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Creative Meditations & Momentary Affinities: Beyond the Body, Publication, & Estrangement In The Poetic Works of Edward Taylor, Emily Dickinson, Jack Spicer, & Mario Santiago Papasquiaro

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Creative Meditations & Momentary Affinities:
Beyond the Body, Publication, & Estrangement
In The Poetic Works of Edward Taylor, Emily Dickinson, Jack Spicer, & Mario
Santiago Papasquiaro

Senior Project submitted to
The Division of American Studies
of Bard College

by
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Contents

Introduction

3

Edward Taylor: Meditations on the Preparatory

Meditations

19

Emily Dickinson: A Presence of Departed Acts

44

Jack Spicer: The fish one by one

63

Mario Santiago Papasquiaro: Advice from 1 Disciple

of Marx to 1 Heidegger Fanatic

85

Introduction

I began this project with the intention of addressing four poets, Edward Taylor, Emily Dickinson, Jack Spicer, and Mario Santiago Papasquiaro, who either did not publish, worked to keep their publications in limited circulation, or resisted any assimilation into their contemporary poetry scenes. My ambition in beginning this project was to explore the works of these poets whom I admire with the hope that I would discover some message or encouragement in their understandings of writing which would enable me to feel complete in the solitude of my own art making.

Over the course of my still short life I've found myself spread across the landscape of America. The pieces of myself, the places where I've stored the meaning and the people I love, are scattered between New York where I now live, Mexico where my father spent much of his childhood and I went to the first grade, and Seattle where my closest friend lives, someone I see as being the other half of myself. Placed neatly between these places, I imagine it is Montana, the place where I grew up, a landscape haunted with all the experiences and the thoughts that have come to define me and shape the trajectory of the realizations I've reached since I left home.

What with my now constant mobility, my unrelieved uncertainty about where I might belong, all the houses I've lived in, planes and trains and automobiles I've taken to cross the spaces that separate me from the places and the people I love, my identity feels scattered and fragmented. Being in one place

often feels like the parts of me that live in the other places are missing from the collection of pieces that unify my identity. It is not that I feel I must connect all these pieces and store them in the same place, or that I must somehow gather them and organize their information to complete myself. I wish I could exist without the reality of my singular body, supposedly containing all that I am like bag of organs and bones, always sitting where someone dropped it on the ground. But this feeling will never be overcome by the eradication of my body. It is a dream that could not come true while still preserving my life. The destruction of my body is not what I truly hope for, but imagining this does have something to do with developing connections between the inner world and the outer.

The American landscape is expansive, filled with velocity and varieties of size, shape, prejudices, beliefs, and structures of power. My own fascination with space, with the complexity of the parts, its form, its sensations and its history, has become for me a mode in which I can experience the world around me beyond the physical. I take those images I meet in the physical world and continue them within myself beyond what they actually are, inhabiting their obscurity in meaning through my own fascination with their forms. One can stare at lines and forms creating space, or at objects in space, and slowly the mind begins to lose them. It sees instead the potential of what lies beyond them. This potential becomes the trellis for experiencing that which is beyond our selves. "What fascinates us," Maurice Blanchot writes in his essay, "The Essential Solitude," "takes away our power to give it a meaning, abandons its "perceptible" nature, abandons the world, withdraws to the near side of the world and attracts

us there, no longer reveals itself to us and yet asserts itself in a presence alien to the present in time and to presence in space. The split, which had been the possibility of seeing, solidifies, right inside the gaze, into impossibility”(Blanchot 75).

Driving across the “near side of the world” one realizes there are empty zones existing between the parallel lines of the coasts. Silent zones, ones that feel like moving through cold water. In these unpopulated zones the horizon shatters distance. One feels nearer, more a part of the objects of their fascinations, but with them, seems to move outward. One imagines their self to be a part of it. The mind is set free from the limits that do not pertain to it. Where one is standing in relation to the formations that surround suddenly becomes irrelevant. One can see beyond them. One can imagine beyond them, can spread their mind out in every direction and imagine a form of interconnectedness so fine it billows across the plains—desires, reaching out of themselves, being, resting on butte tops or bathing in glaciers, tripping on chicken wire, until one sees within the spaces of darkness that covers the reality of our relationships to the world, pushing the intention of the mind beyond the realm of the physical, where Blanchot says, “the gaze maintains with the depths that have no gaze and no contour, the absence that one sees because it is blinding”(Blanchot 76).

While moving I read. This is, perhaps, another form of travel, but a travel of expansion, not projection, which spreads out in all directions. I have found that in poetry there is rarely any sort of destination. Once I start reading I am both

moving and already arrived. I am in the place I sought while that place depends on existing in constant movement. And when I look up, the words echo out into the forms I see in the outer world. I don't disappear when I read poetry. My body stays and the words stay like things, except more real than things, because they become things with my real self: the self that cannot touch anything or anyone else. Because of this, because I'm playing with real objects when I'm reading poetry, anything and anyone I love might appear in the poems. I might find myself standing with a friend, in a field of tall grass outside the house I grew up in, or in a canoe with my father, or somewhere I've never even been, meeting someone I never knew, catching a fish off the coast of San Francisco.

I have a great deal of trouble organizing anything, and when I write I have a great deal of trouble organizing words. Nothing seems particularly important, and everything is of utmost importance. But I see it all as pointing to the same thing. Spicer wrote in a letter to Lorca, "The perfect poem has an infinitely small vocabulary" (123), and I believe this. Perhaps we could also say that there are a vast number of experiences in life, but only one life in the experience of writing. Some point at it with a long soft finger, others with the crooked finger of a dark sermonizer. There are so many types of hands, all pointing to the same thing. Most of society, with its useless focuses and promotions, stares at the hand instead of where it is pointing, like a dog to its master, pointing at a treat on the ground that the dog did not realize was there. I would like to explore this singular life of writing as something that takes place, and obtains its value, apart from

society, in a way that continues my fascination, and seeks to expand the possibility of its meanings rather than set boundaries to that life.

In this project I will try to make an arrow out of individual parts like the arrow geese make in the direction of their flight. I want the fragmentariness of my experience of space to relate with my experience of ideas and my association of ideas with experiences. One of my companions in the undertakings of my project was the theorist Leo Bersani, in his essay, "Boundaries of Time and Being" from the collection The Culture of Redemption. There, he writes, "If that loss [of vertical symbolism] deprives the world as we know it of transcendental dimensions, it also sets phenomena free for relations now wholly unconstrained by any permanent designs. There is no divine plan to which all relations must ultimately conform; design is always provisional and mobile. Thus loss is an immense analogical gain; the most remote objects and phenomena may eventually be experienced as having at least momentary affinities." (Bersani, 75-76). These "momentary affinities" at last seem to me the most honest way of connecting what I love, and the forms I find fascinating, to an experience of living that does not seek validation from public approval, the control of information through organization, or the impulse to destroy my own body. I would like to not cultivate within myself an appetite for closure, for the systemized organization of narrative. Rather, I would like to continue experiencing life within, and outside of writing, as an unending continuation of affinities between objects and experiences.

Edward Taylor

For Edward Taylor the riches of gold and the like did not compare in worth to the transcendent riches gifted to the soul upon the experience of grace. I am unable to explain precisely what those riches are, but I can say that he saw them as coming from God, and that, in Taylor's poems, they appear in a palpable forms. These objects from God are compared with items one might covet on earth, items of luxury whose worth is extravagant, and whose owners are considered privileged. Although such objects often indicate grace in the Puritan tradition, Taylor's poetry seems to counter this claim. In "9. Meditation. Joh. 6.51. I am the Living Bread." he writes: I'll bet a boast with any that this Bread / I eate excels what ever Caesar had"(Taylor 5-6).

Whatever this "Bread" might be, it seems that Taylor found it partly through his poetry and somewhere in the reevaluation of his simple mode of existence. By linking words not only to reality, in particular, the reality of his body, but to God as well, he enabled himself to view "spiced cups, sweet meats, and sugar Cakes" as "but dry sawdust to the living bread" (Taylor 9-10). It is this mode of writing and this mode of existence, a mode that views itself as an action directly corresponding to the life of the writer, that interests me.

Foucault writes in his essay, "What is an Author", that literature, "was a gesture charged with risks long before it became a possession caught in a circuit of property values"(Foucault 124). Taylor's poetry contained risks, risks, insofar as each poem holds the potential for a monumental failure. He charged himself

with the responsibility of reaching some state of exaltation through the act of writing, to establish a connection with God, and some private affirmation of his grace. These poems served as experiences in the physical world that allowed him to charge his sense of being alive, allowed him to believe in a potential for meaning beyond physical objects, lifting him into the realm of fascination, a state where his body and his spirit could be oriented towards the religious.

This orientation towards the religious, towards the unearthly, balances itself through an uncompromising relation of his own physicality. Merely by Taylor's repetition of his writing, i.e., each time he began writing he was beginning again. We can see that before turning his orientation towards the prospect of heaven he must first orient himself towards sin. In the same way, in reaching heaven, he had to turn back towards the world, towards the inescapable physicality and imperfection of his body, and towards the possibility of his damnation.

I am fascinated by these lowest points in his poetic journeys, the moments when his body seems condemned to the most vulgar parts of its physical existence, and the moments in his poems when he doubts the function of words, the ability of a poem to become the vehicle of his spiritualization. I see now that my only way of understanding Taylor's undertakings, is to perform myself with language the link that he was attempting to make, each time he wrote. I am not choosing to inhabit his metaphysical manner since it does not allow for those links to spread and make further connections—for Taylor the link was only necessary between God and him. I would like to create these links in language

between my own body and his, as well as create links between his work and those of the other three poets I am exploring. To do this I will try and work my way from the point of Edward Taylor's entry into writing until the point of his reentrance into himself. Hopefully then I can begin to understand what it was that Edward Taylor reached and felt in the practice of his writing poetry.

Emily Dickinson

While preparing for this project it became apparent that Emily Dickinson's desire to remain separate from society was not in fact the effect of fear, but rather the result of a choice—a choice founded on her refusal to accept the limitations of existing with a pre-established framework that restricted her singular engagement with reality. To function as a wife or a worker (at points in her youth she considered becoming a teacher) was to strike an agreement that required parameters. To be published, in her specific case, during a time when the conception of poetry in the United States was exceptionally narrow and offered a particularly low position to any works by a "Poetess", would mean making sacrifices in the structure and style of her poetry while assuming a position in society subordinate to men pursuing the same. Her choice to remain apart from these structures of power came from her resistance to control and an indifference to what complying with them might offer.

The introduction to The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson begins: "There are certain significant dates in American Literary history during the

nineteenth century”. The introduction then goes on to list these significant dates: Emerson’s “American Scholar” address (August 21, 1837), Whitman’s circulation of printed copies of Leaves of Grass (July 1855)—and includes in the introducer’s holy trinity, “April 15, 1862, when Tomas Wentworth Higginson received a letter from Emily Dickinson enclosing four of her poems” (Dickinson v). The connections made in the introduction seem like sensible ones now; Dickinson is organized with the other giants of our assimilated American scene, but of course, neither at the time Emily’s letter was sent, nor ever in the years of her life that proceeded its signing, were its contents a notable event in the American literary scene. Emily Dickinson’s arrival was an untimely one. She cannot be equated with the events of her present. Her singularity, falling outside the historical narrative, exposes the creation of our cannon as fraud and our conceptualization of her life in biography as an attempt to reorganize history to avoid the escape of its outliers.

In this project I would like to ignore these organizations of literary positions. I would like to address Emily’s poetry in a way that includes her in our shared human drama and does not attempt to exalt her or cloud her in the shallow and meaningless shadows of celebrity. These make her into a fetishized object whose image is purposefully preserved as singular, and whose work remains embalmed by the inability of the public to equate her with themselves. I am addressing this subject because for me it represents the trap, the boundaries set for us by culture, by narrative, and by publishing, that seek to control the part

of us that is able at times to imagine itself beyond these boundaries, to bridge the gap between ourselves and what we do not know.

Dickinson's poems are simultaneously concise and vividly clear while still remaining, to a point, indecipherable—stretching without limit there, in their obscurity, pointing, to what we cannot see. I am fascinated by the boundaries she creates, and how she consistently realizes her escape from them. She illuminates the boundaries of her gaze, on the circle closed in on herself, what Blanchot calls, “An immediate expression of the inversion that is the essence of solitude”(Blanchot 75). This solitude becomes a container for the infinite, somehow makes what denies her, what excludes her—the distance of our separations when existing in the infinite—collapse, letting her find the infinite like a penny on the sidewalk of herself.

Jack Spicer

I began my correspondence with Jack Spicer in March of 2011. That letter will not be included here, but I will say that the first letter was a call for help, an attempt at reaching out to someone when I felt perhaps the most alone I have ever felt. I was reaching out to a dead man but the correspondence worked. I was suddenly connecting with another person, and as I told him more about myself, about what I understood, it seemed the more I began to understand about him. We inhabited the space between us together. One from life and one from death. The letters are our meeting place.

When I began writing these poems and letters for Jack Spicer under the pretext of this project, the chapter as an object began to make me very anxious. I started to believe that I must explain what I was doing, why I was including my own poems rather than his, and explain this through the letters I was writing to him. Because I began to try and explain my reasoning, something malignant started to enter into the letters. Some form of lies. So I cut them out. That information is not information Spicer needs because he already understands this. So I will take the opportunity to try and explain it here.

