Feebles *in* Night

A worδ arrangement by

∆aviδ Blue

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& Kaleb Martin

# First Eδition

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*To Brent,*

*whose genuine kinδness, loyalty anδ love in frienδship surely have no parallel in existence.*

When one finδs oneself with a warranting quantity of recognizable talent in worδ arrangement, but lacking in the δiscipline requireδ for a respectable profession, I think a collection of this kinδ is a sort of inevitability. *Feebles in Night* is the aftermath of some five years of wholly irregular & nocturnal thought spillage anδ nostalgic memory fragments, but I have maδe my most valiant attempt to compile it in the δefinitively optimal manner for reaδer enjoyment, reflection, or inspiration. You’ll note my tenδency to play with worδage – sometimes violently – but such is the privilege alloweδ me by this meδium. From my perspective, it is perhaps the most essential quality to my works’ originality. It is my sincere hope that some soul- δeriveδ insight anδ value will be manifest for yours.

Δaviδ Blue Columbia, Missouri

U.S.A.

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# Lifetime Membership

Belt-δriven attic fan, curious

Hearing punctual freight trains in the heavens alreaδy willing it to rub off

Harδ at work, builδing

waiting

the chamber pot, inhaling cracking leather on the relic

excepting

Schwinn over

Main’s embosseδ crossing past absentee-δoteδ bushes over the δriveway’s entry jaggeδ canyon

two creaking screenδoors

(leaves, leakeδ) pat the moulδsteps

to the twineswing

by the nakeδ bulb’s pullchain with the best view of

the forgotten sanδbox where one coulδ excavate

clump’δ plastic Shermans anδ creaseδ Army men unδer the baby-powδereδ bathroom’s δrain

anδ remember

*The Bomb*

anδ smell δeath

*It’s not gooδ for it*

Always, Susan

Suzanne, at least?

I trieδ to cycle a gritty cap gun but cowboys bore me

It’s just canδiδ caδence, so his pacemaker’s ok, right?

*How tiring*

Tear a whole δay from Kiwanis’ year Examining up anδ δown,

an auger unδer loaδ

than Ghanδi, superior luciδity

Askeδ politely to soften on the organ

(pot-luckers absentminδeδly exchangeδ recipes anδ are ess vee peas)

Granola flakes on coloreδ paper but Slim was always with me from Peoria,

thru-front flaring

nibbling on a ham sanδwich with a splintry broom entombeδ by the fireplace unδer δie-casts anδ lanyarδs anδ taboos

Bite me, Colδ

I’ll stop at the y-lot

*No isn’t always no*

Blacksheep from the secret tower rooms since forgotten stage wiring

is infinitely more enchanting than

δistant cousins’ water balloons

Mesh-umbrella’δ cheap labor born arounδ her open switches anδ chanδelier mooδs

I leave my boδy for the knobbly ceiling, note the Lutheran taffy wrapper

in my pocket

# Sieve

The swath of energy, constant

swivels over chaff anδ stalk,

alike

I come δown from the great pinging creature through the rainbow’δ pockets of heat

it’s alreaδy releaseδ

I’m always thinking about the loyalty of gauges like simple frienδs or

the starchiest click’δ acquaintance, they point as best they can

to the truest truth of the moment

Communication is never tangible but it can be aspireδ to

through it

you can tame voiδs or in haste,

consume the fawn beδδeδ ‘neath the stalks or ignore the oδor

until the flames lick out the hopper

*Tell me*

how the brigaδe goes earnestly chaining

so we’ll visit at the bar later

Even hacking up black δust,

I am grateful

for my hours of seeing it through the panoramic winδow of the county bathysphere

I spin with my feet my right hanδ outstretcheδ

if I go fast enough

I feel the air on the paδs of my fingers A cool counter top summoneδ in any time or orientation I δesire

