

BOOK OF THREADS

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I

FESTIVAL

Eternity is in love with the productions of time.

-William Blake

LIGHTNING FESTIVAL

When birds' sounds
all stopped

and the people
were all running for cover,

I saw you

standing on a bridge
beneath a black cloud
blowing over.

You were holding out
your whole story
on a torn piece of paper,
patiently

waiting
for the lightning
to catch it.

COURTYARD FESTIVAL

In my courtyard, I hear two people claiming power.

The first is a child sounding out words.

In her delicate voice is the march of all the restless armies she will inherit,
the whole murderous pageant of becoming.
She's bored.

The second is a young man singing.

He's provoking the chorus into a fountain.

The fountain whirls above me.

In my kitchen, I am subject to its circular raining.

He's really having a moment.

I'm claiming power too, but nobody hears me. I have a plan.

Today, I'll pick up the too-big hammer that's been banging on the tiny gong in my heart.

Tomorrow, you'll read about how they found a new crack in existence.

SUNDAY MORNING FESTIVAL

There is no future.

But somehow, on a Sunday morning, a young woman walks out among the coins of sunlight on the empty street and returns with a loaf of bread.

I assume that she will transform the bread into energy.

She will feel the energy as it circulates through her heart, the heart of her circulation.

Poem, lay a palm on her breast, massage her heart, and help her do her releasing unconditionally.

There is no future.

Help me believe it.

Somehow my slow walk leads me from decision to decision, through the whole festival of belief, and I return to the canal.

The canal is doing its releasing unconditionally, and my slow walk fills with so many errant emotions that I could be a wandering opera house.

The opera is bathing naked in the water – I can see it dissolve from beginning to end.

There is no day, but the flowers of dissolution are floating by.

Somehow when they bloom, they bloom into daylight.

MERCY FESTIVAL

go to the high place

fall down

go to the high place

fall down

allow

allow

long mornings

to become long days

allow

allow

long days

to become long nights

COLUMBIADAMM FESTIVAL

On Coulumbiadamm,
in the middle of the night,
between the empty park, the empty graveyard and the empty airport,

I saw two other solitary wanderers:

one man
walking with his anger
manifest in his arms
while my untold anger swung wildly in my heart,

and one girl
walking very slowly
reading a book
while my own words circled my heart, but did not land there.

They were the only people I saw
sharing the agreement
with Columbiadammm,
that one can trade a little sleep
for a little fleeting clarity.

Other than them, it was just me and the leaves
pressing through the fence
playing the sweetest game in the springtime wind.

PANNIERSTRASSE FESTIVAL

The wet leaf

I kiss it.

Why not?

LANDING FESTIVAL

To crown its site,
a bird
is crossing the sky

in an exchange
with the sun

that has in it
all the violence
of love taking place.

Poem, tell them how
I would like to be there

how I would like to be
invited
to the festival.

MOTH'S FESTIVAL

Maybe I've been talking all afternoon.
Maybe I've thrown in my lot with the talkers.
Still, there's nothing here that's loud enough
to drown out this moth's whisper in my ear.

It says:

*You vowed to give your life for even a single moment of union.
I heard you.
I remember.
How can you look this world in the eye and make any other promises?*

Before I can catch the moth,
it flies into the closest fire and burns up.

Where is the closest fire?

Everyone who passes by me,
I search their eyes for it.

Anything created,
I scan for the black traces of its burning.

Each move I make,
I wonder if it's the moth in me who's moving.

It rains and the ground starts glowing.
The fire gets lost in the many other kinds of light.

When the rain stops, everything starts talking.
It's any day again.
I've been talking all afternoon.

KITE FESTIVAL

Today the field is scattered with ragged feathers, and once again I find myself naked and unable to fly.

When I ask the sensations in my chest about their shape, they open like the wings an eagle might have if eagles were both black and invisible.

What is the field but an impossible bird that hasn't been disproven?

I have the same reason for being in the field as many of these other people:

You can't fly a kite at home.

The black eagle is spiraling widely, but its cries are never too far to hear.

As for the field and I, we're always on the brink of not speaking - to each other or at all.

PEACE AND PANIC

GEESE are returning
are overhead all-out
pulsing carrying
a soundorb that drips
down onto the surface
of the sky sending
a white spray up
into white wings.

As for MY wings,
I want to pull them
into my chest, pull
my chest into my
heart, pull my heart
into secret sourceless
core, pull that core
into instant.