Spicer wrote in a letter to Robin Blazer, "The trick naturally is what Duncan learned years ago and tried to teach us—not to search for the perfect poem but to let your way of writing of the moment go along its own paths, explore and retreat but never be fully realized (confined) within the boundaries of one poem. This is where we were wrong and he was right, but he complicated things for us by saying that there is no such thing as good or bad poetry. There is—but not in relation to the single poem. There is really no single poem...Poems should echo and re-echo against each other. They should create resonances. They cannot live alone any more than we can."(Spicer 163). This thought is paramount to our understanding of Spicer's poetry. I only include occasional excerpts from his writings because dealing with Spicer's poems one poem at a time does not seem able to approach the essence of the affinities or correspondences between poems that this idea is suggesting. What we have to understand is how these "resonances" are created. Though my poems differ greatly from his, I hope they enact for the reader the "resonances" and "momentary affinities" that I have been

talking about, between my own poems, his poems, and those of the other poets I'm writing about. I would like them all to relate within an ocean of pure consciousness to expand this shared consciousness. In doing so I also hope to illuminate what it seems to me Spicer cared about. He was searching for connection or entry both through himself into the outer world and through the outer world into himself. Words hold this double meaning, and the entry is opened at the moment one begins to make art.

Mario Santiago Papasquiario

Mario Santiago Papasquiario is a poet I came to know under strange circumstances. I first became acquainted with a representation of the person, and not his work, as a sort of mythologized character under the alter ego of Ullis Lima in Roberto Bolaño's novel The Savage Detectives. "Mario Santiago Papasquiario" already exists in the world outside that novel as a pseudonym for José Alfredo Zendejas Pineda. He has been portrayed in both the novel and in the meager biographical sketches available on the web as being a sort of renegade underground poet attempting to counter institutions and controls over both his life and his work. He and a group of friends, among them Roberto Bolaño, at the age of 22, founded a literary movement in Mexico City they dubbed "Infrarealism". In part, this movement was inspired by "Stridentism", an

avant-garde movement formed in 1921 in Xalapa, Veracruz, the town I lived in and went to school in as a first-grader. The Stridentist art movement concerned itself with action in its present, upholding in its Manifesto, “The exaltation of the suggestive theme-atism of machines, the labor explosions that smash the mirrors of these subverted days. To live emotionally. To palpitate with time’s propeller. To put oneself in step with the future.” (Maples).

The Infrarealists were founded in 1975. Its manifesto, written by Bolaño, begins and ends with the phrase, “Abandon everything, again.” The only collection of poems by Santiago I could get my hands on, entitled Jeta de Santo and published in 2008, eight years after he was hit by a car and killed in Mexico City, is still identified in the book’s introduction, by Mario Raúl Guzmán, with the Infrarealist movement. There he expresses Santiago’s struggles and intentions in life and poetry. He Quotes Trotsky in his introduction, saying, “The struggle against simulation in art always transforms, more or less, into the struggle against the falsity of social relations” (Santiago 11). Santiago’s poems transform often colloquial or overused speech into song. Somehow his poetry denies the disasters of simulation. His poems, like actions, are transported into the immediate. Guzmán quotes Santiago saying: “Yo no pienso; yo muerdo”— “I don’t think; I bite”(Santiago 13), fitting with his definition of a “vanguard artist” as “he who, above all else, subverts the quotidian, transforming it and transforming himself” (Santiago 13).

The poem I translated for this project is titled “Confessions of 1 Disciple of Marx to 1 Heidegger Fanatic”. This poem deals with the influences of both these

philosophers on him. Blanchot, dealing with in a section of “Literature and the Right to Death”, referring to marx, writes:

“If we see work as the force of history, the force that transforms man while it transforms the world, then a writer’s activity must be recognized as the highest form of work. When a man works, what does he do? He produces an object. That object is the realization of a plan which was unreal before then: it is the affirmation of reality different from the elements which constitute it and it is the future of new objects, to the extent that it becomes a tool capable of creating other objects... Thus is history formed... by work which realizes being in denying it, and reveals it at the end of the negation”Blanchot 33).

Santiago, in this poem, is concerned with the denial of being, of centrality, organization, conceptualization, and death, which in turn realize his reality. Almost without turning from the general to the specific, from the spiritual to the physical, almost containing these oppositions within a single place, Santiago brings forth his object.

Santiago’s work represents for me a way of understanding experience both physically and symbolically. This is, I think, the same as experiencing the self as both singular and universal. The indefinite article “a” is translated in Spanish to “un” or “una”, which is synonymous with the number 1 in Spanish. It is also translatable to the written amount “uno”, “una” or “un”, meaning “one”. Santiago uses the number 1 in his poems in a way that allows the number to represent both the article and the written number. After dealing with the problem of this relationship between the number and the article in Spanish, I decidedly

kept the number in my translation to represent the article “a” on the basis of a theoretical belief that the effect of seeing the number 1 and reading the article “a” aloud, or to one’s self, serves to create, express, and contain both a conception of the singular individual or private experience as well as a general, unanimous, or infinite portrayal of the human experience. In this way the poem can simultaneously represent two realities. It is a paradox already existing as reality in the function of the word itself, embodied in the infinite nothingness of the singular but indefinite article “a”.

In the only interview with the poet I could find online, in response to the question, “Why did you take so long to publish again?” he responds:

“My first solo reading was in the Museo de San Carlos on May 3rd of 1974. I wasn’t born yesterday. And in 1975 I founded the Mexican Infrarealist movement. Around then they started to get sick of me, because I was confronting Pacheco, Monsiváis, everyone I know of. No one wants to give me a job. For four years I have no income. Sergio Mondragón has refused to give me a job because I’m an Infrarealist. They say I sabotage readings. They say the Infrarealists beat people up. And those idiots allege that I don’t know how to write. Motherfuckers. I am *l’ecrivain*. But that’s not important. Better if I read you some things... “

(Enrique)

Edward Taylor

Meditations on the Preparatory Meditations

Gods Determinations touching his Elect: and The Elects Combat in their Conversion, and Coming up to God in Christ together with the Comfortable Effects thereof.

To stay he dares not, go he knows not where
From God he can't, to God he dreads for Feare.
To Dy he Dreads; For Vengeance's due to him;
To Live he must not, Death persues his Sin:
He Knows not what to have, nor what to loose
Nor what to do, nor what to take or Choose:
Thus over Stretcht upon the Wrack of Woe,
Bereav'd of Reason, he proceeds now so,
Betakes himself unto his Heels in hast,
Runs like a Madman till his Spirits wast,
Then like a Child that fears the Poker Clapp
Him on his face doth on his Mothers lap
Doth hold his breath, lies still for fear least hee
Should by his breathing lowd discover'd bee.

Edward Taylor believes that salvation is outside his control. When we act, these actions only act upon the infinite; a punch or a kiss repeats itself outwardly into the infinite: "Infinity, when all things it beheld / In Nothing, and of Nothing all did build, / Upon what Base fixt the Lath, wherein / He turn'd this Globe, and Riggalld it so trim?"(Taylor, 263). How does one not run, not try and hide from it? And simultaneously, how does one not search for it, not spend the entirety of one's lifetime looking for some end?

Because searching only finds there is no end for the acts to act against.

They exist forever and are always moving. Justice and Mercy, the agents of God, they say *stop*, and it stops, and they move onto the next, they are not human, since human is powerlessness. We act with our hands and our feet, and they do nothing.

1.

**27. Meditation Upon Heb. 9.13.14. How much more shall the Blood of Christ
etc.**

4.7m [Sept.] 1698.

My mentall Eye, spying thy sparkling Fold
 Bedeckt, my Lord, with Glories shine alone,
 That doth out do all Broideries of Gold:
 And Pavements of Rich Pearles, and Precious Stone
 Did double back its Beams to light my Sphere
 Making an inward Search, for what springs there.

And in my Search I finde myselfe defild:
 Issues and Leprosies all ore mee streame.
 Such have not Enterance. I am beguild:
 My Seate, Bed, Saddle, Spittle too's uncleane. 10
 My Issue Running Leprosy doth spread:
 My upper Lip is Covered: not my Head.

Hence all ore ugly, Nature Poysond stands,
Lungs all Corrupted, Skin all botch't and scabd
A Feeble Voice, a Stinking Breath out fand
And with a Scurfy Skale I'me all ore clagd.
Robes rent: Head bare, Lips Coverd too, I cry,
Unclean, Unclean, and from thy Camp do fly.

Woe's mee. Undone! Undone! my Leprosy!
Without a Miracle there is no Cure. 20
Worse than the Elephantick Mange I spie
My Sickness is. And must I it endure?
Dy of my Leprosy? Lord, say to't nay,
I'll Cure thee in my wonder working way.

I see thy Gracious hand indeed hath caught
Two Curious pritty pure Birds, types most sure

Of thy two Natures, and The one is brought
 To shed its blood in running waters pure
 Held in an Earthen Panchin which displays
 Thy Blood and Water preacht in Gospell dayes. 30

The slain Dove's buri'de: In whose Blood (in water)
 The Living Turtle, Ceder, Scarlet twine,
 And Hysop dipted are (as an allator)
 Sprinkling the Leper with it Seven times
 That typify Christs Blood by Grace applide 35

To Sinners vile, and then they're purifide.
 Sprindge Lord mee With it. Wash me also in
 The Poole of Shiloam, and shave mee bare
 With Gospells Razer. Though the Roots of Sin
 Bud up again, again shave off its hair. 40
 Thy Eighth dayes Bath, and Razer make more gay,

Than th'Virgin Maries Purifying day.
 My Tresspass, Sin, and my Burnt Sacrifices
 My Flowre and Oyle, for my meate Offering
 My Lord, thou art. Whether Lambs or Doves up rise 45
 And with thy Holy Blood atonement bring,
 And put thy Blood upon my Right Eare fair

Whose tip shall it, its Onely jewell, Ware.
 And put it Gold-Ring-like on my Right Thumb
 And on my Right Greate toe as a Rich Gem. 50
 Thy Blood will not Head, Hand nor Foot benum,
 But satisfy and cleans all fault from them.
 Then put thy Holy Oyle upon the place

Of th'Blood of my Right Eare, Thumb, Toe. Here's Grace.
 Then Holiness shall Consecrate mine Eare. 55
 And sanctify my Fingers Ends, and Toes.
 And in my hearing, Working, Walking here
 The Breath of Sanctifying Grace out goes.
 Perfuming all these Actions, and my life.

Oh! Sweetest Sweet. Hence Holiness is rife. 60
 Lord, Cleanse mee thus with thy Rich Bloods Sweet Shower
 My Issue stop: destroy my Leprosy.
 Thy Holy Oyle upon my Head out poure
 And cloathe my heart and Life with Sanctity.
 My Head, my Hand and Foot shall strike thy praise, 65
 If thus besprinkled, and Encamp thy Wayes.

Within the space of this poem, Taylor cries out to God, begging for his body to be sanctified. The space of the infinite is folded, like origami, into a form. He creates within the construction of his poem a space, a room, with ends and beginnings to work against. Even as he claims he has no power, as an action he writes himself into a form of power that lifts the body with it and steals it into God. This might not be synonymous with being invited. He has never been given a key and everything about him is wretched.

When he writes a poem, that poem transforms crude physical parts of the body into words, new things, and things only the reader can see. He writes, “in my Search I finde myselfe defild...My Seate, Bed, Saddle, Spittle too’s uncleane”(7/10), “Hence all ore ugly, Nature Poysond stands, / Lungs all Corrupted, Skin all botch’t and scabd / A Feeble Voice, a Stinking Breath out fand / And with a Scurfy Skale I’m all ore clagd”(13-16). Strangely, there is something engrossing, and maybe seductive about viewing the base, physical, grungy, parts of existence through this lens by the solitude of a reader, unpermitted to let their eyes wander across the reality of the thingness that sticks to the skin of bodies.

The poem’s interior space creates boundaries that serve to make a reality that has purpose. It pushes the forms of the body into the form of the poem creating a thick stew of limbs and bodily functions, like a dark pool, out of which, somehow,

Taylor continually manages to rise into a triumphant being whose body shines. He writes, "Then Holiness shall Consecrate mine Eare. / And sanctify my Fingers Ends, and Toes. / And in my hearing, Working, Walking here / The Breath of Sanctifying Grace out goes. / Perfuming all these Actions, and my life"(56-59) while those impurities from which he rose continue existing, backwards in space, he becomes ineffably separate or distinct from it, but somehow still with a body, one that is perfectly imagined and impenetrably guarded by the love of God. Redemption, Grace, call it what you will, becomes a circumstance through words but beyond words.

One can only suspect, moving himself out of his body and the space of the world our bodies inhabit, that Taylor's body begins to ache for itself, since we are not his body nor are we the one leaving that body. We are leaving this body; and I can say there is a definite ache, but an ache that for some reason, if you only could, you would hold onto. Who knows why, the ache always pushes you out. It seems this occurs when the ache is put into those terms—into that word—making it like a bowling ball purposely rolled down the bowling ball return mechanism.