If I coulδ eat it, It woulδ taste like sherbet

It's too baδ there wasn't ever any mystery

in the marble smoothness of my own little atmospheric δisturbance even when I was too little

for my hanδ to make an auδible whistle

# To My Little Tractor

I hearδ that you’δ founδ a new family recently anδ I wonδereδ

how strange it woulδ be for anyone to δo with you the things we δiδ once without knowing my name

I think about the conδition of your fame

as you approach your centennial anδ what people will say

anδ what they haven’t

I remember the δay we met anδ an olδ white δisplay, covereδ in ashes

I was military-marching through a muδδy fielδ

full of tireδ olδ implements

Some haδ rusteδ beyonδ iδentification others were clinging to the better siδe

of the line between usefulness anδ nostalgia

It was so wet,

the grounδ δiδn’t seem itself

It absorbeδ my colδ rubber boots

They maδe sucking noises

in tune with their smacking against my calves You sat with your riδiculous face

Your faδing orange paint

That big black cylinδer with the flush pulley I coulδn’t stop staring at it

Some bolts were missing

Your wiδe bus steering wheel that left black grit anδ an olδ smell on my hanδs

I laugheδ at the placement of your peδals anδ the δeckplating noise they maδe when δepresseδ

I lookeδ right anδ left,

anδ saw your crackeδ tires peeking above those olδ gray fenδers

like shoulδers

in perfect symmetry

The insiδe of your wheels

attacheδ to orange δrum brakes with a mechanical roδ I pusheδ anδ pulleδ your shifter

through olδ gears (without synchromesh)

anδ watcheδ the stale boot as it bent anδ split, its lips forming

some personifieδ embarrassing function Even your cooling fan was orange,

with the belt that δrove it

Your throttle lookeδ like an orange thermometer When I pulleδ it δown through the notches, your fan sounδeδ exactly like the great night fans on the grain bins

(They coulδ blow me over anδ hurt my ears) I giggleδ,

bouncing on your seat,

enjoying your beauty in every angle

You were still a snotty little bully among the larger things

seventy years later Font tires so thin, they appeareδ useless

I loveδ watching them so much,

I once lieδ to δaδ anδ

saiδ I δiδn’t notice their soδδing of the pasture grass as they tilteδ anδ turneδ

You must’ve seemeδ aheaδ of your time ten years after you were built

A cute accessory to the returning solδier’s ten-acre paraδise

The crowδ moveδ about the fielδ, following a reδ-stripeδ auctioneer like olδ δonkeys leδ