Instant just SAYS swell
in the crater where
time fell to Earth.
Everything is drawn
through there: air
goes through and
comes out breath,
the killed goes
through and comes
out ever-living, killer
goes through and comes
out as all-shedding blade.

Hieronymus Bosch IS
out walking
his spiderdogs
and whistling
on the little
flutes of beautiful
day that circle
around his head.

Blessed sleepy PULSING
lovely afternoon this. Perfect
pale wood gleam Sunday this.
Endlessly approaching
branched enormous sound
this. Swelling milky merciful
sphere this. Careful absorbent
fascinated musicface this.

FLOATER FESTIVAL

All day long,
white poplar seed tufts drift in the city's sunlight.

I wonder how to live that.

I know these floaters;
they must be the pages that blew out the window,
into the street.

I know this game;
I must be the librarian of experience,
pursuing each errant seed,
trying to keep my volumes intact.

I wonder how to believe that.

KLINIKUM NEUKÖLLN FESTIVAL

Birds are singing
on the hospital grounds.

In that sound is the old desire
to dissolve out of our body
into the singing of birds.

Across the grounds,
a patient in a robe is making a point
to one of the workers.

“Surely this
will exempt me from corporeality,”
he seems to say
with his pointed gestures.

I try to cover up my hospital armband,
but it slips out and I let it.

No, your point will not save you.
The love it wins will not save you.
Intellectuality will not save you.
Poetry will not save you.

Salvation is clearly not what this is about.

Beside my desire
to go home
is the older desire
to dissolve out of our body
into the singing of birds.

PRISM FESTIVAL I

The festival of nothingness is being.

The festival of being is life.

The festival of life is love.

The festival of love is sex.

The festival of sex is release.

The festival of release is death.

The festival of death is nothingness.

The festival of nothingness is being.

PORTRAIT (dancer) FESTIVAL

denser than these few birds

there would be no air

not to move it
but so that it can move
one bird is scattered into many

seamless deal

day for evening

plough the air
as if evening
could scatter
such a solid heart
like the single bird
a flock almost is

denser than these few birds

till the air
as if evening could follow
such a scattered heart
to drop one of its flock
like a shot

no air in a cloud of every bird at once

DEFINITION FESTIVAL

enoughness:

1. not nothing
2. a small nut
3. the small nut that, in being shelled, can enclose all

enclose:

1. not nothing
2. to contain closeness
3. to become close by means of opening in a corresponding manner (see *co-lose*)

co-lose:

1. not nothing
2. to lose together
3. to share the way that transformation is like a thick muscle working hard in even the almost-nothingest manifestations

BUILT TO LAST FESTIVAL
for Meg Stuart and the Damaged Goods

Like music
playing,
our task is to keep it alive.

Maybe you don't want to believe
that your own heart
has been a blade
pointed into
your own heart,

but here is the room where it happened.

Here are all the people
crowding into that room,
and moving the room itself across the floor
like a toy.

It's absurd:
both like a joke and like a murder.

Maybe you don't want to believe
that the human heart
has been a bird
trying to escape
the human heart,

but here is that old joke about it:

How do you get a *tyrannosaurus rex*
to reinstitute its skeleton?

Convince a ruin
to escape its monument.

Like music
resolving,
our task is to kill it.

SKY FESTIVAL

The sky makes me very forgetful.

Looking at the sky, I forget that I have to hold myself up.

The sky says, Don't worry - just look at the sky.

This is the sky's favorite joke.

Birds are flying out of the sky.

I'm throwing them a crumb.

We'll see which one wins it.

The quickest, meanest bird - that's the future.

It takes the crumb and flies into a cloud.

Let me tell you my mythology before I forget that too:

There is a burning ball traveling between the sky, forgetfulness, and my heart.

I would like to give it away.

It means too much.

Anyone will exchange anything with you as long as it doesn't involve the burning ball.

Unfortunately, the world is also a burning ball.

This is the sky's second-favorite joke:

Meaning is the enemy of freedom and the poem is the war.

End the war.

PRISM FESTIVAL II

The festival of chaos is pattern.

The festival of pattern is consciousness.

The festival of consciousness is belief.

The festival of belief is decision.

The festival of decision is action.

The festival of action is consequence.

The festival of consequence is chaos.

The festival of chaos is pattern.

WEED FESTIVAL

Here is a tall weed

budding like a strange day,

jointed like a groin,

crazed from growing too long in no one's sight,

evil.

Learn it now: every seed

you leave in this garden

grows.

