towels, summer bike. crumbling plaster, spider bites.
empty space at the edge of my keeping. back up bedroom. quick save chamber.
sleep reserve. alternate night room. hold for houseguests. fully absurd
whining and flailing on a heap of space. handfuls of parquet held to the face.
legs thrashing on waxed wooden floor back pressed to the tenant tone paint.
whimpering guilt creeps under the door crawling frothing cache of horrors
i take ten breaths i break with it compose myself and sit
practiced beggar the taught posture draws pity.
legs folded in tight i am hung in study
repeating visions of haikai tradition bent across an anthology
taught and physical suspense reading in the vacant space:
a monk in her last hours dies sitting upright having painted her funeral poem
a disciple holding up the page to catch her falling verse.
apothegm: i have heard it said that queers live many times
though no one says for each new life we narrow then we die.
so yes, i fear i will go like this corpse of the old self seated on the margin
stifled, looking into the spare room ashamed of the hoard of stillness
battered down by that tantrum of excess.

you must watch all wounds
lest bossy rot grows over
(in which case, recut).

CENOTAPH:

a ghost guards the head of every entrance to the underground.
i take care when i cross not to attach myself too closely to the metro,
boot it quick through the tunnels tiled with piss for fear of coming like a dog
to the recruiter's summon that plucks at the back of my jacket.
i try to pass as a woman of 33 in a name brand coat
my skills and experiences worn on the inside of it, duffed in against me. bundle baffle belay.
shining off of tile, the call caves me in robs me like a grave:
WE THE SLEEPERS SAY STAY LONG AND SHOUT WITH US THE ACOUSTICS ARE TREMENDOUS COME SPLIT ON A POINT
my borders are menaced, heaney. the pride of bearing heroic witness, you say.
twisting in my winter clothes, i look back and trap onto everything the pattern
anticipating total repossession hazard of sentiment: i want better than this post
as cemetery warden as stone recumbent prone in the bend of sherbrooke station.
the warrior's code so sayeth your beowulf
is that it be far better to avenge the dear and dead than to indulge in mourning⁸
and i, with only mittens in my hands only headphones and a metro pass
who am now supposed to be grown and dispossessed of my death cult
close myself against the call and hurry on.
we none of us believed in a world beyond the living plane, did we?

chthonic deities
at the mouth of the metro
shrine of cigarettes.

COMING OUT OF CONSONANCE:

refusing kind help
drawing in against their quest
to raise a worker

up out of the street
as though it were fast water
and i reaching out.

TYPICAL POEMS

hospitality

how you afford this apartment, this bleach-boned blondewood whale belly,
this hollow dollar hole high up over the street, this feasting hall where
you strew rich food on pewter, sam, i will never understand.
you are the
anglepoise to my embonpoint. you been up all day buffin' the chrome with foil,
tube legs hissing they shine so hard under the table. we toast the fig tree
with cognac in little glass cups and cigarettes tumble everywhere.
bumping up against the bottom of your wealth, i eat and smoke and sing
for my soft saffron rice and brown butter and green wet grapes.
trying to be
dainty, rough, sincere, as it is just us boys tonight dissolving gossip and lump sugar
into mint tea. i am burst open repeatedly, the plastic inflatable piscine that is
me splitting and heaving my embarrassment out. sam you pay no mind
and dab the table with a bar rag, picking up after me, coiling hash smoke.
you give us halva and rosewater and blood-warm honey. my wrists run
with oil, your heat is on. i am trying to make it here but the weight
of your full home, of wax tapers and trimmed wicks and incandescent bulbs dipped
in silver has me bowing – though i know that you had prospected
that a golden thread might grow from the top of my head, pulling me straight,
filing upwards spangling.

repose

we faint against the full moon, wail into the crescent
aghast and breathless slump into the wane.
gold and heaverows over lazulibblue ongles
over the glick of tongue in the throat.
three days fever two fays comiting take up
oil slow in the needle's barrel, oil slow in me.
oil against hydrangea blue growing squares planted
against going down into the lavender warren down against
lilac walls and smells, to know the way of blood against light
the saturation of oxygen and the peeping monitor overwatching
the usless we who gather and seethe on each moonswell of
emergenceeee. the cliff of runoff mountain ice beside the broken
made stone wall. what sighs now in bluing. who breathes against
the vinlyated foam. who calls my pet name now into this pyx
unpickable place inviolate. eyelid crepe soft indigo pansies tongued
in yellow o yellowest yellow that did.
i will not go into the warren, for i chose not to expend myself
for the fortunes of the named thing. known article
beneath glass
an explanation
a giclee plane
an explanation
clarification, furtherment, repose
beaded black
relief
dissociative murmur
relief
collaboration
explanation
programmation
relief
dissociative murmur
tenets of belief
system relief
remark
piggish plea
se. relief.