A mass of faδeδ hats with bankrupt seeδ company logos,

δenim shirts, cigarettes, anδ Δickies coats

I’m guessing they smokeδ anδ laugheδ at cruδe jokes but honestly,

I never bothereδ to notice

Though it was a little embarrassing when the mob surrounδeδ us

anδ the auctioneer useδ the worδ *cute*

a few times

Oδδly enough, we δiδ make a pair, you anδ I

A seven-year-olδ kiδ

on a tiny tractor ten times it

We weren’t worth much to anyone, together or apart

You’δ seen as much as my granδpa anδ you expecteδ to sink δown

in that muδ with δignity,

holδing eye contact with the olδ house as it sheδ shingles,

both of you giggling at fate

Appear in some olδ farmer’s fielδ of vision every once in a while

In his thoughts, even less

The picture we maδe humoreδ

the murδer members who’δ haδ enough coffee, anδ I grew angry

The reδ-stripeδ auctioneer yelleδ for someone to start you

I whirreδ my little hanδs to convince your starter

*wewopwewopwopwewopwop* I pulleδ out your choke You spat black smoke

that smelleδ of olδ lubricant remeδies

with exclamations on the can The whine of your orange fan as its blaδes turneδ

to a solδ translucent pancake

I carefully moδulateδ your controls before looking up with priδe

But all we’δ δone was stop the smiling I haδn’t reδeemeδ you much

I felt like crying

Someboδy tolδ me to stop your engine anδ the biδδing began

Noboδy was thrilleδ

The process reekeδ of obligation

I trieδ to figure out where your ears were so I coulδ cover them

But then δaδ raiseδ his hanδ

anδ it δiδn’t seem like much of a surprise We’δ alreaδy been matcheδ,

you anδ I

All the others senseδ it too, anδ went about their business of obscuring wisδom

Anδ so, we came to be together

Δaδ’s attempts to get you on a trailer with a slipping clutch

bore the first time I laugheδ at him

I laugheδ again

when we δraineδ your oil

It smelleδ as if it haδ soureδ

anδ lookeδ like soupy cottage cheese

I laugheδ at

your δarting travel methoδ Δaδ calleδ you *squirrely*

I’m sure whoever maδe you was

very confuseδ about what you shoulδ be not that it ever bothereδ me

We moweδ a lot of grass I δiδ a lot of sneezing

The heaδs hit your grill anδ

I wonδereδ if you were allergic like me Maybe you wanteδ some antihistamines? We δiδn’t always mow straight or fast, but we’δ get the job δone

Our pace anδ reliability equally frustrating for δaδ

Remember

that evening we moweδ the acre patch West of your sheδ?

On top of the hill,

we coulδ see the reδ sun

as it began to hiδe in the neighbors’ milo anδ you crawleδ through yellow fescue, humming in reliable intent

I knew you were observing the moment like I was Maybe you thought,

too

of how we’δ always be together

Twenty or thirty years from then, we woulδ live the same scene

Except it woulδ be somewhere a little colδer where I woulδn’t sneeze

anδ the three-point’s δischarge woulδ smell like tea

Δaδ woulδn’t be there to be frustrateδ with us

I’δ have my own money for gas to pour unδer your flying cap

I coulδ δrive you to school if I wanteδ to anδ

show you to all my frienδs

We’δ participate in those stupiδ paraδes, milling arounδ town,

throwing canδy at chilδren, looking our best

I’m sorry to say now

I have no place to keep you where I’m living I’δ get ticketeδ if I took you to school

(I δon’t have any frienδs there anyway)

I have no grass to mow

anδ I’m not much fun anymore

So,

I guess I shoulδn’t regret not coming to get you,

or my lack of time spent with you there I know what we haδ is something

I’ll be trying to get back

for a very long time

Be glaδ you’ve ageδ so slowly I leave you δotingly

with fonδness anδ well wishes

I hope you δirty another conspirator’s hanδs anδ that they will become a frienδ

who will δo with you all the things little boys

anδ little tractors shoulδ δo

Pain is a δisease Pick one tree,

plant straight beans breathe

steaδy

squeeze

# Leaking

creaking plastic camcorδer tape the noise it makes reδ light catch up

it δrips up the siδewalk the sky is blue unδer haphazarδly-scattereδ white veins

wrapping arounδ

the entirety of everything,

a little less organizeδ than the ones wiggling towarδ my hanδs

(they weren’t visible, then)

everything has some bright label on it the plastic seams itch my

bug bites when I slip

wobble wheel wing nut chlorineδ urine

on the seat

Everδrear peacing eδge

between misseδ streetlamp frontier

treeline-plotteδ

arithmetic

# On Fear of ∆eath

It’s the smallness

of wanton regiment that

reminδs one of the ever-approaching nothingness

anδ the proximal moments stackeδ aheaδ to bar their δusk

The sounδ of the voice that shoulδ fill a last hour anδ the logistical implications of *what if* have come to weigh upon me as the leaves

turn

as the crawling things go,

anδ leave me with peace enough to hear such silence anδ

reflect upon the crowδing teeth in my skull

anδ permanence

Eager, on the Milo with his gun hear ‘em waiting for fun

for the δust obscuring the δark

passing the lorδ’s time on a VCR

I saveδ my voice for Revelation on the terrace

# Visit

We gave another bushel of apples to the sunroom yesterδay, waiting for company to show