Taylor does this with himself. It is almost as if he takes his body to the mouth of the pit he dreads to descend and pushes his body into it only to feel himself being pushed back up and out of it once more. He says that when he turned inward to look at himself he found himself disgusting, writing, "Did double back its Beams to light my Sphere / Making an inward Search, for what springs there. /

And in my Search I finde myselfe defild" (5-7). Somehow, this search, this movement inward, reanimates the part of him he believes is as pure as the perfect body of youth. Without writing his poetry this is impossible, "Without a Miracle there is no Cure"(20). A ritual is created within the landscape of the poem upon which he enacts the killing of one of the "Two Curious Pritty pure Birds"(26) whose blood he pours into "running waters pure"(28), and is then sprinkled over him seven times (34). This spin-off of the killing of the ram in Exodus 29:20 is not a recipe, nor are we to suspect it ever actually took place. What it is, is the performance of a strange purification through the act of writing.

2.

23. Meditation. Cant. 4.8 My Spouse

Would God I in that Golden City were,
 With Jaspers Walld, all garnisht, and made swash,
 With Pretious Stones, whose Gates are Pearles most cleare
 And Street Pure Gold, like to transparent Glass.
 That my dull Soule, might be inflamed to see
 How Saints and Angells ravisht are in Glee. 5

Were I but there, and could but tell my Story,
 'Twould rub those Walls of Pretious Stones More Bright:
 And glaze those Gates of Pearle, with brighter Glory;
 And pave the golden Street with Greater light. 10
 'Twould in fresh Raptures Saints, and Angells fling.
 But I poore Snake Crawl here, scarce mudwalld in.

May my Rough Voice, and my blunt Tongue but spell
 My Tale (for tune they can't) perhaps there may
 Some Angell catch and end of't up, and tell 15
 In Heaven, when he doth return that way,
 He'l make thy Palace, Lord, all over ring,
 With it in Songs, thy Saint, and Angells sing.

I know not how to speak't, it is so good:

Shall Mortall, and Immortall marry? nay, 20
 Man marry God? God be a Match for Mud?
 The King of Glory Wed a Worm? mere Clay?
 This is the Case. The Wonder too in Bliss.
 Thy Maker is thy Husband. Hearst thou this?

My Maker, he my Husband? Oh! strange joy! 25
 If Kings wed Worms, and Monarchs Mites wed should,
 Glory spouse Shame, a Prince a Snake or Fly
 An Angell Court an Ant, all Wonder would.
 Let such Wed Worms, Snakes Serpents, Divells, Flyes.
 Less Wonder than the Wedden in our Eyes. 30

I am to Christ more bas, than to a King
 A Mite, Fly, Worm, Ant, Serpent, Divell is,
 Or Can be, being tumbled all in Sin,
 And shall I be his Spouse? How good is this?
 It is too good to be declar'de to thee. 35
 But not too good to be believ'de by mee.

Yet to this Wonder, this is found in mee,
 I am not onely base but backward clay,
 When Christ doth woee: and till this Spirit bee
 His Spokes man to Compell me I deny. 40
 I am so base and Froward to him, Hee
 Appears as Wonders Wonder, wedding mee.

Seing, Dear Lord, its thus, thy Spirit take
 And send thy Spokes man, to my Soul, I pray.
 Thy Saving Grace my Wedden Garment make: 45
 Thy Spouses Frame into my Soul Convay.
 I then shall be thy Bride Espousd by thee
 And Thou my Bridesgroom Deere Espousde shalt bee.

Only in "The Golden City" can Taylor tell his story. The words come out and wash
 the "Walls of Pretious Stones More Bright" so he can speak it, so he can become
 what is him hidden by what is seen, by the body that defines him, by the human
 that defines him, by the "I poore Snake Crawl here" that he is. So he writes, he
 swims through and as he swims in words they wrinkle around, pulling him closer
 to what is made, to what cannot change, asking where should I put this rotten

self? this rotten body? you would not want it would you God,? “If Kings wed Worms,”(26) then something spins and he kisses it, kisses it hard, hard with sweat dripping from his forehead and elbows, changing, changing into nothing, into light that reaches out and holds nothing in, holds no Sin, no pain, no anger at the death of his children and the rotting of his body, and the continual and always letting go of everything that is dear to him, that had to die and swim around in mud and muck and he kissed God for it, he kissed God because he was a worm and wished to wed some swan or giant frog, whatever God to him might be, and stepping over the dead bodies of the ones he loved he walks down and on, he runs, and keeps running “In all Degrees of Love, a Graduate high. / When thy Preheminence doth ply this pin, / My Musick shall thy Praises sweetly bring”— until the couplet where the wrinkles of worm shrink tight and the worms become ribbons, and he is awarded and he wakes up.

3.

96. Meditation. Cant. 1. 2. Let him kiss me with the Kisse of his mouth.

9.5m [July] 1710.

What placed in the Sun: and yet my ware,
 A Cloud upon my head? an Hoodwinke blinde?
 In middst of Love thou layst on mee, despare?
 And not a blinke of Sunshine in my minde?
 Shall Christ bestow his lovely Love on his,
 And mask his face? allowing not a kiss?

5

Shall ardent love to Christ enfire the Heart?
 Shall hearty love in Christ embrace the Soule?
 And shall the Spirituall Eye be wholly dark,
 In th'heart of Love, as not belov'd, Condole?

10

In th'midst of Loves bright Sun, and yet not see
A Beame of Love allow'd to lighten thee?

Lord! read the Riddle: Shall a gracious heart
The object of thy love be sick of Love?
And beg a kiss under the piercing Smart, 15
Of want thereof? Lord pittie from above.
What wear the Sun, without a ray of light?
In midst of Sunshine, meet a pitchy night?

Thy foes, whose Souls Sins bowling alley's grown
With Cankering Envy rusty made, stand out 20
Without all Sense of thy Sweet Love ere shown
Is no great wonder. Thou lov'st not this rout.
But wonder't is that such that grudge their hearts
Hold love too little for thee, should thus smart.

Nay, nay, stand Sir: here's wisdom very cleare. 25
None sensibly can have thy love decline:
That never had a drop thereof: nor ere
Did tast thereof. This is the right of thine.
Such as enjoy thy Love, may lack the Sense
May have thy love and not loves evidence. 30

Maybe thy measures are above thy might.
Desires Crave more than thou canst hold by far:
If thou shouldst have but what thou would, if right,
Thy pipkin soon would run ore, breake, or jar. 35
Wisdom allows enough: none t'wast is known.
Because thou hast not all, say not, thoust none.

Christ loves to lay thy Love under Constraint.
He therefore lets not's Love her Candle light,
To see her Lovely arms that never faint
Circle thyself about, with greate Delight. 40
The prayers of Love ascend in gracious tune
To him as Musick, and as heart perfume.

But listen, Soule, here seest thou not a Cheate.
Earth is not heaven: Faith not Vision. No.
To see the Love of Christ on thee Compleate 45
Would make heavens Rivers of joy, earth overflow.
This is the Vale of tears, not mount of joyes.
Some Crystal drops while here may well suffice.

But, oh my Lord! let mee lodge in thy Love.

Although thy Love play bow-peep with me here.
Though I be dark: want Spectacles to prove
Thou lovest mee: I shall at last see Clear.
And though not now, I then shall sing thy praise.
In that thy love did tende me all my dayes.

50

We are incomplete, but have no memory of being whole. The condition of life, being temporary, becomes the condition of being incomplete, without finish. What finish could there be if always there is more to come? So how do we live in it, only barely alive? Taylor says, "To see the Love of Christ on thee Complete / Would make heavens Rivers of joy, earth overflow"(45-46).

But, Jesus, we are sick of this place, we are sick of it and it is so cold here, and it is so flat here, and it is so dark here, and look here all we have is our legs and our feet for God's sake, and sure we can move them, we can go on moving them, we can even move our arms, and in our agony you might want to force this warmth, this liveness, this love to the ground and just fucking force it, fucking take it because this one is all you want and all you need, and force it to your lips, and why is it not yours, you have nothing, you think, so why the fuck doesn't it take you in its arms and hold you, you think, it promised, someone somewhere at sometime promised, and you believed them somehow. But now it is gone because you thought to grab it, and instead it is gone, not even the wind blows, only the constant hum of electrical equipment can be heard somewhere deep beneath the parking lot and this thing you thought was there and you had pinned before. It never did.

“read the Riddle: shall a gracious heart / The object of thy love be sick of Love? / And beg a kiss under the piercing smart, / Of want thereof? Lord Pitty from above.” (23-26).

Completeness, the ability to see, would make each place, the ground, the trees, the sky, the sounds, the breeze, become a singular experience, one so real, so complete, we would no longer be able to define ourselves, and so we would no longer exist but rather be a part of everything; and ourselves, our understanding of a singular human entity, even our conception of what it means to see, what it means to understand, what it means to want and yearn and hope, would be eradicated. There would be no poetry, since it points to the inability of completing ourselves, it points to the war, to the breaking, and finally to the tears that seek reparation. Is there no way for Edward Taylor to kiss God upon the mouth? We are left alone waiting without the power to take love by ourselves. Liveness must take us, must somehow pity us, “A Beam of Love allowed to lighten”(12), “To see her Lovely arms that never faint / Circle thyself about, with greate Delight”(39-40), and we are only left waiting for this to come down and take us, we are powerless waiting while that hum persists and the landscape is empty, cleared of the crevices and shadows that could hold deep within them all the cakes and all the light and all the love a man could eat. We are waiting for God to take us over.

But, maybe, just maybe, we can do something. We can prepare ourselves. We can prepare ourselves with love so that when we are taken it can flood out of us. We can prepare it in a world that can sustain it. Taylor claims that love would ruin the physical world, this incompatibility he calls “the Vale of tears”(47). So we

must prepare our kiss, behind the veil, instilled with all the love inside of us that we hope to impart inside the poem, where it can survive and where it can keep it until we are taken like a small gift to “lodge in thy Love”(49).

4.

Meditation 24. Joh. 1.14. Tabernacled amongst us.

25.10m [Dec.] 1697.

My Soul would gazing all amazed stand,
 To see the burning Sun, with'ts golden locks
 (An hundred sixty six times more than th'land)
 Ly buttond up in a Tobacco box.
 But this bright Wonder, Lord, that fore us playes 5
 May make bright Angells gasterd, at it gaze.

That thou, my Lord, that hast the Heavens bright
 Pav'd with the Sun, and Moon, with Stars o're pinckt,
 Thy Tabernacle, yet shouldst take delight
 To make my flesh thy Tent, and tent with in't. 10
 Wonders themselves do seem to faint away
 To finde the Heavens Filler housd in Clay.

Thy Godhead Cabbin'd in a Myrtle bowre,
 A Palm branch tent, an Olive Tabernacle,
 A Pine bough Booth, An Osier House or tower 15
 A mortall bitt of Manhood, where the Staple
 Doth fixt, uniting of thy natures, hold,
 And hold out marvels more than can be told.

Thy Tabernacles floore Celestiall
 Doth Canopie the Whole World. Lord; and wilt 20
 Thou tabernacle in a tent so small?
 Have Tent, and Tent cloath of a Humane Quilt?
 Thy Person make a bit of flesh of mee
 Thy Tabernacle, and its Canopee?

Wonders! my Lord, Thy Nature all With Mine 25
 Doth by the Feast of Booths Conjoynd appeare
 Together in thy Person all Divine
 Stand House, and House holder. What Wonder's here?

Thy Person infinite, without compare Cloaths made of a Carnation leafe doth ware.	30
What Glory to my nature doth thy Grace Confer, that it is made a Booth for thine To tabernacle in? Wonders take place. Thou low dost step aloft to lift up mine. Septembers fifteenth day did type the Birth Of this thy tabernacle here on earth.	35
And through this leafy Tent the glory cleare Of thy Rich Godhead shineth very much: The Crowds of Sacrifices which swarm here Shew forth thy Efficacy now is such Flowing in from thy natures thus united As Clears off Sin, and Victims all benighted.	40
But yet the Wonder grows: and groweth much, For thou wilt Tabernacles change with mee. Not onely Nature, but my person tuch. Thou wilt mee thy, and thee, my tent to bee. Thou wilt, if I my heart will to thee rent, My Tabernacle make thy Tenement.	45
Thou'lt tent in mee, I dwell in thee shall here. For housing thou wilt pay mee rent in bliss: And I shall pay thee rent of Reverent fear For Quarters in thy house. Rent mutuall is. Thy Tenent and thy Teniment I bee. Thou Landlord art and Tenent too to mee.	50
Lord lease thyselfe to mee out: make mee give 55 A Leafe unto thy Lordship of myselfe. Thy Tenent, and thy Teniment I'll live. And give and take Rent of Celestiall Wealth. I'll be thy Tabernacle: thou shalt bee My Tabernacle. Lord thus mutuall wee.	60
The Feast of Tabernacles makes me sing Out thy Theanthropy, my Lord, I'll spare No Musick here. Sweet Songs of praises in The Tabernacles of the Righteous are. My Palmifer'd Hosannah Songs I'll raise On my Shoshannims blossoming thy praise.	65

God, like the wind, knocks things over, spills blood and yanks intestines from their outlets in the walls. The poet wants to be empty; poets they are full of nothings that bob up and down in the darkness. If only the poet could clear it out, renovate it, make room for all the guests in the world, "Have Tent, and Tent cloth of Human Quilt"(22), and fill it up with God, and pay Him in songs, and in return the poet only asks to become nothing, to become nothing but a tent of flesh for God to fill up, "Together in thy person all Divine / Stand House, and House holder. What Wonders here? / Thy Person infinite, without compare"(27-28), and we can feel it, we can feel as we move further and further away from where we started, as we mover further and further from the point where the structures of thoughts, of references, of stories and genres and symbols and things building thoughts and summoning body parts that become lost throughout the structure, becoming meaningless, and the words fill up with vacuum, and we feel saved. The gift has been accepted and we are no longer writing words but light, because there is no end and we are going somewhere, we are always going somewhere while the bobbing heads of nothing inside sink and disappear into us. Suddenly there is room, there is so much room you could burst with love. Just one tiny insect of love could be enough to buzz around your giant empty body. It would still be nothing but that buzzing, a sweet warm buzzing throughout the structure—buzz, buzz, buzz, buzzzzz— and you don't even wonder where it has all gone.