CONSUMMATION FESTIVAL

1

Tonight I saw a man and a woman meeting in commiseration outside of a bar. It was closed. They were more drunken than the bar could have made them. They were both so clearly washed up and meeting in the tide-pool of age. But as they leaned on each other to stand up straight, they looked like heroes who had just torn death down out of the sky. They were the Ones, the Lovers; they had done it.

2

All day long the air was full of patient water trying to wake up. In the late afternoon, the sky parted and the lovers scattered themselves around the city. The quiet festival of sunlight guided them into each other. Everywhere I went, the radiant threshold of their lips and hands was opened, crossed. My path was a budding vine; they had done it.

3

The next morning I saw a little boy pointing at a window saying, "Daddy, that's the one I want!" and he left his finger in the air, waiting for it to evoke a celebration of the fact that he had both created a desire and located the site of its satisfaction; he had done it.

DESIRE FESTIVAL

Babies are crying
for nothing in particular,

just because their absorptive new forms
are filling with desire.

At the flea market
everyone seems to be a real person,

personally milling through the crowds
to find their own beautiful things.

They are very convincing,
but I'm not convinced.

I heard a secret:
you make your life.

No one knows what that means.

The day seems so long.
The darkness seems so insidious.

Every human heart has, at its center,
constant, immediate, unconditional access
to a nature like no nature like moving water.

Desire
is an entity whose dark tail
clips the water.

RESEMBLANCE FESTIVAL

The streets are wet and the rain
has left another evening to drift upwards,
trailing the threads of your coat.

Prove again
that you have not come apart completely.

Once again
it has become hard to believe.

Without pause, the birds
begin to heighten the air.
They have a long way to carry it
before it reaches
into the weightless expanses
where it can rest.

When you open the locked drawer
of the long day
to find sleep inside,
you don't ask who put it there.

Why ask this of love?

THE BURIED CRYSTAL'S DREAM FESTIVAL

To be beautiful,
Earth puts on its wig of life -

loose strands swarm in oceans
and curl in migratory arcs.

Tenuous instant braids drift
into caves and come out people.

For a moment, all the heat
and articulated water just sways,

then the wig gets caught in solar winds
and the people start to fuck up.

They leave cities, crack, entangle
wish and analysis breathlessly.

“Will you comb out my wig?” Earth asks.
Yes. Creatures that were wailing

into their nests turn and wail out
with perfect infinite abandon.

PRISM FESTIVAL III

The festival of innocence is awareness.

The festival of awareness is curiosity.

The festival of curiosity is knowledge.

The festival of knowledge is expectation.

The festival of expectation is betrayal.

The festival of betrayal is humility.

The festival of humility is wisdom.

The festival of wisdom is innocence.

WAKING FESTIVAL

I wake up and I'm an infant.

Your eyes are there.

You're in them.

Beside you is another world.

You're watching me with another world in your eyes.

What does that look mean?

Every day, the center is somewhere else.

By the time I get dressed, you're gone.

My housemate, Future, is out walking her dog, Chaos.

I never see her at home.

It was a foolish move to let Future borrow my book.

Hopefully I'll run into her today, and her dog.

She never goes anywhere without her dog.

THROUGH A HIGH WINDOW WE SEE THE FESTIVAL BEGIN

Together, aloft,
following the sway of the sweetest dance

each actor seized by a story
inarticulate but real

falls, rising as he does so
and rising as she does

perfect, as if they knew
we were watching

as the world watches itself
to pieces

but keeps the sweetest thread invisible
enclosed in its lovers

the tangled layers just
frayed enough

to feel one another winding

ROAMING FESTIVAL

It's raining, and everyone seems a bit broken-hearted tonight over the fact that the soul goes walking by and looks right at you and doesn't even say hello.

You're not there.

I go to meet you.

You'll only meet me on your terms, only in the middle of the air.

I have to find a way out of weight.

I do.

I look down and say, When this night's over, I'll have to sleep in that heavy body and forget the narrow path that led through a confusion of clarities into a confusion of flesh.

You don't believe me.

You tell me I just need to come up here more often so that these isolated encounters with you don't mean so much.

I like it when you give me advice.

I like your relay-race style of passing from one useful belief to the next.

You're realistic.

Without my clothes hanging from me soaked, I love the rain.

There's multiple nocturnal Turkish boys out here who want to have sex with me in bushes.

Moses is in my poem again.

The bushes are on fire and are addressing him.