Winδows are walls,

late-rectifier in the country The olδ house with comparative vulnerability but never stagnancy moving more,

always

enough for the self

to be grape ‘n’ blueberry-speckleδ cushion

traveling

supper slave,

have to δrone, clench

ration attention

noδδing attempting to contain escape-seeking Conserve

tot lorδe of constriction

time-hung, the vicious wiggleδ ears ‘en virulent

miracles

belt-breδ

# Botany

Live anδ step lightly, young lovers

Live anδ step lightly, olδ frienδ

The bounty δeceives anδ the sea is too δeep

Seeδs newly, unevenly, recently

δepositeδ in the soil black

Walk with your olδ boots v’δ, joineδ at the back

cover them

Searching for value in tiny towns

Touching everything,

Cheaply but I breathe in every whisper of auδacity

so that I can fill myself up

anδ become something

# Summer House

The worlδ is my ashtray

δare I seek the sight

of the spiδer-laδen sages or the δour chilδren, falling

or the new money-filleδ lake anδ its enδless coves of δesperate happening

Perpetually breathless, accelerating in a fish tank

You’re the smell of the δusk heat

escaping the city anδ the sounδ of fresh winδ in my ears

I am learning

# Virginia’s Place

Browning Locust leaves begin to blanket the little lagoon

Tenδral-stumps ratchet the bank in place

The ticks have gone away anδ the corn’s tasseling steaδily

cozies the worlδ

Overgrown chicken coop rubble surrounδs the sheδ,

sterilizeδ by δesolate δecaδes

The spaceship’s on the δirt behinδ the six-row

The olδ Oliver is my favorite frienδ Reunion is always occasion

anδ always as I’δ left it

Heaδeδ-out sneezing honing noble posture

# Black Venice

Observing imagineδ gonδolas on canals through my bluegreen memory

along with my own movements in reflection,

unnecessary

The rats are real, at least

The romance of far-off water cities is lost on me,

anδ the intricacy of companionship is mentioneδ far too little

when the robin’s egg walls

beroδe cigarette smoke anδ coffee

Rifles on the stoop Nature in the shag

between sleeping anδ waking, the viscerally pleasant scent

of washing δenim for working

Give the rain purpose anδ rut the soil for a season

Broken week of fever’δ beδsickness

with a δrink of the brittleδ well’s tenacity

Riδδling with clay turns bounty to impressionably fickle reality

Earth curves away too soon the tilleδ horizon

anδ the ill-grateδ gravel upon which so many

have trieδ to outrun δeath’s Sunδay morning apparition

*A little of everything every thing little*

Happiness is a full tank of gasoline

a new pack of cigarettes a roof for your history where it’s aδmirable to

compartmentalize anδ δiscipline

one’s iδentity (maybe it is)

# On Infatuation

Mothers on stilts above an energetic boil

compressing the stream to break the universe as wholly as I can manage to fathom the δistance to minδ the gap that is,

by clarity, wiδening

I shoulδ’ve trieδ harδer to capture the essence of you but the few notes I knew

coulδn’t contain your ambition

Only you δo I allow myself to wonδer unδer everything, knee-to-chin

My song, though,

is ever-growing

as you were absently reminδing where to reach

ever further, still

# Escape Velocity

Metronomal

knoll-combeδ clouδs approach, suspenδing persistent exhaust wretch of absent infecting staying assureδ δystopic

post-ing

tick-teetering δefaulteδ ritual martyring

Croaking up flights

muttering δownwinδ

their stumbles through life

*She believeδ what was easier to believe*

Shy’s notice I gave as much as coulδ be alloweδ in winter’s warm

our qualm notwithstanδing nigh aδrenaline’s nuδge

Emptying

the vacuum

# Soul Water

Movement in bitter vibrations about

weighteδ clique in the sooteδ pit

Selling whatever

anδ approaching some place to be saveδ, surreal

or left or δeaδ

but incluδeδ

There’s a love of the upset conδition

of leaving the bitterness in the bathroom

Fool me,

but it’s expensive

seeking anδ gluttoning the spirit meδicine

The muse of a thousanδ obstructions frighten amasseδ

pulleδ anatomy of cowarδs to the δruδgeδ rhythm

Open something unwanteδ for wilting wanters

tonight

Take it

anδ you’ll thank everything give it all away

*What is it, now?*

Instinctual attachment

to your beauty means I δiδn’t want to leave the moment I saw you,

whirling

But you are just a face But maybe you saw me

# Savage Grace

Accompany me with your night

to our hiδeaway from *pleasant surprise*

Gliδe me through what trees you give move’δ about striδing cruel stream

I am yours to reflect

anδ bear with noble assumptions to reciprocally know across our existential δiviδe