But should you and must you fear that emptiness? Edward Taylor knows, "Thoult tent in mee, I dwell in thee shall here. / For housing thou wilt pay me rent

in bliss: / And I shall pay thee rent of Reverent fear / For Quarters in thy house.
 Rent mutual is”(49-52). Some poets want to be a rickety house for the wind to
 blow through. Taylor wants to be a tent made of flesh that God would reside in
 while being a resident within God’s body-tent as well. He says, “Thou wilt mee
 thy, and thee, my tent to bee”(46), while God pays rent in “bliss” Taylor pays his
 own rent in “Reverent fear”, becoming a tiny thing, a small insignificant ant
 among the many, ignored by the walls that surround him, the walls being so high,
 and the ceiling being nothing but a darkness hovering so far above. To house in
 God is to lose any sense of your body and become only, perhaps, a voice, a
 voice whose task it is to sing the rent, “The Feast of Tabernacles makes me sing
 / Out thy Theanthropy, my Lord, I’ll spare / No Musick here. Sweet Songs of
 praises in / The Tabernacles of the Righteous are”(61-64), until the buzz is gone
 and the fear becomes a mad longing for the destruction of the body, for a
 shedding of the skin as if it were a patch of quilt to cover beauty while it slept.

5.

76. Meditation. Phi. 3.21. Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like his Glorious body.

27.5m [July] 1707.

Will yee be neighbourly, ye Angells bright?

Then lend mee your Admiring Facultie:

Wonders presented stand, above my might.

That call from mee the highest Extasie.

If you deny mee this: my pimping Soule,

5

These Wonders pins up in an Auger hole.

If my Rush Candle on its wick ware flame,

Of Ignis lambens. Oh! bright garb indeed:
 What then, when Flakes of flaming Glory train
 From thy bright glorious bulk to 'ray my weed. 10
 What my vile Body like thy Glorious, Formd?
 What Wonder here? My body thus adorn'd!

What shall mine hempen harle wove in thy Loom
 Into a web (an hurden web indeed)
 Be made its Makers Tent Cloth? I presume. 15
 Within these Curtains Grace keeps Hall, and breeds:
 But shall my hurden-hangings ever ware
 A bright bright Glory like thy body faire?

Meethinks thy smile doth make thy Footstoole so
 Spread its green Carpet 'fore thy feet for joy. 20
 And Bryers climb in t'bright Rose that flows
 Out in sweet reechs to meet thee in the sky:
 And makes the sportive Starrs play Hide-and-Seek
 And on thy bodies Glory peeping keep.

And shall not I (whose form transformd shall bee 25
 To be shap'te like thy glorious body, Lord.
 That Angells bright, as Gasterd, gaze at mee
 To see such Glory on my dresser board),
 Transported be hereat for very joy,
 Whose intrest lies herein, and gloriously? 30

What shall the frosty Rhime upon my locks,
 Congeale my brains with Chilly dewes, whereby
 My Phansie is benumbd: and put in Stocks,
 And thaws not into Steams of reeching joy?
 Oh! strange Ingratitude! Let not this Frame 35
 Abide, Lord, in mee. Fire mee with thy flame.

Lord, let thy glorious Body send such rayes
 Into my Soule, as ravish shall my heart,
 That Thoughts how thy bright Glory out shall blaze
 Upon my body, may such Rayes thee dart. 40
 My Tunes shall dance then on these Rayes and Caper
 Unto thy Praise. When Glory lights my Taper.

What Taylor wants is still a body, but body that is becoming beautiful, a body being made beautiful by God. A tall thin candle that would be his body majestically supporting a flame, the flame like life and the body like wax, but not a wax of death, a wax perhaps that covers some exuberant cheese, a wax of life because can't you see? Edward Taylor wants to be alive, he wants to be transformed into someone actually living, someone who kneeling down to inspect this or that, kneeling down and touching it, would actually be touching it, and it would be touching him, and there would not be any sadness, there would be none at all because he would be all wax and the flame would be there, and he would be dripping with love for that fire, because there is no point in bending down and inspecting anything, there is no point in the living unless you are dripping and melting, and you have lost your shoes, and you have lost your jacket, and you have lost that desperate desperate need to be loved yourself, because you are already dripping with love, nothing but wax and love, and gloriously shimmering you might move through space like a frozen shimmering flame of joy, and this must be the body of God Taylor says, "And shall not I (whose form transformed shall bee / To be shap'te like thy glorious body, Lord,"(25-26) and he "thaws not into Steams of reeching joy?"(34) Can you not see all the pieces falling apart, all the layers becoming meaningless, as you reach into the flame?

6.

12. Meditation. Ezek. 37.24. David my servant Shall be their King.

7.5m [July] 1695.

Dull, Dull indeed! What shall it e're be thus?

And why? Are not thy Promises, my Lord,

Rich, Quick'ning things? How should my full Cheeks blush

To finde mee thus? And those a lifeless Word?

My Heart is heedless: unconcern'd hereat:

I finde my Spirits Spiritless, and flat.

5

Thou Courtst mine Eyes in Sparkling Colours bright,
indeed, and soul enamoring,

With the most Shining Sun, whose beames did smite

Me with delightfull Smiles to make mee spring.

Embellisht knots of Love assault my minde

Which still is Dull, as if this Sun ne're shin'de.

10

David in all his gallantry now comes,

Bringing to tendre thy Shrine, his Royall Glory,

Rich Prowess, Prudence, Victories, Sweet Songs,

And Piety to Pensill out thy Story;

To draw my Heart to thee in this brave shine

Of typick Beams, most warm. But still I pine.

15

Shall not this Lovely Beauty, Lord, set out

In Dazzling Shining Flashes 'fore mine Eye,

Enchant my heart, Love's golden mine, till't spout

Out Streames of Love refin'd that on thee lie?

Thy Glory's great: Thou Davids Kingdom shalt

Enjoy for aye. I want and thats my fault.

20

Spare me, my Lord, spare me, I greatly pray,

Let me thy Gold pass through thy Fire untill

Thy Fire refine, and take my filth away.

That I may shine like Gold, and have my fill

Of Love for thee; untill my Virginall

Chime out in Changes sweet thy Praises shall.

25

30

Wipe off my Rust, Lord, with thy wisp me scoure,

And make thy Beams pearch on my Strings their blaze.

My tunes Cloath with thy Shine, and Quavers poure

My Cursing Strings on, loaded with thy Praise.

My Fervent Love with Musick in her hand,

Shall then attend thyselfe, and thy Command.

35

Before he can get running, before moving to make music, to be more than just a slob, the parts must be oiled. But he is “Spiritless, and flat”(6). Of course we get tired of it, we get tired of wanting and aching, tired of so much wanting, how wanting is want of welcome to Him though, and pleading but a trickle of saliva from a vegetable, and longing but a silent knocking, such a silent pounding on the doors; “I want and that’s my fault” Taylor says, and “spare me, my Lord, spare me, I greatly pray,” he does pray, the praying being his silent knocking, his silent pounding upon the door of transformation, he is asking for his fist to bleed is all, the blood becoming something more. Our blood we know is so suspicious, we know not if it is in fact part of ourselves, it could be melted gold fitted into a mold? It could be, and this is what’s so strange about Taylor, not that he has a mold, or that the words he seems to sacrifice like blood create a form, but that he is not content with making something of blood and form, something living to share the earth with, but that he wants to be something beyond living, something that does not need to correspond with others. Its solitude creates a sort of pressure to transform words and to transform his poems. He hoped they could become, or that they were, vehicles for reaching, and that the blood he poured into his work would become a sort of sacrifice for the completion of his body. He asks God, “Let me thy Gold pass through thy Fire until / Thy Fire refine, and take my filth away”(26-27). For him it’s a matter of filling that flatness like a balloon until it lifts from the floor, rotund and filled, and floats. Just that half of us is all he needs, that half must be strong enough to keep singing for the other half, must be picked up and moved to feel the inspiration, the hopeless possibility of

becoming whole. But, of course it is only a moment—it is only a wish. What he truly needs is the energy to keep wishing it, to keep looking to the ground and then to the sky, and finding himself in between, to imagine himself to be connecting both with the distance of his body.

7.

39. meditation. From 1 John 2.1. If any Man sin, we have an Advocate.

My sin! My sin, my God, these cursed dregs,
Green, yellow, blue streaked poison, hellish, rank,
Bubs hatched in nature's nest on serpents' eggs,
Yelp, chirp and cry; they set my soul acranip.
I frown, chide, strike and fight them, mourn and cry
To conquer them, but cannot them destroy. 5

I cannot kill nor coop them up; my curb
'S less than a snaffle in their mouth; my reins
They as a twine thread, snap; by hell they're spurred
And load my soul with swagging loads of pains. 10
Black imps, young devils, snap, bite, drag to bring
And pitch me headlong hell's dread whirlpool in.

Lord, hold Thy hand, for handle me Thou may'st
In wrath; but, oh, a twinkling ray of hope
Methinks I spy Thou graciously display'st. 15
There is an advocate; a door is ope.
Sin's poison swell my heart would till it burst,
Did not a hope hence creep in't thus, and nurse't.

Joy, joy, God's Son's the sinner's advocate
Doth plead the sinner guiltless, and a saint. 20
But yet attorneys' pleas spring from the state
The case is in; if bad it's bad in plaint.
My papers do contain no pleas that do
Secure me from, but knock me down to, woe

I have no plea mine advocate to give;	25
What now? He'll anvil arguments great store	
Out of His flesh and blood to make thee live.	
Oh! dear bought arguments; good pleas therefore.	
Nails made of heavenly steel, more choice than gold,	
Drove home, well clinched, eternally will hold.	30
Oh! dear bought plea, dear Lord, what buy't so dear?	
What with Thy blood purchase Thy plea for me?	
Take argument out of Thy grave t'appear	
And plead my case with, me from guilt to free.	
' these maul both sins and devils, and amaze	35
Both saints and angels; Wreathe their mouths with praise.	
What shall I do, my Lord? What do, that I	
May have Thee plead my case? I fee thee will	
With faith, repentance, and obediently	
Thy service 'gainst satanic sins fulfill.	40
I'll fight Thy fields while live I do, although	
I should be hacked in pieces by Thy foe.	
Make me Thy friend, Lord, be my surety. I	
will be Thy client; be my advocate;	
My sins make Thine; Thy pleas make mine hereby.	45
Thou wilt me save; I will Thee celebrate.	
Thou'lt kill my sins that cut my heart within;	
And my rough feet shall Thy smooth praises sing.	

Here as elsewhere, in the meditations, there are very few descriptions, names, or allusions to the places Edward Taylor's body spent time. What exists is states existing within the form of the poem with places here-----and-----there that often seem to serve as a beginning point and a destination hopefully reached. Ordinarily, these are places understood in their entirety and not through the specificity of their parts. But Taylor is using parts. He uses parts of his own physical body. Nothing can be felt or moved without them, "dull, dull Indeed!" he says, "my heart is headless: unconcerned hereat: / I finde my Spirits Spiritless

and flat,”(Meditation 12. 5-6) but he lifts his spirits with the specificity of words acting, “thou courtst mine Eyes in sparkling colors bright, / Most bright Indeed, and soul Enamoring,” which seems to touch him in the right places. Here the change finds its way through the eyes; in other poems through the skin, the bowels, or the mouth.

These poems are trials on earth, and perhaps they do not lift him, but rather sink, he says, “My papers do contain no pleas that do / Secure me from, but knock me down to, woe”(23-24). He finds his way to sink through the colors, the sounds of the world. The music drives him mad, “Yelp, chirp and cry; they set my soul acranip. / I frown, chide, strike and fight them, morn and cry / To conquer them, but cannot them destroy”(4-6). And what do they do it for? The world, with its reasons, with its sounds, made by God but behaving apart from him, forcing the body to be the receptacle of noise, of dance, of fire springing from the state of life. He looks at it. Taylor looks at it. He cannot escape it, “I cannot kill nor coop them up”,(7), and they drag him down. But he lets them. What escape is there in the darkest part of the sun? The sun, the sounds, the physical world turns us over. We sit and watch apart from it while its cycles spin, renewing themselves again and again in its constant heat. While we watch, our singular cycle fading, moving towards its end to finish us. Is this all there is or will we begin again, start anew, turn towards death and then away again?