pink suds

two hands deep in the suds of the twinkliest internet journalling froth,
like she was at a sink of soap and slippering dishes.
liquid display hearsing her towards a final exultant spasm of self-definition.

blink gold crystal on her pink chanel upholstered under eye bags.
you do it tonight
tonight
invectives foam from streaming television. a nursery hum composed only in tones of refrigerators and
lashing dishwashers rocking on their casters. a trough being slopped rhythmically.

manhattan pro dog walker she promenades gemlike selves on silk octoleash. spring palette ribbons
blowing out of her belly connect to the necks of force, misery, despair, unseatedness, profundity,
importance of opinion, cruelty to others and hair envy - hoping, but no.
no wretchedness can't be let out like a dog and told
go piss, go on pee, and let it back in bringing delight.

under a loupe in a circle of white bathrobe she runs to "marry me", frequently asking

can i make my replace i and is replace i and i stand nowhere?

&: (is a rubberduck, a round belly butt that commands you to care for your own comic corpse)

and wash yr legs before sleep
each a baby
wash your legs
lift and coddle
cool tap tepid water
leaking love onto your legs
waxpink wide legs
lift and pour palmful of
selfmother run water
gripewater sweet liquid
anise and pondwater
dreams of tadpoles
distilled to drink
clear tea of gilchrist street
soft water swum with softer teeth
that bite the bottoms of boats
banked at whitesands
nothing heaves all holds
still in sugar sand
flealess dunes drift
soft against the body of
named known water
whitsunday weather baths over
superimposed sun-shy summer wading
resolved away
released from memory
like fatness.
see? spool out and
come back.

out & bare

i'll meet you **gravesize**
ready and already of the wreck
limpet blasted rock us homosexuals
are thrown against and threshed
for hopkins' clear spread chaff
works of water on grain this
inconsolable mismatch of labour
letting years evade the lapse
the **straining wavebreaks clap**
and strung around the indoor
outdoor cord connects electric
workers to their task. these who
want for nothing, save to gather
dross from dragging hems and
acorn out of gaping cuff. make of
us some more godly stuff, press
down against the bullying surf
that which drops exhausted.
world of sorrow, wailing over
gulls and plovers. tied lightly
to the substrate, dune plants
grass up from the sand each
blade fencing hot against grey.
wrack of bodies, mat of weeds
output of pounding: break
time, cup up the sea plugged
ear and ask there whether you
are heard. you, worker, ask
the **soaked out face**. sure
of mortification, now sure
too of the culpable flesh,
the wheat-broke stalks
bent and sheeply bleat:
for once i am, not will be.

grammar set / discomposure:

*“Plural is defined as ‘more than one’,
gender is identified with sex,
or tense with time.” (Frank Palmer, Grammar, 83)*

allow me: gender is identified with sex tense *or* time.
despite and around this the category gapes,
eater of babes. worldsucking sinkhole demands
everything and nonthing be slotted into its face.
in local french the **fugue** is regarded as flight from the home.
in the yard of grammar gender is regarded as a category of the noun.
tense being local only to the verb
it is number that belongs soundly to both
it is an issue of economy, of value.

this being known, *“Gender must not be confused with sex,
number with counting, or tense with time” (84)*
makes short crust of much of the struggle
and strews it for the birds who have no wooden houses.
anthemic to the point of tenderness, i try and not take up
the aspect of urgent need, leave my begging and my dress
beneath the architrave, the builder's chronicle of period.
i must not be confused with sex, as i am with amount and measure.
i must accord and lay out in order events: actions: interventions: recoveries
and not name the hard-won distortion as 'disorder' else give over lease to proxy,
exegete who uncomplexly delivers punctuation in all of the approved places.

*“there are all sorts of rules
for embedding or subordination” (80)*

::subordination
coercive system of empowerment
drip-fed self sufficiency
hummingbird syrup of
regulated independence \

at ease with the inherited tense
i organize my visible life
in the same unclosed circles
as are deployed for the
television set.

mind my practiced open posture::
certain forms of ignorance
must be performed

for shelter staff as they assess
program eligibility requirements.