He believes the words, but he wants to know who's speaking.

My desires pretend to be prophets, telling me how it will be to have what I don't have.

I don't believe them.

However, I know this much is true:

If I climb this thread, I fall into you.

If I fall from this thread, I climb to you.

ROBIN FESTIVAL

States

change.

I woke up at dawn,
and the white walls were blue.

Other birds
were singing in the courtyard.

Just above
the dust that spits
from the highest stone,
you'd never know
that the tower is falling.

Now,
in the same room,

it's a normal day.

The white walls are white.

The robin is very convincing.

SOMETHING FESTIVAL

'This is something: the more I learn about you, the louder this rustling in the grass becomes.

Something: a sound, a rustling in the grass.

'That's the sound of my changes, circling me like dogs.

Do you think they're hunting me?

'They're not; they're after the scent that's caught up in my breathing.

Something: the scent of the hair I slept inside, the hair you said was so dirty but smelled so sweet.

'Those dogs chase my breath all night, they chase the scent in my breath; they don't believe me that you're not coming.

I'm at peace with it.

You should see the white flags in my eyes, flickering like white flowers in the rain.

I've learned to be grateful for what is: stillness and poetry.

But there's no convincing the dogs. They only know a few words anyway:

come
lie down
beg.

In the morning, when they've worn themselves out, the dogs lie down at my feet without even being told.

'They dream all day of precipices and storms and other things that cause blindness.

This is when you come to say goodbye.

PILGRIM FESTIVAL

The festival is ending.

They're taking down the tents.

It's early evening and my vision is wandering.

There are pilgrims pouring out of my eyes, lost and ragged, unable to disguise their needs.

Whenever two people fold into each other, a tent is unfolded in the other world.

This is why I say to the pilgrims:

Let the tents unfold.

By the time the evening is over,

I'm not sure if I'm alive.

I see why prophets throughout history have been convinced that it's the end of time.

But vision sometimes ends in fire.

Fire always ends in ash.

Of all I've heard, these are the only words I can follow:

Stay alive.

This is why I stayed so long at the festival,

I was practicing being alive.

Now the pilgrims pour shamelessly through the open window until dawn undresses in the street.

II

BELIEF SYSTEMS

*He hath made every thing beautiful in its time,
also he hath set the world in their heart
so that no man can find out the work
that God maketh from beginning to end*

- Ecclesiastes 3:11

BELIEF SYSTEM I: PERSISTENCE

It is. It is drawn through this fabric. This fabric is pierced for it: the thread, the one the angel pulled through a garden gate.

Every stitch of the angel's threaded needle is another one of us. Between us is the arc of its stitching, lineage's ends reaching.

Pursuing on the thin legs of unnamed animals, even the finest sensation fails it. But those animals return in packs, bellowing their pursuit of the thread.

Many have given their high points so that the thread might be clearer against only the sky.

Many have tried to knot the thread around their stranger longings to make it apparent with weight.

Many have made children to watch it closely as it came out of their bodies.

Many have tried progress to clothe its insubstantiality.

Many have tried to cut it to feel in the absence of its continuity that it was there.

Many, like myself, have spoken to it to see it change as words will change a face.

I admit, though, these unnamed animals may have fallen asleep out there and been unable to distinguish their dreaming from the unfamiliar surroundings.

Or I may have been sleeping when they returned and confused their account with the outpourings of early-morning birds crazed by the night-long rain.

After all, interpretation is an uncertain science; and just the mention of the word "angel" is enough to convince the ciphers that I am too drunken to operate their machineries.

But most of the time, I don't even have to try to see the thread.

Most of the time it is as hard to not see it as it is to look at a letter and to not hear a sound.

I can almost name it as if it were another animal.

Now I will call it love, because I am tired of hiding.

Now I will call it longing, because I want another name.

Now I will call it sorrow, because I do not want to lie.

Now I will call it God, because I want that word badly.

Now I will call it ending, because it is also nowhere.

Now I will call it generation, because it is again.

Now I will call it cohesion, because it is the only common substance.

Now I will call it occurrence, because it needs to happen.

Now I will call it a thread again, because I do want what also moves in you.

BELIEF SYSTEM II: RELEASE

*For my generation
as we throw our coins into the sea*

I figured it out,
why everyone is so broken-hearted:

because light
has no loyalty
to what it falls on;

it opens the bud,
and it moves away.