In this trial, sin appears in so many colors--“Green, Yellow, Blew streakt Poyson hellish, rank” (2)--but Ed, they are not dispelled. They exist even more as you evoke them in our minds; they become vibrant, twisting visions of a beautiful

apocalypse as you prepare for trial, as you ready yourself for the end, with God as your advocate. Sin is not hell. Hell has no colors, just “Black Imps” (11), and in heaven you imagine nothing but blinding light. Only in life, inseparable from sin, are there colors, and the words of colors. Words suggest the physical; you, suggesting the body, need them. When you say, “Thou wilt mee save, I will thee celebrate” (46), you mean that you will, if saved, celebrate light in living wordcolor. So, of course you must be designated a criminal to stand trial. We bring nothing to this world, Words themselves are stolen things; they are ways of taking what is outside of us and bringing them into us where they can exist as much more than they are. So where should we look? Where are we looking? What is ours? How do we finish?

Emily Dickinson

A Presence of Departed Acts

We exist, in Emily Dickinson's poetry, on a flat plane, body and soul. Above and below our singular sense of ourselves are immense rhythms, reaching only into us at times of some flooding sumptuous solitude. Did it touch you when you read it, or was it something else, not the words, but an erasing of the words to create a space for feeling? Through the poem, this place, where in poetry we constantly return, is "disclosed to us".

1.

[1493]

Could that sweet Darkness where they dwell
Be once disclosed to us
The clamor for their loveliness
Would burst the Loneliness

The poem deals with nothing but its own creation. It acts like an aural sound to burst through the silence. It moves between the walls separating the self from the other. The page: a wall, where messages are left, pointing beyond it—the walls of borders: Mexico Berlin—freedom imagined as if pointing out its surface, showing there is in fact a wall, it is physical, you can write on it, also shows its limit—what lies beyond the board? What is not whiteness, beyond the

page, in the darkness of ourselves where things start to grow, where they breed and fill us up in that darkness, invisible, darkening the darkness, their forms seen only as sounds.

We are constantly trying to reach through the space that separates us. First the space created around ourselves must be overcome. Then, the space beyond it. Another person's space perhaps. Another space's space. But it is not another person the poem reaches toward. It is something else, the place inside our own shadows. A place so filled with sound, and life so beyond our outer life, so beyond what we admit to be real, that to let it through is, for a moment, to make us real, to change our rigid dying to breathe with life.

In a letter written in August, 1851, Emily writes, "It is not enough, now and then, at long and uncertain intervals to hear you're alive and well. I do not care for the body, I love the timid soul, the blushing, shrinking soul; it hides, for it is afraid and the bold, obtrusive body—pray, marm, did you call *me*? We are very small, A.—I think we grow still smaller—this tiny, insect life the portal to another; it seems strange—strange indeed. I'm afraid we are all unworthy, yet we shall 'enter in.'"(Letters 51). She seeks an expression of the tide that moves beyond the form that contains it; to "Insect life", to cut into it, revealing the pulp and letting it breathe out over its exoskeleton. It is not enough to know the body continues living. She must feel it living, and the absence of another's life that once filled the spaces of her cannot be categorized as still part of that body, that consciousness, if she does not feel them there. This is not the goal.

For Emily the expansion of consciousness reaches hopelessly beyond the space of the body, and in effect, fills it with the anticipation of expressing the belief in its limitlessness. She is momentarily suspended between herself and what she cannot fully reach. As if there is a sound, a musical expression created by the clamor of the empty spaces within her, reaching towards what filled them, to make a beauty from their absence. This sound seems to call them back, to conjure them for a moment in the body of the poet, and the reader, so that the sensation of their nearness might breath a warmth into them.

2.

[1576]

The Spirit lasts—but in what mode—
Below, the Body speaks,
But as the Spirit furnishes—
Apart, it never talks—
The music in the Violin
Does not Emerge alone
But Arm in Arm with Touch, yet Touch
Alone—is not a Tune—
The Spirit lurks within the Flesh
Like Tides within the Sea
That make the Water live, estranged
What would the Either be?
Does that know—now—or does it cease—
That which to this is done,

Resuming at a mutual date
With every future one?
Instinct pursues the Adamant,
Exacting this Reply—
Adversity if it may be, or
Wild Prosperity,
The Rumor's Gate was shut so tight
Before my Mind was sown,
Not even a Prognostic's Push
Could make a Dent thereon—

What language, might our mute bodies use? “below”, “Apart, it never talks—“ but is, and exists in relation to the silence of the objects with which its forms relate. The spirit lurks within the body “Like Tides within the sea”. Boundaries acting against the movement of our inner tides that exist within the limits of our bodies would be nothing but energy—pure motion—were it not for the physical body they move to experience them. If it spoke, might it not speak of the slow corrosion of everything sharing their existence in the physical world, of existence in time? Time too shares a physical body, the earth the sun, the moon, with their movements, their moving bodies, the spirit moving them. Suddenly dancing together things start sprouting up from the ground.

But both the body and the spirit are blind to their dependence. Each is fascinated by its own desires, and uses the other to get them through. Will they speak when the body can no longer continue? The spirit can imagine itself apart,

but cannot express its idea without the body. The body seems to know its place alone, without the need to tell.

Though they exist separately they are dependent on each other. Like the touch of the violinist and the response of the violin, “The music in the Violin / Does not Emerge alone / But arm in arm with Touch, yet Touch / Alone—is not a Tune”. With the creation of its sound, through touch, we work through the limits of our bodies, of our skin, to share the push and pull of it. Without both experience of touch and experience of spirit, together, we have no way of defining what it means to be living, what it means to be dying—both happening together—creating a movement towards and a resistance against the approaching end. It is an uncharted struggle within us.

3.

[744]

Remorse—is Memory—awake—
Her Parties all astir—
A Presence of Departed Acts—
At window—and at Door—

Its Past—set down before the Soul
And lighted with a Match—
Perusal—to facilitate—
And help Belief to stretch—

Remorse is cureless—the Disease
Not even God—can heal—
For 'tis His institution—and
The Adequate of Hell—

Remorse, being found nowhere in the poem becomes the history of it. The history of remorse becomes what is not given. The cold means nothing to the cadaver. The promise broken is only made to life—the poem is immune because it is an action, though not only an action. Its body is not changing. It is a body without the specter of death who's inner tides will change and forever move within its form. Of course, the woman is not immune.

What is left is her without the poem, with nothing but herself reminded to look back and discover the experience is missing. It has been replaced with what could hold no place—with the lack of it. “A Presence of Departed Acts” is the lighting up of the room in a tiny burst of fire to discover that it is empty. But this is Memory, awareness of the trail, “Awake”—discovering where you are, which is discovering where you are not. It creates a distance so far between that the distance takes over. It is the same feeling as discovering that a part of everything, any holiday, or mission, or morning, is also missing. Only His breath might tell you where it has been. The fact of love's arrival is only an occurrence, the history of the thing making the object nonexistent. You tell me you love me—only an occurrence. When only a handful of the scars show themselves, speak

themselves to have been, beginning at the grave, then measuring the sun,
remorse becomes the place, memory the condition, the poem surrenders neither.

4.

[903]

I hide myself within my flower,
That fading from your Vase,
You, unsuspecting, feel for me—
Almost a loneliness.

Do Emily's poems really have a form or do they, like thoughts, become entangled in what they are not? It is as if the form was suggested to the reader in their birth, in their beginning, but become wind instead. She often does not end her poems with a period, yet we still look back on them with doubt, with uncertainty, or rather, they fill us with it, they become impassable moments of unease, bringing you in and leaving you. In her poems, like the one above, that do end with a period, there is still no finality to their form. The weak connection of sound between "Vase" and "Loneliness" "Almost" creates a feeling of connection, a feeling of form that might transform the poem into an object. The failure of these sounds to satisfyingly connect creates an unease that takes us from "Almost" experiencing "a loneliness" to fully experiencing it. The poem fails here while Emily triumphs over our experience of the present, over our sense of loneliness.

So how does a flower fade from a vase? It becomes an image becoming the lack of an image, a still life, a lack of life, frozen, suddenly moving. And in it

there is nothing but the failure of the sound to hold the form: the vase not becoming enough to contain its loneliness. The poem presents itself as an image—not creating a place. A space—erased—finding again that these are words and we cannot break them. We cannot tuck the edges of its form around it to contain it. It is not snug. The poem will always feel estranged—alienated from its purpose—but succeeds in making us feel the lack of it in ourselves. The need for the flower to stay, the feeling of the need for the flower to stay, is not felt until it is fading. Made of its fading. The question is asked somewhere along the way: wasn't she just there? Wasn't she? Just, there is no way of bringing her back—only the feeling of its disappearance, her fading, to feel.

5.

[802]

Time feels so vast that were it not
For an Eternity—
I fear me this Circumference
Engross my Finitude—

To His exclusion, who prepare
By Process of Size
For the Stupendous Vision
Of His diameters—

Is this not how we experience any empty space, what makes up most of what must be faced by our own very substance? Our own lack of substance? Should there have been something there? Is it us? Eternity is like water measuring the form of the body with displacement—its exclusion from space—infinite. We are not without end, but with ends reaching. Each fingertip, each toe-tip, is an exclusion from the space outside it. What she cannot touch, what she cannot become—an exclusion in diameters—an exclusion from Him, whatever the infinite may be. Her size being not her size, her size not being what she is beyond it, becomes the measure of what she is not, becomes the measure of everything that she is, entangled with it, engulfed in it. The ocean dictates the measure of any continent, and the continent becomes the measure of the ocean. Both visible—both invisible—indivisible—humiliating in their disguises. Can you hear it? There is nothing to hear but white noise, the crash against the rocks—a plain becoming the field of a dream, the space upon which the diameters of a larger dream finds its form—His form—her form—shared.

6.

[1105]

Like Men and Women Shadows walk
Upon the Hills Today—
With here and there a mighty Bow
Or trailing Courtesy
To Neighbors doubtless of their own
Not quickened to perceive

Minuter Landscape as Ourselves

And Boroughs where we live—

Shadows movements are those of time, perfect indicators of the day, the place. They are always on time. And on sunny days, they will always be out. On sunny days they will always visit the same place, bleed into the same forms—touching and creating their forms. These forms other than ourselves—acting—connecting with other forms, hide us. They quicken into one full form of darkness. They break anew. Their living, so separate from our own, breaks distance, breaks time. But it is a time too huge for us to feel. The Gods play with this light while we seem to only play with ourselves. But below us, inside ourselves, another world moves, our own, with parts as significant and as turbulent.

“Minuter”:

Marriam-Webster

Minute

noun

1 a : the 60th part of an hour of time : 60 seconds

b : the 60th part of a degree of angular measure

2 : the distance one can traverse in a minute

3 : a short space of time : moment

4 a : a brief note (as of summary or recommendation)

b : memorandum, draft

c *plural* : the official record of the proceedings of a meeting

Minute

Adjective

1 : very small : infinitesimal

2 : of small importance : trifling

3 : marked by close attention to details

noun

1 a : the shadows, each part, pointing to a moment in time. Its form holding it.

Each shadow being a piece, a minute, flowing. Each shadow marking its
opposite: the light. Touched and not touched. Your shadow will tell time

b : a measurement, a point in time indicating its resistance, its approaching turn,
measuring the form, the distance between the shadow and the light. Both are
indistinguishable in darkness. Shadows measure our form beyond limits and
contours of line, of space: our history

3 : did you see something move? Space of time: that space so temporary. The
sun still moves in a cave

4 a : the shadows in this poem are of ourselves

b : partial, unfinished: pointing to the next movement, the one approaching

c : the movement when one touches the other and they become one

Minute

adjective

1 : Something small

2 : merely a moment passing

3 : marked by a close attention to death

Can we exist without the shame of what we are not, of phenomena that
cares nothing for us, that seems to boast itself in mockery of our tininess?

7.

[1090]

I am afraid to own a Body—

I am afraid to own a Soul—

Profound—precarious Property—

Possession, not optional—

Double Estate—entailed at pleasure

Upon an unsuspecting Heir—

Duke in a moment of Deathlessness

And God, for a Frontier.

What is the third voice that speaks and separates the body and the soul?
It is as if the poem speaks its own fears, as if the poem has both the body and
the soul, but to whom does the poem belong? Whose property could it be?

Without legal rights, publication, marking the possession and the rights of it, the poem is unhinged; existing in the ether of existence, without law, it moves on its own accord. Without the approval of its actions, without the support of another's voice—another's body—it exists: "Possession, not optional." It came to be without the thought of being—summoned violently into existence—the nature of existence—the form and the thought, acting together, reaching together—the two in unison without the full belief of their codependence. And in this action, in the movement of their existence together, somehow we feel the immense pleasure of their being free, of existing beyond each of their confines—becoming something beyond themselves and turning towards what is impossible in experience, towards the new, the unknown, the impossible "Frontier".

8.

[1101]

Between the form of Life and Life

The difference is as big

As Liquor at the Lip between

And Liquor in the Jug

The latter—excellent to keep—

But for ecstatic need

The corkless is superior—

I know for I have tried

One could think this poem defines two types of life: one bound, and one let loose. Or it could mark the difference between the form of a living thing and

what it means for that form to live—the poem and the poem in the midst of being read. But, again, look back: “the latter” makes you turn to the line before it, that says, “And the Liquid in the Jug”. So we see this liquid “Life” pass from jug to mouth—passing from form to form. We could see in one, the bottle, a life contained, and in the second a body, a body intoxicated with it, one that chooses experience of life over preservation of it.