::embedding
the contours of the con/form:
anglophone rules determining behaviour.
all acts are transitive: at the prompt, please:
repeat experience into behaviour, comes out behaviour.
read actions into secondhand experience, underhand experience
self-assess, is this appropriate behaviour? repeat and reorder experience
the process of remembering inscribes small errors
mutagenic knot of concern, hard node on the process
rewrite. repronounce appropriate
expose the copulative verb
 appropriate and repronounce.

*"...these categories become redundant and are often lost,
as gender has been lost in English" (106)*

french retains her gender, and in her curtained salons and cells
personages converse along their spectrum, all the while
feeling about in the dusk for the unnamed plural. not lost
of course, just now misplaced. the category sucks and gains
excreting hot dogs and weefee signals: wavering on the lips of liminal
 being both born and too retracted, the bleeding edge of termedness.

*"grammatical categories...
need either objects (the transitive verbs)
or complements (the copulative verb)" (81)*

the copulative verb has been washed off and dried. away falls its name, remade: the linking verb.
o me, i been linking all morning and it's good to sit down to type. i link for cash, i link for bonds.
categories deeply need to be plugged with objects. listen to the whine of their yearn.
mannered tricks of flattery and poise, categories need complements to sit or lie beside.
grammar is loaded and lonely and texting me up. i'm weary from work and don't respond.

florid

institutional spaces impact homeless people in multiple ways ¹
trail and invade. speculate and report. the open hole of need crammed with cotton
and napkins and receipts.
it is an industry, that. there is work to be done where others are workless (and is work
the great prize, after all of this?) - pang of forgetting, the reverse of remembrance.
twinge and alarm - another thing gone. possessions trailing behind the cart. reporting
lags, little is provided.
dissociative state alongside but not within homelessness.
one category supplants the other. the worker clips the intake sheet
to the subject's file with violent joy and all is green. birds in flower grass in heat.
little twig
says she
it is too early in the season to do anything but cut back the cane.
and with that the subject is led away from her proud accumulation
for the night the subject sleeps or doesn't sleep in barrack bunks
on vinyl sheets. she is dispossessed of her many only things
she is flat on her back when spring recedes
and until breakfast she, decumbent, feels their loss.
little twig
the worker speaks across the anti-aggression screen
things cannot have things, how can this be?
have a napkin for your grief, retain the receipt. can you remember how to be?
the subject cannot remember where she keeps
herself by day and rests by night. she cannot risk the
tumbling bouquets and garter snakes that may well
fall should she try to speak.
nonverbal
said the worker of the twig.
and it all crumbled
more than before
but where lies
before
where
did
she
put
it

ITWAS no bed at all:

it was supposed to be heat but it came out late march
like a tube of just slush dropping from the undercarriage
of what was expected. it was supposed to be opera but
it came out bad breath and i pahhhhh panted it openly.
it was supposed to be licensed but it turns out all i could
manage was illegal and quick, though it came out fine
according to everyone in attendance. it was supposed to
be protective but it came out a street fight, face cut &
being strangled while cigarette bros looked all kinds of
away. it was supposed to be cheerful but it came out
complaining, sore and surprised at it, wanting to whine.
it was supposed to be social but it came out kinda phobic,
worried about the world and what it meant to be looked at.
it was supposed to be critical but it turns out that i can't
really pick on the thing that is holding me down and back.
it was supposed to be cumulative but it came out new
every day, and more was created, more was replicated. it
was supposed to be a respective but it came out as
reliving, time-travelling backwards to near-survived ages.
it was supposed to be difficult but it all came out easy. too
easy to have survived, so it must only have 'happened'. it
was supposed to be a project but it turned into a process
and one had alone with a cursor, at that. it was
supposed to be a fine line, to be folded with bone, but
it couldn't be packaged and is all over the house. it was
supposed to be careful but it turns out it can't be, it
simply can't manage that particular act. it was supposed
to be staged but it came out as accident, and it split
down the middle and rubbed on the furniture. it was
supposed to be clean, if not spare, but it wouldn't. it
turns out it would rather be gummed up with hair.
it was supposed to define but it came out describing
not its own discrete self but instead it named me. it
was supposed to be error but it came out as practiced
and the shame of that lingers like smoke on the clothes.
it was supposed to be forward but it drags on behind me
upsetting the rows of boots by the door. it was supposed
to notice structure but it hated confinement and came
out clumped and disordered, costumed not bare. it was
supposed to be precious but it turns out it isn't and there
is no place to trade it for something of worth. it was
supposed to be positive, if grim, when it came out but
instead it is grimy and sullen and vain. it was supposed
to be intelligent but it came out repeating what it had
been told, the dulling refrain. it was supposed to have