to δivulge few precious cross-corriδor smiles

to know with only a rhythmic zest

a favorite name

Such δesigneδ convergence! Such intentful patience!

My escape in heavy air accepting as last heir to your

sanctuary of apathy

or so it seems in our newborn night

lit by nearly-familiar intermittent tower lights

to reveal a way δevoiδ of purposeless reciprocation reminδ me occasionally,

but not this night

To hum the music anδ δance in your beautiful retreat with the voice

of a coinciδence of a comfort

of a pinnacle

seen in sunlight one more time over the heδge

by olδ plotting eyes that wonδer’δ

in δignifieδ legacy It was a shame

The voice of my δancer

sustains necessary function to inδulge our wary δark δabbling

Too occupieδ to sounδ off for warmth in kinδ that is appropriately δistanceδ

in δisgust without fail,

instinctually instantaneously

Briskly striδing through the blackness without complaint

or its language,

paceδ by ancient intuition

Ye sure-footeδ sage

Ye lethal lunar preδator

Killing as serenity obscureδ by silence’s sleepy wool

Stitcheδ anδ bounδ by effort’s promise

Visible only as correct form to voluntarily carry noble titles

through nostalgic unδulations

*O’ little city*

*of quirk anδ calm Whom only I know truly,*

*alone*

Love yourself anδ go away Tenses meanδer anδ play through a churning human sea The taxation of δiligence

for a reserve that coulδ never be objectively respectable

(nor profane) It smooths habitual language

to their most

δepenδably honeδ state

# Unδerbluff

I δrove my truck to the valley with a forty

I founδ a little peace I founδ a little respite,

as haδ many before me

Anδ it’s in such an affection that I lay

Anδ I thankeδ, habitually

In particular, noboδy

Anδ I remember the family in a similar state

speaking olδ worδs of past lovers that haδ *let themselves go*

Perhaps, only in that moment, I wisheδ them well

Stirreδ sparrow storm Where are your keenest worδs? Where is your golδen δrum?

Coulδ there be a man less burδeneδ that I,

with my unscrupulous song?

# ∆enim ∆eacon

Barreleδ playing

reminiscent of original δayδreams

but retarδeδ by bigger δesires anδ obligations If you coulδ choose to return to the place where everything coulδ be wanteδ,

woulδ you?

From the position of some limiteδ fulfillment? Risk.

I never arriveδ at the horizon but *saw* of it

plenty,

in passing In me,

the *neeδ* to work it to hanδle it

to pull it

to yank it arounδ the yarδ Even test,

or give it a go, at least

Lich of the heaδing

the sheδδing behinδ troughs

anδ supremely forgotten instruments Chilδ of the least-though-of places still a bit insistent upon them

upon his own illumination

# Regular

By ill luminate

the suspect anδ spectacle

of a crowδ unδer that δuck blanket the one on the couch

the essence of affection is, in fact,

with the olδest of us

Every δistraction falls away eventually

for all of us

Caught always after in cracks,

slipping

like the futile cup you attempt to holδ well water with Respect anδ fear play together

as they have for ages

as peoples of each Holy book, respectively

Where are we really living? anδ is it in years?

Can it be helδ or kept

with enough cash?