This would be a simple and concise reading of this poem, and would hold, were it not that the poem points, again, backwards, to “The difference” (there is no difference being what is really there). The difference is the space “between”, the movement of action connecting the two forms; the liquid at the moment it leaves the lip of the jug and meets the lip of the drinker. There is no way of tying it down. How could the distance between become recognizable? Where does the body stop? When do its forms stop holding static and still and become a correspondence within the heat of the forms that echo our existence through space? What is this “difference”, what is this transfer?

9.

[587]

Empty my Heart, of Thee—

Its single Artery—

Begin, and leave Thee out—

Simply Extinction’s Date—

Much Billow hath the Sea—

One Baltic—They—

Subtract Thyself, in play,
And not enough of me
Is left—to put away—
“Myself” meant Thee—

Erase the Root—no Tree—
Thee—then—no me—
The Heavens stripped—
Eternity’s vast pocket, picked—

Who “Thee” is, is of course one of the important questions to ask about this poem. There are many possibilities. 1. “Thee” is God. 2. “Thee” is another person: lover, father, mother, etc. 3. “Thee” is herself—““Myself” meant Thee—“. Regardless of whom you prefer to see as the “Thee”, it remains that any arrangement of parts, of possible influences, specific pieces, cannot explain the whole of her identity. More importantly, that if she catalogues all those parts, cataloging being her “subtract[ion]” of the parts, attempting to understand and gain power through the organization of information, and takes them one by one, as if from a puzzle, believing them to make up a whole, she reaches a point where a portion of the puzzle seems to be missing. Putting them all together into the space where they are assumed to fit reveals that the space is not filled. There is a part of that space filled with nothing—a vacuum, a void, a window beyond the other pieces quilted together. She says, “Subtract thyself, in play, / And not enough of me / Is left—to put away—“.

Whatever “Thee” is, its erasure is a trick—“Eternity’s vast pocket, picked—
“. Through the act of the poem this disappearance, or chopping down of her
identity is impossibly achieved. The rules of language, the boundary between the
poetic creation and the experience of the poet’s action of writing the poem is
overcome by enacting a cleaning out of her identity within the poem. “Empty my
Heart, of Thee—,” is the ambition presented in the poem’s introduction. From that
point, other than when she places herself in quotations as, “”Myself””, she simply
leaves herself out of the poem. Each reference to what she is is made by
referencing another: “Thee”. By claiming that her individual identity has no
origins, no essential being defining her, “Erase the Root—no Tree— / Thee—
then—no me—“, a radical destabilization occurs, the center does not hold, and
suddenly the voice speaking is blown to pieces.

By creating an individual self we also lay the boundaries of our identity. To
reconcile the gap between the body and the soul, one self, looking at the self, an
affirmation of your whereabouts must be reached. But if you are not there, then
who is looking? Playing with yourself, or playing with the existence of yourself, is
appealing. Like a poem, you could be a master of the parts that make up your
whole. You could watch the feeling coming and see experience colliding with
your body—an event almost caught in an image, your neck strained back, your
mouth silently agape—and suddenly the pleasure of being no one, of
momentarily eradicating your identity, of shattering it and allowing yourself to
expand beyond the diagrammed limits of your hips and your feet to your head, of

corresponding seamlessly with the forms surrounding you, filling you up, flowing and bursting in spasms of freedom.

10.

[362]

It struck me—every Day—
The Lightning was as new
As if the Cloud that instant slit
And let the Fire through—

It burned Me—in the Night—
It Blistered to My Dream—
It sickened fresh upon my sight—
With every Morn that came—

I thought that Storm was brief—
The Maddest—quickest by—
But Nature lost the Date of This—
And left it in the Sky—

There is really no single poem. There is really no single event. They seem unique, specific, temporal, but they hang in the air, in time—fixed. An event is permanent, a poem is permanent, a poet is not. Progress is the bleeding out of time, getting one long piss done. Power, control, destruction, and paranoia are not us. They watch us, and what can we do against them?

Break ourselves. Become a unanimous declaration of differences. What can they do if we fail to succeed in containing them first, if we cry out and forget ourselves, if our dreams are not dreams but visions, and wandering through a space that wears its walls and furniture and oxygen like organs we become a couch, a snake, an earthquake? What then if we are in it, imagined in it, through words a part of it, and suddenly it makes no difference what “Thee” is we. Why do we have to sit down and write again, why does the lightning crash, why does the morning break always in different lights, with a different amount of wetness in the air, but always the same horizon line, always a distance from ourselves and from poetry?

She hears the thunder and sees the bright line of the lightning reaching for her from some place else. This correspondence inspired the dream, and dream has inspired this correspondence. These two are acting together, and what means something is not the effect on the objects by the correspondence, by the influence upon them, but the correspondence itself, the thing existing between them without form but born from form—the effect of form. The new day will never feel the same again. It will always be this way.

Jack Spicer

The fish one by one

Dear Spicer,

In order to begin this correspondence, we have to believe that it makes no difference where you start and I begin. I'm saying, what I am and you are makes no difference. It is much more important that we feel these letters to be what they

are. We must not be seduced by other plots. I am not going to tie these letters to the leg of a pigeon on the top of some roof in a borough of New York and watch it disappear over the horizon of jagged metal peaks into the cold, clear, morning air. I will not use a quill, and I will not lick anything. If there is a death, it is both yours and mine; I will not expect you to come rushing through the snow with your scarf and wool wrap coat. Death will not alarm us. It is something we will try and take as a given in these letters, you being dead yourself, and we should both do our best to act naturally about it.

Note: there is no real drama. That is, our real drama could never be articulated or justifiably expressed in plot. This is not a movie Jack. These letters are not for Hollywood they are for Hades, and I want the real drama to be there without you or me, to be there even if I burned the notebook I wrote this all in, or held Delete and sipped my coffee for 30 pages.

We should try and make the thing real, shouldn't we Jack? Real in the way that it's invisible, in the way that it exists as a force or a specter over us, driving us from our daily things. A force acting upon our nerves and not a fantasy that must be reached with comfort and spare time.

I'm so glad you're real Jack. I'm so glad you never made anything up in your whole life. Fuck those liars. Their hearts are two wheeled suitcases, film reels of them walking through crowded intersections at mass transit stations. Going to powerful dinner parties where it is revealed that their suitcases were packed with pounds and pounds of human flesh, children's digits, and old lady's ears, so they could have a fantastic food-like flesh fight and then count how

shocked they were, how many times, by their erections that point right back at them, winking.

I guess I'm talking about talking to living people as if they were the dead. The dead have to serve as a translator or a mediator between the living and the living or else nothing important will get communicated. I'm also talking about publishing those plots. Believing in fame as the afterlife is a symptom of the English classroom sickness of our hearts. They've got us if we give into that. They've got us nailed down and we'll never be anyone but the name like "Joseph Stalin". Beyond the name there is only plot. Avoid it. Write letters to the dead.

Love, Alexis

I

The fish one by one, were given their doses and go
insane. Becoming monstrous. The fish
paddled lightly
in the corner

of the Tupperware. Then
she killed them one by one, first placing each
individually in glass beakers
identified with the letter K.

II

Raisins

death's vestiges, expelling the life to carry the body
along. But the ghosts trailing vapor
forms breathing in the cold, gauntlets of non-existence
evaporating from each direction
turned; who do not recognize, each moment
anticipating the arrival of beauty with
a terminal dread. "Please take these bandages off doctor".
We pled along the spines of mountains, your ghosts
in bathrobes, ready to return
you to your beaker.

Dear Spicer,

In The Ballad of Escape you end with: "An end to the lives that have tried
to complete me." In your next collection of poems, that would be Admonitions,
you dedicate each poem to a person. Someone you know I take it; often people
you are, or have been, close to. I cannot help but be scared of these dedications.
Are they furniture in the room Jack? It seems strange that they would turn out
that way, that when the Martians come in they play with Ed and Nemmie and

Ebbe and Russs, and arrange them for you again right? And hopefully this is all against your will. It's like building a universe out of cadavers, or like using human flesh to build pedestals for small sheets of paper. If the dedications do anything they prove that what is written in a poem is totally outside our control. Somehow, the ones you love and the ones you loved and probably now resent to one degree or another, find themselves at the same party. I guess it must be terrible, really—well, to come to my party at least. But it has nothing to do with me.

Prose is exhausting in a different way than poetry. Prose is what you can't get away from, and it dogs you until your mouth and ears seem saturated in Ether. Prose eats things up and hides them. You can always manage to say something in prose and then render that something meaningless, a complete joke, like bringing one show horse after another out from the stables, having them stand still, and shooting them in the head.

But is poetry beating the dead horse back to life? Did we have the idea of the horse already in a poem before it was a real horse? Have you prepped me and have I prepped myself, and is this how we make our own magic/logic? You see I'm not very sure of things. But, I would love to ride it. I love to ride it. It takes me in the morning and it takes me in the evening, and I am always writing poetry that gets lost or turns into things. Maybe once it became a sliver of dirt between the cement squares of the sidewalk. That was a good day. Or maybe once it turned into a trucker's tattoo, and it roared away. Another day, more than once, it became some air in the curtains of more than one girl I lusted

for across the street. That was so terrible. I stayed in bed for the rest of my life
and watched Bill Maury.

Love, Alexis

For Zoe

This is the matter where we are all preserved. Behind doors
or walls all escaping the blink of an eye and the doorways
keeping more opaque than the ground. Clear
with its permission of dark things
entering. There is little left to say
to go insane about. Hope
enough to keep from falling into night.
Our of you my love—
inside, what has already happened
while the vapor escapes from the cup, or a sudden sublimation
returns the chair, the walls, the floor, the darkness in the doorway.

For George

We are the weakest willed of an encrusted nest of sea urchins—
That cannot evoke the sea
Our mountains—crumbling—
Subtle points of chess
Salty suits of armor
Never kissing edges of the panels of his shoulders
Tied to a rope— always hanging—front paws drifting—

Amar asking to be shaking all his achings—
Decathected suits of armor.
We grow out of tiny pots.
In the hallways—lapping ankles—we grow out of tiny
Dark—spots .

Dear Spicer,

What have we become together demonstrating the flexibility of internal relations? If we both believe the essential thing exists, one might think the conditions around us might change, but they don't. I still need to vacuum and I can hear that machine roaring and pumping dust back into the room. It is not taking a chance and risking it. I have not set myself up to fail for years because I have barely crawled in any direction resembling up. I don't want to be too bloody or too accurate, and I do not want to get up. And Jack, I know nothing about baseball. What I am thinking is I take ten apples and I take my knife and I gouge a hole in each and line them all up on my desk. Then they are slowly eaten by ants. But you never know. Apples are nothing like poems, partly because they begin with the letter A but partly because they work as sustenance too, and poems, if you eat them, make you sick. It's the same way with paint.

Love, Alexis

For Jeremy

Practicality would be something to be proud of,
but pity deflects itself back to itself—Corpses of the immediate—

Big flying corpses—

Sleeping alone, sleeping with Cenobites. The bed—a fixation
covered with quiet little insects breathing like jewels.

For Anastasia

She calls and my fixation about what soda pop to purchase stops.

Fish scattering from a school
a disturbance or an attack. Some killed—
Eaten. And they recoup flawlessly.

For Sofia

By dreaming them, the bodies that are kept there died of old age, or car
accidents, or sitting awake in the dark streets I have put them there myself
in a grass where no one else goes, but I find myself returning, crying, because
the cars not running are twisted frames of metal, and shattered pains of
glass reflecting the little crickets' tears
relieving the darkness like a river of glowing white milk. In the hell where we
tiptoe, of light as it passed
over the long flat grass, and the bodies stacked up near the river that shivers and
speaks and I shiver. In time of complete
silence, as if every one of them was dead, as if everyone had become what the
light showed them to be. From the light outside my own dark house

I dragged them over the sidewalk and up the hill to what I have not met yet,
to where the cars float like Lilly pads in a field of glass and wind blows softly on
the flat pale grass.

Dear Spicer,

I am not unable to uncover things, but they exist as much more than they
are, breeding inside me, they are things that take up no space so one cannot
place them on a table or a chair, they are things that have no words, and so they
cannot share, though they share among themselves, continually feeding one
another, slurping a kind of soup and looking up out of the darkness from bellow
into another darkness that is above. Things, or places, or words, like “bellow” and
“above” mean nothing to them. We are sitting with them there in the darkness at
the same table scrapping legs against the table’s legs and consuming. The soup
only makes them, not fat, but stay, but they are gone and all is looking for them
into that darkness, but nothing can be seen—not the soup, not the chairs, not the
table, not the legs, nor the legs, and all is darkness.

Love, Alexis

For Serg

The river will never be enough

to stop every living person in their tracks
and make them drowned.

Drown them. Drown
them. What will be next? Standing
on rocks in the middle
to search with a stick
for ice
until you freeze to death

For Malcolm (Broken Gate by a Ranch in Montana)

The sun hanging in the air a drunk man passed out over a tall stool. There is a
bald man in the car ahead of us, a man on the bus, someone indulging
her lipstick; the heat trickles in through the cracks of the doors and the floor of
the car while the cows crossed, a thoughtless bunch wasting, walking
across some highway, one of the many, the only one taking us to where we were
going. Cars lined up on either side, sitting, sad
faces in the windows, the engines fuming, angry but what use is it yelling at a
cow? One man honks his horn. With no one to listen to their anger, to
look,
in their upset faces and vulgar gestures they sit, some close their eyes and forget
the city.