Now, I admit
that I never thought
I'd see you so lost,

but I'm glad,
because you cannot change
without breaking

like light
on the face of the water
when you drop your coin into it,

when you pay
to stay alive.

BELIEF SYSTEM III: CLARITY

People are walking along Kottbusser Damm with their heads down,
guarding against the crashing of the waves.

Clarity is crashing white against the rocks.

We know too much.

Sometimes, there is a blink of light on the face of the water,
some stray affection makes it through the clouds,
but mostly, the waves are a brutal, unbroken grey.

This is the deal,
and the terms will remain for the rest of your life.

Either learn to get your mouth to the surface
while your back is pressed against the rocks,
or learn to break from the current and float,
or learn to climb the rock and sit there like a lizard,
or learn to swim and keep swimming,
or learn to drown –

but that's it.

This ocean
won't go away.

Yet there is

a boat

we are sometimes allowed to board,

a boat

that sometimes passes.

I would like to live in that hold.

I would like to live above the water.

BELIEF SYSTEM IV: REPLACEMENT

you cannot
match its beauty
and even if you could
match its beauty

you cannot
make it continue
and even if you could
make it continue

you cannot
make it everywhere
and even if you could
make it everywhere

you cannot
match its infinity
and even if you could
match its infinity

you could only do that
using it itself - this is why
there is no other world
and there is another world

BELIEF SYSTEM V: SUCCESS

I wonder if you or I will be able to slip past these guards and their weapons that fire years of immobility.

It is neither reason nor ambition nor faith nor hunger that keeps us climbing the tower.

So far I have only been grazed as a warning when I approached the end of my chain.

Of course they let the lover roam out there freely, but this too is only a warning.

“Even if you make it,” they say, “you’ll only rove in circles.”

My friends, though, swing their silver picks into the tower – they are climbing on the stones and on each other.

“We’ll kill them when we get there,” they say. Or, “We’ll win them with a spark they also know.”

Beside them with picks of steel climb the ones who mean to become guards themselves.

I cannot despise them, in their hearts they believe they will be better guards, that they will be able to carry a sack full of the sands of mercy, despite weight and wind, to the watchman’s platform.

I wade at the base of the tower in drifts of that sand blown or cast from their shoulders.

Sometimes, instead of climbing, I float among the people on their way, as if in a dream or a story.

I know, however, that it is real because when one of their picks slips into my heart, I feel it.

I know this even though sometimes I am borne so far adrift that the tower itself is no longer even huge.

But the frequency of my returning to the base is as sure as sleep.

I have a plan.

I’ll draw the lover close to me with poems, he loves poems.

Then I’ll skin him with the pick they gave me and wear him as a coat against both the shots of the guards and the chills that hover far from the tower’s heat.

Even if I never make it out, I can trace his captured circles.

After all, someone has to warn the young.

BELIEF SYSTEM VI: FAILURE

So many have fallen before me,

came too far along the wrong thread
to know how to leave it,

learned the book of laws so well
that they could not unfasten their memory
from its contradictions,

ended like a flake of light
that traveled from its sun
meeting neither rock nor hole
until it only ended,

did not take
when they should have taken
being convinced that if desire exists once
then it exists twice,

spoke too much
believing that their words would evaporate
while in fact they were coated into pearls
and cast before swine,

simply grew tired and slept.

These warnings may seem heavy, but don't worry –
soon it will not make sense to heed them
because an evening as sudden as a meteor
will become the only law.

Soon you will have another mind
and will only be allowed to visit this one as a friend,
not to watch it undress
or even know it will be there
when you come back.

I am not saying do not listen – do listen to me now.

While you are here with me
this evening will use its total indeterminacy
to slip into the mouth of God
and draw out the breath of life.

I will breathe it into the dust
at the foot of your bed.

When you finally return to your bed
it may be filled with an unfamiliar Adam
at rest instead.

BELIEF SYSTEM VII: ENCOUNTER

As if
every eye could
be a prism
and
every look could
break us,

our encounters open the full spectrum of human connection:

violet light
where we make love,

red light
where we kill;

indigo light
where we consent

orange light
where we eat together

blue light
where share silence

yellow light
where we talk

green light
where we are,

as if
light could
be a place
and
we could
be there.

BELIEF SYSTEM VIII: RECEPTION

Are you ready for me, my one? Have you outworn the letters that congeal into a no-man's alphabet? How else can I agree to the man that you spell out for me? I only know you as a human shape we sometimes see at evening, leaning on the gate. We look up from our work and wonder about the visitor, because few come. But I know you are mine because of the way you lean your weight against the post; it's the leaning of weight that we labor for. I drop a leaf onto a face of water as a sign for you, but you don't believe me. My one, you just watch.