promise but it turns out it doesn't and no school will place it so it cannot be trained. it was supposed to be able but it came out in a panic and it continues to shriek as i sit by it here. it was supposed to be different but it came out refrain, looking only at itself in the mirror i gave it. it was supposed to be power but it turns out its tired already from trying to be what it is not. it was supposed to be saintlike, be carved statuary but it came out a suppliant and refuses to stand. it was supposed to be worship but it came out dismissal and it will not consider an alternative pose. it was supposed to be vital but it came out second-handed, a cigarette exhaled and then caught up the nose. it was supposed to be daring but it came out submissive and is shy to be caught doing anything bold. it was supposed to be easy but it turns out it isn't and it says it won't ever be and there's nothing to discuss. it was supposed to supplant all that came before it but it turns out it can't cause it just does not have the mass. it was supposed to be disciplined but that came out laughing like as if that could ever be the way of this work. it was supposed to continue even while i was sleeping but it turns out it loves weekends and teevee and joints. it was supposed to do better than i had before it but it came out as me so there was no better model. it was supposed to be teachable but it turns out it is delinquent and worse it turns out it believes in such things. it was supposed to be deviant but it has no taste for perversity and only provokes me by lying so flat. it was supposed to be exercise but it came out unpracticed and lags behind all the others out circling the track. it was supposed to be bright but it came out matte and weary. it was supposed to be lean but it came out covered in grease and not even that shines and i know that is to spite me. it was supposed to be exhaustive but it turned out just to be starting, yolk of the morning feigning aubade. it was supposed to be about the past but it named its own age. it was supposed to be then but it came out as now and also claimed tomorrow and the foreseeable rest. it was supposed to be as promised but it came out inventive, it churned and congratulated itself on the excess. it was supposed to be special but it turns out it cannot be anything other than that which it is. it was supposed to know better but it turns out it doesn't and i do not know why that surprises me.

from a stone

some place between the promised all enriched flour girl, and the broken teeth and the one who will always be in the sliding window watching with her elbows holding down the sill and her moonface holding down the neighbours. pounding on concrete, she is horrified that the streets are hollow beneath her, that the stone is paste. this city is a counterfeit jewel, and we drink from leaded glass every evening when we gather at the piano. or the pipe.

can i tell you about the not fitting-in-ness of queerness in punkness in trainness in skidness in junkieness which excuses and muffles all loving absolution. can i draw it around a stick and poke a tattoo pitting out this promise against the future, this big fuck you against the future because the past has been an utter bastard and yet beauty still compels. witchcraft and homebrew and wool socks wet all the time and that thing where the salt from the road slush corrodes your heels and your friends are making music or shaking tinctures or going to nursing school and coming back to the lights out and the heat off again, to sleep in the dark with the dogs. how the dogs smell like fritos. can i elegance a portrait of this and tell you something deeper by it? the black water and how they all say when they let go of the frost-greased steel railing and put out into darkness they thought 'o this is a mistake', that's the message they carry back to us. we bury their boots. we bury their phones. their work phones. their parent phones. their crime phones. we dig them up later and take the sim cards out and use them as our own when we leave the city. this is the same process as those who used to earthbind then retrieve the corpse of the transmuted dead on that far white shore. out from under the cairn, handled and turned, dressed with dry field flowers in eye sockets, the skin sloughing off, encouraged to come apart and decay in our hands. put back in the cairn. unburied months later, on and on, until you have unbirthed the loss, until you have with your hot living hands rendered her a white skull, a long bone or two, until she can be kissed on her dry teeth and you have forgotten her living body and released yourself from sorrow through the gruesome truth of her decay. this is what we do when we sit up at night and talk about you, and tell over the story of how you hitched off with your girlfriend and they found you scattered in alberta, exploded across a field, taken apart while alive. they should bring us back your body. they should give us something better to turn over in our hands than your leather boots. reeking **salt** shells.

NOTES

NOTES: HAIBUN CYCLE

1: "When I hired a horse, I remembered a famous priest who was humiliated when his horse threw him into a moat." (Basho, Matsuo. *Narrow Road to the Interior and other writings*. Translated by Sam Hamill, Shambala Classics, 1998, pp. 69.)