Instead of children there are cow pies. They are the size of children, only they
are old. What drifts in and out are tastes, or tastes of thoughts
dead or living, thoughts wasted waiting. Lines. Who takes care of all this? No
one, the gate was broken.

I looked out my window and saw a cow standing next to a crow, in a field, brown
and covered in shit. I was hungry,
sitting there waiting for the cows to pass, and the crow. They stand with their
necks bent up against each other's rears, protesting
with impotent hatred. They looked at me and I could see we were in the wrong
places. One eating
a dead animal, not a cow, but due to the way things are, had become dead and
food anyway—tearing
pulpy chunks out of its leg. And when he was done with his dinner, he did not eat
the cow pie for dessert.

For Tyler

If you are a ghost
haunt hills or mountains or rocky trails
not our morbid interiors
they constantly stink
and it evokes
the wrong type
of hopeless terror.

The one without
a new escape

by death or
transformation
by lightning.

Can you hear the moment approaching?

The ghost watching from the escarpment above?

It sounds like music
smells like rain
and darkness

Dear Spicer,

The dead are everywhere between things and us. They constantly are making new stories about themselves and approaching me with them on my hands and knees. They don't float, ghosts, they stand on their head and eye you with the space between their kneecaps. It is all I can look at. They are a community of nothing. I guess emotion exists between their kneecaps. The absence of some logic to explain this tells us that this space is where language exists. I am constantly staring at it, but you see when language is like this you can't see it. The whole business is very tricky. I spend time lying in different directions to make out if I can see the truth. I usually lose it.

I don't keep you with my dead Jack because you were never lost, only discovered. More than that though, you were always lost, or always existing already beyond the fear of being found, you were an end and a death, but not yet what comes after. You are a ghost Jack, and you are in these letters, but the letters really aren't for you. They are for each other. One letter likes to have another letter, and its misery that this correspondence cannot go on forever.

Love, Alexis

III

I shake the chair with the cat in it.

If the cat is not convinced
there is no earthquake.

What I mean is: we are
codependent on ineffable improvisations
of failure,

failure in chain reactions. A translation

fishing for different chicks in different towns, don't trust the wind
licking the raw earth, no
things falling from shelves.

No things

falling, no things

acting. Or was it

the cat that saw through?
The cat
does not believe in earthquakes.

Dear Spicer,

In "A Textbook of Poetry", you say,

14.

It is not unfair to say that a city is a collection of humans. Human beings.
In their municipal trust they sit together in cities. They talk together in
cities. They form groups.

Even when they do not form groups they sit alone together in cities.

Every city that is formed collects its slums and the ghost of it. Every city
that is formed collects its ghosts.

Poetry comes along after the city is collected. It recognizes *them* as a
metaphor. An unavoidable metaphor. Almost the opposite. (305)

Jack, the city is a lonely place, the city is a very lonely place. So many people sitting alone in squares waiting for things to happen. But the groups, they are even more lonely. There is no escaping what that solitude is when surrounded by others. But I don't live in the city right now. I've never even imagined myself being part of a city, actually, when thinking about it I already feel lonely. It is not hard to imagine the self, the body, as being a city, as being a collection of other people, and as having ghosts (ghosts are never hard to imagine). And the poems, they all came from different parts of the country. They pile up like people looking for a different party than the one they somehow ended up at. They seem a collection of strangers. But, I guess, strangers fall in love. They have sex occasionally or imagine having sex with each other and think they would like that. Strangers are everything you're looking for because you know nothing about them.

I don't want my parts forced together. I have an idea of what is mine, and I have an idea of what is not mine. What is not mine I try not wanting. This is hard, especially because not having something implies something lacking in yourself. My roommates were talking about money tonight. One said it's weird when you have a friend who has a lot of money and they ask you if they should buy these eleven hundred dollar leather pants online. Just that. Nobody spit on the ground. It ties a knot in me so tight I wish I had a machete to cut through it. But I try to make my words worth something, I try to make my poems worth something. I pile so many exuberant colors on my canvases you'd think I was a fucking emperor. It is hopeless though because when I'm done the paintings and the poems aren't

mine. When I'm done I suddenly realize they've left me for someone else. I guess, when you're good, the goal with painting becomes that that person is rich. Then you get the money right? Whatever, fuck it, I'm not even sure anyone has ever actually picked up on my aggression. People talk about art like their talking about vacationing spots. I try to use their tone with them so that they understand I want them to explode. This never works.

Jack, sometimes people say you want to write impersonal poems. But I know they have too much to do with the personal. I know that you can't bare it; that revealing what is yours only makes a mockery of it. That acting only makes a mockery of it. That is why we need to get rid of ourselves, so we don't have to exist so ashamed.

Love, Alexis

For Peter

We make a wasteland
It doesn't remain without us. It's a party
People are invited but they don't show up. We find a cliff
Sit on the edge.
Cars and beetles and nothing. Scuttling on the road so many miles bellow
The ghosts
Don't even show up to the party. Them always
With their dicks out and smiling. Air like stuffing.
Air Stuffing
The cars creeping. You bet me

the car will turn right. Alright.

It turns left.

We both drink.

You bet me the truck will turn right. Alright.

It turns right. We both drink.

For Monica

George let me know: we have too much time to think.

While he said so I tried to stretch myself as big as I am to cover the floor. Stretching
my legs to cover the floor with time flooding, becoming
a plane of light and lust stretching. Becoming a level. The shadows
mimicking
architecture. Chairs, bathtubs, beds mimic
architecture or animals.

*

It used to be that hate was needed for getting things done. Without hate we are ghosts
too. And ghosts mimic architecture. They have no assigned sex, or are
little girls. They float not touching ground or ceilings or walls, with no shadows. They
float
to stop breathing and break all the crust
dripping from the eyes. These are my hands
on the floor
talons.

*

It might be
George meant
the only way
to scrape
is down.

Dear Spicer,

I was reading some paper on After Lorca, and in it, to show how you purposely “mistranslate” or “distort” meaning in your translations they had placed your version of “Suicide” next to an English translation of “Suicide” that you hadn’t meddled with at all, and at first I thought it was so weird that they decided to leave Lorca out of it and use another translation to represent the real Spanish. But despite the sudden dream we were living in, I realized that death was written everywhere, on everything, and I could smell the sweetness of Lilacs and rotting of apples, they were made of glass and ash. I remembered why love is such a struggle. There is no escape from the perils of communication, endlessly brutal fistfights in every lockered corridor. You can only look over the heads of so many “Suicides” before the logic of the separations we have created between *this* “Suicide” and *that* “Suicide” no longer illuminates any difference but flatly reveals the absurdity of isolation; the pure incomprehensibility of coming to terms with

the fact of that in all these “Suicide[s]”, “He is conscious that there is nothing left / In his mouth but one word.”(118).

It is nice that you see your poems correspond. But do they always interact nicely? I wouldn't name them. You give something its own identity and suddenly there is an impenetrable plastic bubble around them that you can only see through. But I guess you don't mean them to always get along. Anxiety is just as good. There's an immense pain that arises from just standing next to another person and not saying anything. When it comes to words the pain of that distance is there too. It is not the two words connecting that we feel, but rather their relation, the energy existing in the space between them. The fact that we manage to bridge the gap from one word to the other is not alarming, but it is alarming when the distance between them remains, when they go on standing next to each other, the pain of that distance, their flesh-like longing becoming a hint at the reality of our limit to understand connections. I'm glad you're dead, Jack. I don't think I could stand the pain of the silence between us if I could see your body.

Love, Alexis

IV

No body
should be here
but it is.

Keep the body

and use it
to make love

on the table

on the bed

on the floor.

No reasons why poems have form—
if only so we can make love
to them.

Dear Spicer,

One day you'll be gone. I'm not sure if you are still here. Each sentence is going strait to hell. Static little snakes following each other along. They make their way by follow-the-leader, sometimes bumping inappropriately. Static little snakes shaking. They are not from here. I'm sitting in it and none of this exists unless I truly believe it exists Zoe tells me. Do you exist little snakes? Are you glowing worms of life really? Do you glow? Are you glowing little worms? Are you the keepers of death in life? Am I reaching into something—something All-a-Glow with the only true promise?

There are so many promises Jack. Each is a blister, a blister you have maybe on your heel and it rubs all day until it pops and the dead skin rubs off and then the real pain that even the bubble of that fluid filled promise is gone. These metaphors pile up like dead turtles stacked into a tower. I'd die for one real promise, its true, I'd die so well because I'd know that there's no way for the world to sustain what I'd done, because the whole thing is built on breaking, the breaking and the war, and even the decision to kill another inside of you

becomes a war that kills so many, and Ohh the death count is piling up Jack, the bodies are piling up, and I have to push through them, swim through them like some demented Little Mermaid to find one thing that is mine, one thing that I discovered on my own, one shiny metal spoon or cactus barb embedded beneath my fingernail or moment of safety inside myself, me being always scared, always swimming, looking into the eyes of every body inside me and looking into them, looking for the promise, seeing the body holds the promise, seeing that the body is so it fits inside me and knowing I'm so big I'll always be lonely, that I'm so big I constitute a huge promise, a huge promise that's fated to be broken, that I know will and must be broken because each is, and if it wasn't the whole world would fall apart, pieces of that gigantic whole of the galaxies and the universe would break away and go flying into oblivion, so many tiny pieces, because they would lose the force that forces them to continue, that is the constant war, that is the never ending propulsion, the never ending reason to kill.

But you must ask me Jack, what does this have to do with poetry? Poetry is the dead body after the promise is broken. It's a reanimated cadaver grabbing the air by the throat and speaking without promises into the darkness that breaks them. And that power, keeping that ongoing war, is powerless to break the poem's promise because no promises are made, as only poems can speak without them.

Love, Alexis

V

Poems make little worms

in a fog

appear and

disappear

trains in a fog that can't

be real

Mario Santiago Papasquiaro

Advice from 1 Disciple of Marx to 1 Heidegger Fanatic

To Roberto Bolaño & Kyra Galván comrades & poets

For Claudia Kerik & the luck to have known you

*It's as well at times
to be reminded that nothing is lovely,
not even in poetry, which is not the case.*

W. H. Auden

The world gives itself in fragments / in chippings:
of 1 melancholy countenance glimpsing 1 brushstroke by Durer
of someone happy with the grin of an amateur clown
of 1 summer in flames catching bits of universe licking your face
the moment when 1 indescribable girl
rips her Oaxacan shirt
exactly next to the crescent of sweat from her pits
& beyond the peal is the pulp / & like 1 strange gift from the eye
the lash

Maybe not even carbon 14 will be able to reconstruct the true acts
It is no longer the time when 1 naturalist painter
would brood over the leftovers from lunch
between movements of Swedish gymnastics
& without losing sight of the pinkblue tones of flowers he could not have imagined
even in his sweetest nightmares

We are actors of infinite acts
 & not precisely under the blue tongue
 of the cinematic reflectors
for example today / that you see how Antonioni passes by
 with his routine little camera
observed by those that prefer to bury their head in the grass

to get drunk on smog or something / so as to not augment
the scandals
that already make the public thoroughfares impassable
by those that were born to be generously kissed by the sun / & its quotidian
ambassadors
by those that talk about fabulous intercourses / of females who do not believe
in this geological age
of vibrations that would make you a tenacious propagandist for zen buddhism
by those that have at some point saved themselves
from the accidents that the tabloids calls substantial
which incidentally—for now—are not counted among the flowers of the Absurd

Like that on the trapeze on the tightrope
of this 1000-ringed circus
1 old man tells of the emotion he felt upon seeing Gagarin
fluttering like 1 fly in space
& it's a shame the ship was not named Icarus I
that Russia would be so ferociously antitrotskyte
& so his voice dissolves / lurches
between applause & boos

Reality & Desire double over / they butcher themselves
they spill out 1 over the other
like they would never do in 1 poem by Cernuda
foam runs from the mouth of that 1 who speaks wonders
& seems to live inside the clouds
& not in this neighborhood's wastelands

The humid air of april / the lewd wind of autumn / the hail of july & august
all of them present here with their fingerprints

Alcohol

urine / that didn't serve as fertilizer to this grass
how many gardeners not even making minimum wage would leave their scant
proteins in this trap

For now you hang facedown in the shade
of the long & hairy legs of the parks
where they congregate

he who dreams of revolutions that stop too long in the Caribbean
he who would like to tear out the eyes of the heroes of the posters
to show the nude the hollowness of the farce
the girl with green eyes feline & filmic
in the best case moving closer to each other they become blue or who knows
the student all adrenalin & rebellious pores
he who doesn't believe in anybody / not even in the Kantian beauty
of some admirers of Marcuse
& bursts out screaming that we are rotten by rage /
dehydrated from drinking so much theory
the little call-girl who shares the torrent of her solitude
with obscure men
letting supply & demand tip the scales of grace
sympathy and sudden vibrations
Chance: that other antipoet & unbribable slacker
those who come here to cry / to the point of carving—as in wood—