Are you ready for me, my one? Have you cut the vine that coils into a no-man's bible? How else could I drift from the soil into the man that you've opened for me? I only know you as a growth whose arm trembles as it leans into our gate. If there were more who stopped there, we wouldn't look up from our work. But I know you are mine by the way that you scatter; it's the scattering of the man that we labor for. I work all night to clear the leaves from a face of water as a sign for you, but you don't believe me. My one, you just wonder.

Are you ready for me, my one? Have you unfastened the threads that knot into a no-man's rule? How else could I learn to let the mirror you've sharpened be my man? I only know you as a place where light does not come through the gate. We hardly pause from our work, because there is almost no one there. But I know you are mine by the way you turn your head; it's the turning of the head that we labor for. At the edge of the water, I send a deer to stare as a sign for you, but you don't believe me. My one, you just wait.

BELIEF SYSTEM IX: THIS

This,
the light on the stones
and not
the image of light on stones.

This,
the person
and not
the thoughts congealed
in the person's absence.

This,
this world,
the infinitesimal spark
surrounded by darkness;
this is where love takes place.

BELIEF SYSTEM X: ABIDING

This must be the place.

White flowers are opening in the middle of the air.
Finally, there is compassion without suffering:

no stem,
no root,
no ground.

You can't go home now.

Yes, you left the kettle on.

Yes, your house will burn down,
and then your world.

But we won't be going back
to that world.

Every place but this one
is just a shade of fire in a cloud
drifting past a sinking sun.

Watch with me from here.

Whenever you have felt
watched over,
that watching
was from this vantage.

When it's us
looking out from here,
we decide

whether the flames that surround us
are destruction or celebration.

We are the ones now who decide the nature of vision.

Stay.

Let these eyes be yours.

I

LINEAGE

*People are going back and forth across the doorsill
where the two worlds touch.
The door is round and open.
Don't go back to sleep.*

- Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī
(trans. Coleman Barks)

TRAIN LINEAGE

By the time I arrive
the train is already gone,
winding down the elevated track,

but in the sky above the platform
are these simple gifts:

the perfect white of the day-moon
half-flooded by the perfect blue of the day, and
circling around it,
the perfect black of silhouetted wings.

At each arc,
the black flock shifts
quick as thoughts
in the all-colored glare of sunlight.
It flashes wing by wing:

a music like the under-music that carries a racing mind into sleep,

a breaking like children breaking off to hide in the world,

a turning like the turning of your head,

an opening like a sudden cliff-edge

in this hill we slide down towards death,

and what seemed to be lost ground is open air instead.

BRIDGE LINEAGE

The people coming down off the bridge
have the huge water in their eyes (peace)
and the strange warmth of this December
twenty-second night opens each Welcome,
welcome, visitor from another shore.

The sky is death-violet and the globes
of light that peak the bridge's cables
are white as the white balloon that floats
from CA Conrad's crazy navel as he lies
on the floor contemplating connection.

Unconditional Creation, even though
all morning I am faithless and hideous,
you still lean like a flower from the vine
at noon when the Secret City Choir sings,
and at night you bring me across the water.

What is joy? It's the one turning and turning
at the middle of the bridge, strung from
heaven to heart to Earth-core - the one I meet
when I cross over, forgetful of returning,
the one I meet when I return.

BELLY LINEAGE

The belly with us all in it

hangs above a bath of leaves –

that big woman,

her body hurts

and she wants

to rest in green water.

The hand that brings us out of captivity

turns another page in the living room –

that old man

he's waiting outside

and he wants

that woman bad.

CLAIMING LINEAGE

Even if you are the worst
murderer violator monster –
even if you are HUMANITY
– Earth-killer and gorged on
atrocities – even if you are –
YOU ARE – even though you
are – love your blood and
bone and sinew – ALLOW –
you who fail eternal life – you
who fail perfect union –
MAKE healing unconditional

BLUE LINEAGE

putting things outside the room
because they are blue

throwing coins into water
to decide to do this
because there is no reason in the world

making all of your decisions
in the light
of early morning
or early evening
because it is blue

existing most of the day
and night
around small points
of honest time
because you are blue

WILD LINEAGE

Last night, I just made it home through the spray of lightning that preceded a heavy rain. The storm was already in everyone's eyes. The people hurrying past in the streets looked at me a little longer than they usually do. We were glad to be in the position to exchange animal to animal without the consequences of violence, service or sex. The accountability for our candidness was transferred to the sky. Then the rain came down. The street spit into a judgment light; the grass folded and breathed. When the storm had drifted some, I laid down to listen, and fell asleep for a moment. After that moment, I was awoken by a huge rippling clap of thunder that trailed into the distance like the bell of a church on fire.