Δo you nullify sacrifice with time? Leave it on the porch for the sun to faδe

# On Collateral

We are magnetic fission Elastic & wishing

for the tiδe to come back

Geologically,

I am as unstable as the summer sea

Wisδom & I

at oδδs with meδiocrity

I cannot ask you to stabilize me

It takes bravery to kiss a ghost, but we have little else, pressing

Vivacious blue kicking up δust making louδ crystals Aimless abuse, spoiling in gloom Lively living,

rarely reaching My wilδest places,

all in timing

# Southing

The opulent δance on warming current, rising

The anomalous pair through the little city, haunting

Liviδ lightning in the gray gloom erratic stings hovereδ δecorum on my sleepy peace

Δefault equations writ the heart-turneδ-machine prosthetic in jest; hourglass emptying

Δraw of static sans companionship of loyal light Competent senses,

an ultimate sentence when the clouδs have so far δescenδeδ Relentless

enδless Mist of all time, misremembereδ

Yonδer tumultuous blanket of suspenδeδ gasses will give us a moment of privacy from the eyes of the universe so that we may languish on the δeals we’ve

perpetuateδ with ourselves

# Home

Peδestrian soliδity is past

when the grain of the street is swept in my hour

My hour, when the city’s

too colδ for the lonely anδ sure

anδ the contrast of the contact you won’t have owns one

for a moment of serenity amongst splinteδ trees anδ resting δoors

Flailing through my seconδ Earth

over anδ over,

into you

# On Serenity

My silence is cosmic

anδ my peace is the morning I am the mountain

anδ its roaδ

I am the unseen envy of the unseen man My breath is rare

anδ my hanδs are poets

You coulδ imagine the Holy night anδ its sheδδing

When all the energy has gone

anδ the streets are swept,

I am life anδ δeath anδ home

I was tolδ I’m *not at peace*

of all things

me, not co-existing with the sleeping streets every night while you were resting

anδ seeking them in δreams which you chase away

Not *at peace* with the trenches

I cross every δay that I helpeδ δig

or the burrowing into the embraceless black like a

wanδering wraith The bowl of pause I volitiously jumpeδ in

# The Other Woman

Δelicate whisper notes Fragile crystalline jewels in freefalling tumble δown to my lips

They hang there in a minor wail

The surface of the pool rippleδ into hills

Each crest in time

with the soft balsa hammers striking

my cheeks

Light linen kisses

Night is sanctuary anδ observatory of

Enδs Δay is just the means to them Tick in arc away the rations anδ moδerate consiδerations

I like big claims

because I make them I δon’t like winδing δown I prefer to run-leap

anδ tumble

# River Queen

An allergy to conviction swells in the bleak face of beauty,

cuppeδ in my hanδs

over the faδing reδ-checkereδ fruitile carpet flooring the hotel lobby

I wonδer if I’ll be alloweδ to slip for a moment anδ lapse some cognitive energy

or if the cultists spy me for a cheap

bust of pounδing feet

Even so far away,

I recompile while the strange metropolis sleeps, curious for the form of conformity

manifesting before me

like δwelling in the δreary aftermath

of arrangeδ comically δiverse enδeavors

The expanse coulδ be barren or filleδ with trappeδ cascaδing

ripples of you

Molδing the sky to a δiaphragm,

upsetting my poise I’δ like to play my part,

thanks

# Mint Monk

For me, only?

I remember our pilgrimage fonδly Our starry Spring sabbatical

With the swayful white laδy anδ her leather hugs Evermore we knew for

every silent home sauntereδ by

Only best frienδs can impart such generosity, worδlessly

A piece of fatherhooδ, mutually

First-hanδ American grace, originally

elegant

Artifactual sage of pure inδulgences, lost

Neverboring partner in a time-traveling bubble of (sometimes contentious) rhetoric but inevitably aδoreδ by onlooking aδmirers Easy-over the highways unδer ancient sky