2: Williams, Jean Calterone. *A roof over my head: homeless women and the shelter industry*. University Press of Colorado, 2003, pp. 12. This text represents an unusual turn on the part of writer and academic Williams, whose investigation of the shelter system is the only such survey I have encountered that divides the interview sections exploring the myths and meanings of homelessness into responses deriving from the 'housed' and the 'homeless'. By levering apart these perspectives the innately cynical and controlling attitudes of shelter staff and other 'housed' people that so shape outcomes for the homeless women interviewed are made visible. The strategies of resistance and resilience on the part of homeless women are cut away from the tempering voices of shelter industry stakeholders resulting in a record of homeless experience that accords with much of my own first-hand understanding of the youth shelter system in Toronto.

3: Williams, Jean Calterone. *A roof over my head: homeless women and the shelter industry*. University Press of Colorado, 2003, pp. 16. The linear shelter model referenced in *Women Resist* is "Characterized as "earning your way to housing," linear programs are built on the notion that homeless people must move through various stages of social services, for example, emergency shelter, transitional shelter, and finally permanent housing." (Williams, Jean Calterone. *The Politics of Homelessness in the United States*, pp. 5.)

4: "The sun had already sunk into the sea and the moon was a dim blur, but the Silver Stream was there, suspended in the heavens, its stars twinkling in the cold as I listened to the sound of waves carried from the offing, my soul as if torn from its body, my bowels wrenched, my heart suddenly so full of sadness that I could not think of sleep, but stood there, weeping so hard that I could have wrung the tears from my ink-black sleeves." (Basho, Matsuo. *Traditional Japanese Poetry: An Anthology*. Translated by Steven D. Carter. Stanford University Press, 1991. pp. 356-57.)

5: The servicescape refers to commercial settings, locales often not considered for study by researchers examining place attachment as "...they are seen as too insipid to rouse attachment." (Debenedetti, Alain & Oppewal, Harmen & Arsel, Zeynep. "Place Attachment in Commercial Settings: A Gift Economy Perspective." *Journal of Consumer Research, Inc.*, Vol. 40, February 2014, pp. 904, DOI: 10.1086/673469.)

6: "With no real home of my own, I wasn't interested in accumulating treasures. And since I traveled empty-handed, I didn't worry much about robbers." (Basho, Matsuo. *Narrow Road to the Interior and other writings*. Translated by Sam Hamill, Shambala Classics, 1998, pp. 69.)

7: "On the bank of the Fuji River, we came upon an abandoned child, about age two, its sobs stirring our pity. The child's parents must have been crushed by the waves of this floating world to have left him here beside the rushing river to pass like dew. I thought the harsh autumn winds would surely scatter the bush clover blossoms in the night or wither them - and him - in the frosty dew of dawn." (Basho, Matsuo. *Narrow Road to the Interior and other writings*. Translated by Sam Hamill, Shambala Classics, 1998, pp. 40.)

8: "Beowulf, son of Ecgtheow, spoke:
"Wise sir, do not grieve. It is always better
to avenge dear ones than to indulge in mourning."

(*Beowulf*. Translated by Seamus Heaney, W.W. Norton & Company, 2000, pp. 97, lines 1383-85.)

NOTES: CODE POEMS

1: Giddens, Anthony. *Central Problems in Social Theory: Action, Structure, and Contradiction in Social Analysis*. University of California Press, 1979, pp. 6.

2: Webpage source code: Dans La Rue. *Our Actions: Improving Physical and Mental Health*.
<https://danslarue.org/en/our-actions/a-global-approach/improving-physical-and-mental-health/>.

3: Dans La Rue. *About: Join Our Team*. <https://danslarue.org/en/about/join-our-team/>

NOTES: TYPICAL POEMS

1: Line one is a quote from Williams, Jean Calterone. *A roof over my head: homeless women and the shelter industry*. University Press of Colorado, 2003, pp. 58. This poem has its origins in the testimony of a woman interviewed for Williams' project:

"I began to get serious headaches. Before the headaches I was working 80 to 100 hours a week during the busy season at my job [working with computer databases]. By July I was taking forty to fifty aspirin a day, but I put off going to the doctor because I was in the busy season at work. On July 10 I had a very severe headache and woke up with very little memory. I woke up in a motel and didn't know how I got there. I went to the hospital, but they couldn't find anything wrong physically. I can't remember where my apartment is—I never have been able to remember." (40)

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