Today I'm back in the field. The sunlight is as determined as a muscle lifting a bowl of water. It's not moved by the wind at all.

SELF-IMPOSED LINEAGE

We look like fools beneath the effortless sky.

Love fills us like water does a ditch.

We sit down in the field to let wind replace us for a while.

We wait for our story to loosen its grip.

When we are finally quiet, we find not even an echo of it.

Yes, fabricators of justice, we find here no accounting of all we have sacrificed for that story.

Yes, dividers of the holiday from the day, we send out our dogs as if time were our flock.

When we are beautiful, our story is small as a shadow at noon.

We are determined nonetheless to make it pervade.

THE MARRIAGE OF SPHERE AND CLOUD: A Proverbial Lineage

for Jeremy Wade's piece "Together Forever"

A Memorable Fancy

As I was walking among the swelling presences of Togetherness, which to Individuals look like torment and insanity, I collected some of their Proverbs; thinking that as the sayings used in a nation mark its character, so the Proverbs of Togetherness show the nature of Coexistent wisdom better than any description of buildings or garments.

When I came home, on the abyss of longing, I saw a Being, enshrouded in a swarm of threads, hovering on the sides of the threshold: with viral fires he wrote the following sentence now perceived by the minds of the living, and read by them on Earth: —

*How do you know that every Cloud drifting over the ground
Is not an All whose Person has been opened by Togetherness?*

Proverbs of Togetherness

All that is held in the heart dissolves if it is not held in the heart.

When two beings meet, a new sphere begins to swell between them.

The sphere of Togetherness is sunrise, ocean, belly, galaxy.

Like a flock of birds finding Direction, awareness scatters and gathers as it finds Togetherness.

No One, no Law, no Cause.

All is two: the All of One and the All of Union.

The fish of the Togetherness Ocean is a cloud in the Empty Air.

Let the I we are forgive the I I was.

One who has suffered you knows you.

Everything possible to be felt is a shade of Togetherness.

Born of Womb, being must find Form. Born of Form, being must find Womb.

Togetherness is an ocean of sensation that One is alone beside.

Union is in love with the productions of Scattering.

The green of the leaf is the bounty of Togetherness.

The swarming of the flies is the intelligence of Togetherness.

The dissolution of the person is the wisdom of Togetherness.

The cum of the creature is the exuberance of Togetherness.

The spread of fire is the glory of Togetherness.

Enough! or All too little

ANOTHER LINEAGE

Maybe
after the universe
is consumed
by the final,
all-encompassing
supermassive black hole
and its
saturated singularity
incites a rebirth -
a new
big
bang -

maybe
I will meet you again
maybe
matter
will find
all its old favorite shapes
but consciousness
will stay free

maybe
next time
you'll believe me

maybe
infinite density
potentiates
infinite patience.

NOVEMBER LINEAGE

for Shane Boris

The angular autumn sunlight
built a wall across the windowpane

where fertile silence could not enter
and the shelled yolk could not leave:

an eternal glare. Until the shadow
of a living bird split the instant,

allowing occurrence to breathe itself
piecemeal into the room. I wish I knew

how beauty convinces us,
convinces us completely

to give up our hold on the thread
between light and flesh,

to be born on a day like this.

LOSS LINEAGE

The infant has dropped
its mitten
from the carriage,
knowing
in this way
that the mother-sphere
has changed
from being belly
to being air.

The mitten
is not lost;
instead
it is entrusted
to loss,
made
into a talisman
of infancy's
wisdom
by resting
on the cold pavement.

FORMULA LINEAGE

Here is the formula
for a man
(in case you need
to make the world again):

take
any form

and separate
its love

into
name

and
breath.

Hold them apart.

Be that one.

In its longing
to come together,

that love
will find

every shape
except yours –

it will find
the shape
of a man.

PASSING LINEAGE

I saw you
finally

as the same child
always returning
because no one
can keep it

as the same light
always falling
because no one
can hold it

and I knew
that the same love
would always find you
in secret

against you even

even with these words
in your mouth.