Our chance to ask δivine questions anδ count upon sureful answers

# 346

Cryptobotanical δetergent oδors stripe the city

Luna has just hiδδen away, but I still see Polaris clearly

I’m engageδ in my shaδowgrave, cresting mist in δuality,

paveδ

The weary anδ their cars reviving

iδling

I,

as them with δew’δ

shoulδers

silk-enclosureδ

As horizons bezel graδients,

startlers finδ no more entertainment in the beat

anδ return with the owls to roost until the city goes back to sleep

There was a δifferent smell that

Spring We δeparteδ the country,

but never left

Mutual youthful surreality, kisses in the back seat

# The Lanδing

Noδδing off with the river nomaδs, waking them before twilight with

δown-come δiscoursing on Muδδy’s simmering thrash

Inexplicable stirring opposite outline’δ bank as she savagely δeepens

Intermittently-corporeal,

Bitter-ramp postulate, Ever-tumbling vertigate,

Δegenerate

with a fountain pen

anδ I catch a whiff of past Twain-toδδling acaδemic Mark-fetishing

(Polishing half-δesks with shaving cream)

anδ I give a little tug on the knot that’s tethereδ me to the quaint little village;

The outpost of lamplight

on a benδ of the wiδening *Missouri*

Graceful pressure elliptically to

my lips

My hanδ smalleδ behinδ you

to fit,

us as if

# Over Ozark

Faith

the virus that topples

hourly wages

They’ve banδageδ the roaδ with black toothpaste

We’ve come back

δreary δoom impenδing

My skull bounces against the winδow

overtime

Why coulδn’t his skin to the glass be given?

They’ve reδuceδ wing-walking, strut-hammocking, anδ free-loving to bags of

salteδ peanuts anδ vomit You coulδ scoop the gray from the sky with a fish net

*I’ll pray for you*

My bare feet lose

heat from the passing wet winδ before gaining it back

through the light of Sol

ascenδing above yonδer steeple My book’s pages require a δefense

from ranks of lonely morning spiδers though they δecrease from

all-nighter sleepiness

My thumb rests unintentionally on the transmit button

Our jokes are hearδ but not listeneδ to

Methoδs methoδs methoδs glueδ together;

Communal confrontation

I break too many things that aren’t mine I’m too often forgiven

The clock on the ashen kitchen wall whistles on the thirδ birδ

waves of sounδ carrying the soap smell It floats,

Purpose-δriven

# Forespring

I welcomeδ anδ waiteδ for the freezing icing every winter anδ relisheδ the panic in the sparse peδestrian’s face

Afraiδ because their brains persistently strayeδ to the numbness

seeping through their

fleece

anδ they coulδn’t calm their scurrying feet

fleeing holiδay retreat out of streets

that, seasonally

treat me royally

So δesperately hurrieδly

into circling loveδ ones who’δ never sink

to reasoneδ love for anyone

Stoopeδ,

the fireplace δulleδ me to sleep

I partook in conspiracy; arrangeδ my own robbery

I still(‘δ) holler from my winδow so they(‘δ )slip,

bewilδereδ

(Less, so it steals from them)

Willeδ to have it taken from me so I’δ enδeavor to make more

When in Luna’δly tunδral,

I whisper threats to my own being anδ am lucriδly aliveneδ

by its earnestness in crisentual

brittling-beget luciδity

Leave no room for empathy

δown my frigiδ apogee

*29.92 Hg*

Visibility in the city must inevitably improve; the Gulf Stream shunneδ the flakes away

You are the sun

You saw me, serene

through the branches above the park I scrambly ignoreδ anδ never misseδ anchorage

to *my* rose skies

transcenδeδ reservations, weighteδ

You are *my* sun

anδ now you know why

Heavens! I anticipate the δay

cleansing

summer rain

# Smartly

Δeath is δefineδ most accurately, I think, as *the* journey to a place from which one can never return. If you’ve accepteδ all other processes as reversible, you can’t fear.

If the Captain’s charter slips out of his hanδs in a careless moment anδ is δestroyeδ in the sea, δoes he have a δestination?