1 paranoid martyr's face
 after destroying—not precisely from enthusiasm—
 the seats of movie theatres
 he who writes his will or epitaph on 1 wrinkled napkin
 & then pitches throws to the air / —& the whole world assumes
 that he celebrates his birthday or the divine nuptials of the night before last—
 & all the hypotheses turn out to be too fragile to explain
 why he used 1 gun & not 1 bucket of paint
 if he seemed capable of seducing to a fever / the pulse
 & the pupil of Giotto
 who always greets you with 1 *I am desperate*
 & you?
 those who rabidly love like street dogs
 —in the green & the ripe—
 & 1 calls them florid lovers
 & are 1 aphrodisiac not only to the sensibilities of Marc Chagall
 those who know death in person
 at the hour in which the suicide becomes an obsession
 a disheveled desire to bite & be bit
 to put 1 up to here with so much castle of sand
 that seems uncollapsible
 to invent for yourself every second 1 Power
 that the quotidian cement mixers demolish
 like you were 1 piece of brown paper
 & so you understand why I wanted to bury
 beneath tons of plants

buildings / black earth
the minor stroke / the tachycardia of his intimate history
it spreads the nervousness the intranquility
of those who do as they breathe
as if they had some left of 1 carnivorous plant
& spent hours waiting for their escort Ternuda
that call-girl who rarely shows up
those that come escaping from the tear gas
& the clubs off the major avenues
from the large & the small stains now without remedy
with the smell of pine or the caress of a Kleenex
those who ignore who they are / nor do they care to know
when the climate gets a worse reputation every day
the eternally sick with amnesia that suck the thumb of joy
because Paradise on Earth is here & not in Miami
those who swear to declare this free territory independent island
that does not degenerate to a junk ruin supermarket

In the instant that 1 pop song
winds its rhythm
to the particular batterings of the rain
& establishes an odor fatally momentary
so to keep dominating the scene
hair a mess /
moist enamored eyes
& emerging from the same chiaroscuro of the night
appears 1 girl with muddy fists against her thighs

repeating 1 / 2 / 3 times:

I am not 1 sex object / I am not robots /

I am alive / like 1 forest of eucalyptus

here where the norm is to be relentlessly kind

one to the other

& this is the lesser evil

The park trembles / my internal steps take me through the streets of 1 green sea
port

that the natives call Mezcalina

1 sensation unknown until now

like making scientifically sure how to read DNA

after making love

If this is not Art I'll cut my vocal chords

my most tender testicle / I'll stop saying rubbish

if this is not Art

The branch of a tree folds under the weight of 1 hummingbird

or better to say 1 hummingbird ends up shattering the already broken branch

We are still alive

somehow we must call the crystal islands

that with violent luxury kick the most tender parts of your eyes

the reality appears on a plastic sheep in miniature

but also your eyelids your perception & its straitjacket

the Material and the Energy /

& the courage to put your tongue between their tongue

This is 1 very unusual day
vibrant daily anonymous
earthling to your hearts as we say on the days of festival
or during the ever more frequent searches of the houses
the fear illuminates your stomach & burns it

THERE IS NO AHISTORICAL ANGUISH
TO LIVE HERE IS TO HOLD YOUR BREATH
& UNDESS

—Confessions of 1 disciple of Marx to 1 Heidegger fanatic —

Poetry: we are still alive
 & you light with your matches my cheap cigar
 & you look at me like 1 single unkempt hair
shivering with cold in the comb of the night

We are still alive

1 butterfly greeneye & yellow wings
 has caught in the blue flame of my jacket
—my body of denim
 feels like a seductive human radar magnet of pollen
acquires at moments the conviction of 1 tiny galaxy
 singing absurd songs between ohs of amazement—

Golly what a moon!

Exclaims the millionaire alone

& miserably employed

that just yesterday he was fired for not being moved by
the shortcuts of the bureaucratic cafeteria

What a moon!

like a fingernail clipping

like 1 hook of sperm

suspended

over the tense back of the night

when one hears the crackle of smashed walnuts—crack—

the buz the whining of 1 ambulance

that once again arrives late

the sound of the lizards with leopard spots

climbing connivingly through the creeper in search of something to eat

the last sounds of 1 picnic

where they have made Desolation their own

& have stopped shouting the proximity of the wind

that stains & gnaws everything

however 1 still walks through here like a happy hummingbird

like Chaplin the first day he kissed Mary Pickford

someone passes with 1 transistor radio

that looks like his second ear

& this is the same m^2 / at the same time

that the north pole & the south pole

the thesis & antitheses of the world

meet

like 1 incandescent meteor & 1 UFO in trouble

and inexplicably they greet:

I am he who imprinted on the back of your denim jacket

the phrase: The center of my solar system is Adventure

they call me that but I like that they call me the Protoplasm Kid

You are the guy who bites his nails while flipping through the crime section

with your fingers confounded in the erect pages of the paper

but

is it news /

those that report /

those that read like 1 prescribed drug

Who Sherlock Holmes are the assassins?

Given the circumstances mistrust even your own eyes

wrangles races litigations of what caliber

they hide beneath the itchiest clothes

the scared climb trees

the most agile prefer to walk pointing with their finger

the exact moment when the atmosphere thins to a fault

& airplanes begin to fall from the sky like a silent film

in which the arms of the dying move like propellers

without explaining why the horizon is salivating with fire

Even though the sky—apparently—looks calm & clean

Like an irreconcilable enemy of the plastic Arts

& almost no one fixes in the madness that kisses like bites the clock without hands

while it asks *is the ground freezing*

are we going out of orbit???

Sure it is the case until Jerry Lewis sincerely sheds tears

In whatever moment 1 poem happens

for example

that flutter of hoarse flies

over 1 parcel that no one succeeds in deciphering

how much is trash and how much is miracle

for example those school girls with the books pressed to their chest

that turn the head of a man gray haired & spectacled to shake

while the wind—lubricious—plays beneath her skirts

for example

the fat guy & the thin guy that sleep the siesta

dreaming the same mischief

where pie wants to serve as makeup

& 2 feet are foolish to enter where only 1 foot fits

for example

he who just yesterday —disguised as a woman—eloped from the psychiatric clinic

& does not get tired of handstands & runs like a crazy kangaroo

asking himself the meaning of life

for 1 merthiolate that erases their bruising insides

the scratches of insulin & the electroshocks

while singing in the form of a ballad the verse of Guido Cavalcanti

Now that I do not expect never to return

for example

that redheaded guy who soaked his feet in the water of the fountain

& feels Huckleberry Finn Traveling on 1 log raft
/ in full Mississippi /
or 1 bearded tramp filling his lungs with Turkish tobacco
on the banks of the Seine
seeing his name written on the water: Lord XYZ
while the reality sails like a boat of noisy & agitated vapor
because he knows that life can make him die & rebirth every instant
—in 1 time & 1 space
where they do not count Euclid or his geometry of babbling—
& the immediate tricky as the days running
is represented by whatever so-&-so yells Help!
& marks the 06 of his conscience
to find out what brand of life or waste corresponds to kiss
spit or look horrified
whatever so-&-so that shouts or tries & cannot
while the shock is drawn (like with burning wax)
in his rigid face of a retired worker
that appears & in 1 way
1 time bomb
in moments / in the swig when 1 second vomits & pales
everything is tragic / even the joy / whichever you want /
Aeschylus & Harold Lloyd playing chess with beer caps
But without knowing how calciums make their creative leisure grow
to the height of 1 earthquake that truly
crosses out & re-accounts
when the Chaos is robustly seen unto the beast
(date of the bull & voice of a queer)

when needless to say it is economically shat

(You / Me / Us)

to not talk about the neurosis & the anemia *made at home*

& what is the use then what is the use

of the hurricane the raffle of things

that undress you & invade you like amebas

what is the point if you do not understand why overpopulation

why abortions

1 pregnant woman smiles at you /

if you don't get it's from desperation or from contentment

that claps its stomach like the Virgin del Parto by Piero della Francesca

if you only make it to stutter to dilate your eyes

when the effective hand of the pickpocket starts to function

/ the disciple of Shiva he of 7 arms: God of

masturbation

& the assault of the thin bill /

if you only make it to swallow & make gestures

when that character in Ionesco —maybe traumatized by the bald soprano—

the first changes ask you: are you sexual political

vitally satisfied?

& of what use is the dew that squeezes the gardenia

in the misty morning

you know it as a pulse like the palm of your hand

like the pubis—sapid—of the girl

that is the relief of your map

& the compass that keeps your territory

what is the use if there are lives that are 1 automobile without a motor
desperately touching the klaxon
without power to depart

of these that cure the saturday hangover wetting their eyes
in the edges of the fountains
of the lady of the high with her whipped cream & twisted caramel candy haircut
& her tiny unbearable voice when she says *I'll smoke from mine*
all that race of squares of sacred gestures
that feel offended
from the rubbing each time more frequent with the plebes
& the life of that vagabond (he who vox-populi says no need)
he who has lucidity shattered / without his bike
has pursued some sort of light in the Sierra Tarahumera
like his homonym Antonin Artaud

of the one who gives too many turns to kiss 1 flower
say to the beloved: lets go to 1 hotel / blasting himself to the moon
that face of a white potato
of the clueless bureaucratic / who is mistaken & more than 2 times
he who will have the same face of telenovela
—self-pity—

the next that passes through here
of the ex queen of the spring in times of Hiroshima
& now neurotic grandmother of mangaloid triplets
of the adolescent without money & disposed to everything

& with hips that had strangled the pulse of
Oscar Wilde
of the cheese-ball that says that 1 park
is like the florid liver of 1 city
while they danced on the tip of their toes
around 1 woman who did not even say her name
of the so many & many that have bathed 5 / 6 times
in the black waters of failure
& not for pleasure (they say)
not as those who eats—between smiles—1 meringue tart
in no way like that
& that is what you always say (you / me / us)
while you slowly do up your raincoat
-the body & your sociological defenses-
& you leave to go for 1 walk—that will be more than 1 walk—
beneath the rain
in & out
beneath the rain
& all because you need it urges you to let go to cry openly
without anything or anyone interrupting you
not even those kids in hotpants
shining with their muscles of bronze
& hugging the blond light posts

& you are not the only one proclaiming to be the only passenger
of their schizophrenic submarine
while you walk like gone with an off cigarette in your mouth

& the rain draining off you grotesquely
from your eye to your chin

Certainly you are not the only 1
before which the rusted umbrella of life
does not want to deploy its wings
you are not the only 1 to whom the world seems
--in 1 pessimist moment—
1 ghetto without bridges or roads

& sometimes also you limp & you darken
you scratch your nose & the crust of remembrance
the Existence takes the body of 1 police officer
that walks their latest model baton down the length of your face
& you still ask: what's up my big bad wolf?

How's the health of the health of the repression?
while shaking the bushes of marijuana
planted like carrots in the subsoil of your mind
& your heat is 1 populated neighborhood
with the fisheries & the roof collapsing
for the pure terror
for the pure terror

With everything they survive the oxygen & the rhythmic rotation of the stars
September winks 1 eye
& it is better if everyone was hugging their dearest waist
1 honey colored cocker dog rains mired in the seventh dream

while 1 rogue fly uses their nose as a sofa bed

little pieces of trash husks papers

fly entangled in the valencian wind

that today can cut up 1 flower

later smash it along the ground

but tomorrow /

goodbye carbon dioxide /

apoplexy bitch good luck goodbye

Explain to your occasional friend

make it clear to yourself

that life keeps on being your poetry workshop

& hopefully electrifying the energy of your internal turmoil

next to the girl with agility of a sailboat

that you have chosen as the companion of your next leaps

it dwells / it lifts your heels

it buffs the shine of your eyes

hopefully / hopefully

The fragments the chips in a while

become hands like those of Houdini

1 shout so solid & real

like 1 breast or 1 apple

or 1 desire that makes all the body 1 transparent prism

The seemingly static & fleeting

turns out to be 1 valuable piece on the board
behind a simple photographer walking
once live 1 named Ernesto Che Guevara
& did not seem capable of minor sweaty effort
to not make mention of ethical exploits

The seemingly static & fleeting
results in 1 seemingly valuable piece on the board
the breath & the burning that accompany you
when traveling kilometric avenues
remembering the verses the skin of Sappho
bathed in the moon
when you pass you hand over your face
in the moment when you are 1 rainbow
scratched through the sun & the drizzle of 4 in the afternoon
when you write over the naked torso of the trees
the poetic artifacts of this century

I love you the rest
Tú me enciendes
You turn me on
How can this be
So beautiful?

—ablaze with faith

& between waves of pleasure—

When you see in this instant of the fight for life
that put euphoric Rosa Luxemburg
the living practice of the favorite theorem of the heretic Wilhelm Reich
1 body become literate next to another body
& thus was founded the University of Tenderness

when you learn to say No
with all the energy of 1 karate blackbelt
or say Yes / with the certainty
that soon the stars will have 1 color
that after 1 good time we will understand

The seemingly static & fleeting
threatens to burn & with kisses
the hour when the great political insurrections seem to look buried
(so say the bourgeois economists from their antiaircraft inspections)

But 1 looks at life
worthy of a homemade tattoo
though for now they pose for 1 invisible photograph
that can be the same climate that burns

Though for now only seems
that the Beauty radicalizes emotionally
like multicolored t-shirts that say: kiss me
from the most erogenous zones of their torsos

like 2 brats (rumored to be hippies or anachoids)
that promise to find themselves
at such an hour / in such a sunset
in Port Ray Bradbury of the canals of Mars
/ By any means
exactly there /
Beneath 1 sky that Van Gogh would give thanks to in 6 languages

& what whiteness will you add to this Whiteness
What breath / what burning?

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