PRISM LINEAGE

The lineage of authenticity is imperfection.

The lineage of imperfection is shame.

The lineage of shame is vulnerability.

The lineage of vulnerability is compassion.

The lineage of compassion is courage.

The lineage of courage is wholeheartedness

The lineage of wholeheartedness is generosity

The lineage of generosity is connection

The lineage of connection is authenticity.

The lineage of authenticity is imperfection.

HENRY STREET LINEAGE

for Rutherford Chang

From the eyes of the purple coat orange grocery store bag woman comes a very thin channel that reaches all the way out to distant shuddering waterfallmist expanses. She's looking far off into this place. It's nothing special. The eyes of every living being look there. The firm knowledge of that fact creates a firmness in the woman's gaze. If she looked at you she would look right through you, but tenderly. She's walking with a little girl. They walk slowly past the grey slush and No Parking sign. Other people are walking past them quickly. The rumble of the train on the bridge is spurring the other people on. The approaching evening is spurring the other people on. The other people are spurring each other on. Now the little girl looks up at the woman. The little girl looks straight into the mountainous poem in the woman's eyes that no one sees (I, too, can only guess at its presence). The woman is a little bit embarrassed at being seen so innocently in the middle of her life, but she smiles. She smiles in a way that does not at all involve her face. It's nothing special. There's nothing special about the universal connection. It's universal. Now the little girl's face is asking a question. The answer is yes. Despite the whole filthy landslide of human progress, it is. This is their secret.

CIRCLING LINEAGE

My living
has always been in places like this,
 alone above a valley
 with oak leaves patiently turning
 toward the ground
and massive, circling exhalations
 that make the oak leaves
 impatient,

and it is always the middle of the day
because it takes the whole beginning to arrive.

I have only lived
in places like this;
 at the festival, my face
 was always turning patiently
 toward the valley.
My movements through Berlin, through New York
 were just an impatient
 circling,

and it is always evening
because it takes the whole day to know I have arrived.

SILENT LINEAGE

one day

gone

one day

gone

one day

gone

without a word

just like

you always knew

EVENING LINEAGE

The half-light
drives me like an insect
to vibrate senselessly,
signaling my species
with a common friction.

Sometimes it seems
as if I am answered
by the blinking
of a setting sun,
the piercing eye
of someone I don't know.

How can it be
that these brief affirmations
are enough to propel me?
I must be light as an ash
to float for so long
above an uncertain flame.

Let the alchemy of evening
turn the day's accomplishments
into pebbles, into sand,
into winds for the ending
of waking to stutter at.

THE QUESTION OF JOINING THE LINEAGE

If there were a howling beast
 plunging toward us at the speed of light -
 distant,
but close enough to be
 perceptible as a
 ringing
like the ringing of the nervous
 system inside the
 ear, and
if this peaceful little moment now
 were a burrow in awareness
 just
big enough to contain
 the library of human
 glory
and just
 small enough to
 protect us,
would you join me in scraping
 at the walls to fit one more
 poem?

ABANDONED LINEAGE

Forget this house we're building.

Today, while the sun was still in its tender infant orange skin
and its fingers were stretching across the sand,

I was reading,
and, as I've read and forgotten a thousand times,
as I've learned from every source that opened,
lost in every little wind,
I read again:

There is no future.

Forget this house we're building.

Open the back door,
at first just enough
to get your fingers through, then
use your power of decision
to do all that decision can:

open it all the way.

The early morning is like a turning coin,
one face is the cold wind
we've been hiding from,
and the other is the sunlight
we want.

The coin drops and rolls in a long, straight line.

Follow it with me.

The horizon is covered with hills
that seem like they would be solid
if we were to reach them.

The ground is covered with sharp little growths
that seem like they would be beautiful
if we were to become them.

And you are covered with the glare of a mirror
that seems like it would be clear
if you were to see through it.

Our walk is full of charlatans and thieves like these,

trying to steal the authority of our wandering
so that they can substantiate their unauthored stories.

They offer you a future if you'll stray.

There is no future; stay with me.

The slightest wind
almost carries away
our tenuous futures;
and yet

senseless, transient thing,
you won't stop.

I'll never convince you;
you'll never rest.

I'd like to give you a masterful wind
like chains around your wrists and ankles,

a wind that you can't run from,
stronger than your struggles,

a wind that would drum in your ears like an army
and raze even the hostile, spare desert weeds,

a wind that would leave you nothing, reception, joy.