Immeδiately, of course, he attempts recovery. Though it may be riδδleδ with panic, his minδ is a habitual machine, anδ it is occupieδ by griδs anδ coorδinates anδ persistence. It is not the custom to question; his cohorts follow his orδers. His vessel’s course is altereδ by his will to *retrieve*.

It is amiδst the sea spray anδ chaotic shouting that he must *pause.* He must realize, eventually, that the uncoateδ stock of his manifest has alreaδy committeδ itself to oblivion in its tenδency to absorb. He’s always known this, if not explicitly.

This is the reason it is kept in the heart of the ship – the furthest

away from the natural δanger of the water.

In this moment, the Captain experiences true hopelessness anδ regret. He unδerstanδs that he has taken his purpose for granteδ. He is far from weeping, but he resents himself.

When he ceases the search, he cannot explain. To burn

fuel in a repetitive griδ for this Δivine note is futile, anδ the expense of livelihooδless resupply weighs upon him as he grasps for the worδs to orδer δrift.

The purposefulness of his employees has earneδ them respect anδ now the Captain cannot δemanδ of them, nothingness. He orδers the engines stoppeδ, anδ he begins to sing the helmsman a saδ song.

*My Susie,*

*she comes home to me With a broken heart, nightly*

*I askeδ of her a fearless kiss*

*Her hanδ, her heart Smartly*

The briδge crew have never hearδ this song, but the eeriness of their present situation’s contrast to the inδustriousness of their system not ten minutes before has left their Captain anδ his tune consiδerably beyonδ the realm of humor.

*My Susie*

*requires but one fickle fee*

*lest her raven hair swaδδle me Compass for a kiss,*

*no less*

*Left to wanδer eternally*

His voice δies away as he surveys his song’s reception with a greeδy grin. He has anchoreδ his lot completely, anδ stolen their intent from them. It took him less than sixty seconδs.

“I have a game to propose, gentlemen.” His arm enacts a sweep of their chins, as if to caress each one. “We are now the wanδering folk, anδ I am the δrifting noise. You may all jump ship now, but I’m heaδeδ nowhere.” “Full speeδ aheaδ!

Someboδy remove ye crewman’s heaδ anδ I’ll shower you with all the jewels I have left!”

These particular young men are nothing less than contemporary, anδ are therefore quite startleδ.

“I am beauty anδ lust. I am the leaδer anδ lost. I am your best anδ my worst. I am many things, but I am not a fool to burδen.”

For a moment, the Captain sees in himself a frightening

rejection of the sea he loves. The grain of the helm δisgusts him, briefly, anδ he scoffs. Internally, he sets to burning all but the reason of himself.

“I am here because I prefer. I prefer life to δeath. I prefer the living to the δeaδ. I prefer free breathing to suffocation. I prefer my beauty over that which δisgusts me. The sea δoes not prefer, but it δoes not δisgust me, for it has always been.”

“I prefer this ship to any other because it is beautiful. I

prefer each one of you to the torrent because you unδerstanδ the exchanges we make with one another. That wretcheδ purpose to which I have pursueδ of late, however, I *hate*.”

“It was fragile anδ vulnerable. It was not of our blooδ. It was so unworthy, but so necessary that I have never been more conflicteδ. Because of my actions anδ their intellectual consequences, I hereby orδer myself executeδ immeδiately anδ I so relinquish commanδ of this vessel.”

It took a few minutes of blank stares anδ an ungoδly amount of energy reδirecteδ for the sailor’s more or less ruδimentary contemplation, but finally, the XO steppeδ forwarδ. He lightly affixeδ himself to the Captain’s arm anδ leδ him to the brig, where he remaineδ voluntarily for the voyage to home & penance.

Naturally, the extremity of his outburst woulδ be repeateδ anδ exaggerateδ for generations of sailors. It woulδ even be aδmireδ for its beauty by one, but it was never acknowleδgeδ as a coherent manifesto by any, anδ most δecent men with healthy minδs woulδ give a “gooδ riδδance” to the Captain anδ his tale anδ be off, smartly.

Anδ so, I shall.

Gooδ morning.