

learning to inhabit mind  
like a shrine rather than like a line

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Chronology

:

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Michael Bernstein

on leaving Milwaukee

*dreamer of chairs and curtains  
bohemian of a pitiful city.*

-Kitasono Katue

Sun's

towers  
drop, fade-  
less.

the bru-  
tal  
corn

waits

Sarah K. Bell

what do i wear to the funeral

a blink  
& blank harness for foal knees

a dress that spills me like yarn  
to coil beneath  
the pews

Zachary C. Bush

If I were you, I'd never go back to that world...

where women cry crabs for tears  
where men shit blazing-snakes for turds  
where broad arms are soil-rooted and towering (shadows  
swell across the land like chew-chew trees) there  
colossal fists occasionally unraveling then dropping  
down to pluck creeps up from their endless road of drink  
striking their many sweaty appendages against the wind  
and it all sounds choppy like waves smacking against a jetty of nails  
*...a world where the soundtrack of your thoughts suddenly stops*

Donald Dunbar

from Click Click: a serial poem

1.

Symbolic figurines with specific names  
Steam glowing

Visitors choosing sides  
On the basis of sex

The ownership  
One woman feels of another woman

The disgust a man  
Feels of another man

Great excitement  
For the agreements of a game

2.

Apartment buildings glowing  
Universities and factories glowing

A cloud glowing  
Like it's swallowed something

Money glowing cloud-green in the bank  
State lines glowing thinly and tall

The name glowing  
As it pulls away

Like a moment  
Of great excitement

J. Michael Wahlgren

An Odyssey

I crawl. I violin pleasure  
We need to ascertain.  
What secure words they say.  
Some speak *'tis what 'tis* until  
Violence enters into play;  
An unknown theft,  
The violin inside  
Notes they play.  
Men as suitors, elbows  
To the sky, a mile high.  
Your composition  
Is phenomenal.  
They can only steal so much.  
They communicate  
Through cries.

Kat Dixon

back two spaces

or why don't we skip Wednesday and go in our pajamas & my insides  
are wrinkling, which is all I can think to talk about  
or say, why don't we skip one

letter or one period & everything runs together we do not growl at each

other we pick up

a telephone (anymore.) & what they're doing with  
words which is to say,  
to write around god or

a cold year. or half in retelling.

Howie Good

from Pig/Iron

4

The moon enters in a dark overcoat. It's possible to see the suicide in people's faces, the slope of their shoulders, the way their clothing is worn, their gait. There are days – many, in fact – fingers drum impatiently on the roof. The stairs that lead up also lead down to an iron bed, rumpled sheets, a photograph of insomnia. And always the same ending. I'm hunched over, tightening a screw with the edge of a dime. It does a bad job.

Michael Bernstein

the rot to light

up for  
it—

the de-  
mon  
push  
tough

on my  
skin,  
a vol-  
ume of  
gore.  
festers

the  
names  
wrath  
takes—

ex-  
pels its  
sherking  
host.O

tenure in  
knots,  
each hour

a dragged,  
cloaked  
botch,drawn  
up

from worse  
wells,damn-  
able.kill  
it

now,the  
flood to  
snuff  
sense:

gan-  
grene for  
yr vision  
shore—

gears' pitch  
all frantic

working,  
worked

Nicelle Davis

The Dead Messenger Pigeon Writes

I am made of bones and string. Bleached  
and hollow. She doesn't like people  
knowing about me. That is why  
the rope. That is why escape.  
My death was as your  
birth. A warm wet  
cylinder. A long  
red passage.  
I learned

your

language of arranged sticks from coyote's  
stomach. I write you because I am  
indebted. She gave my ghost a  
skeleton to shake. I clank  
it. She wouldn't want  
you to know about  
the excrement  
—There was  
excrement  
involved.  
But she  
found  
me  
and I write you now as a turn of favor.

She loves easily. And her loves  
turn to fish. She is afraid of  
the fish drowning, so she  
knits them to the sky.  
Her vision is tied.

Is tired. It can  
't submerge  
with out  
the sun  
reeling

it back to shore. She only sees fear in a  
knife not potential. The fish want  
to be cut free. Please send  
an edge she can  
't recognize.  
Please don  
't tell her  
I can

write. She would be ashamed of the excrement. And  
the bones. My bones. She wouldn't want you to  
know she is a collector of bones.

Felino Soriano

—after John Coltrane's *Light Blue*

Linked, often, a child's melody  
wrapped in smooth transition, womb into arms  
into a world's dedicated chaos. Lifting  
weight from childhood  
lying dimensional sacredness onto shoulders  
now able to withstand focal determination. Blue-link  
male, metaphor option paralleling pink-link female,  
otherness of androgynous appearance  
unlikely able to link self to defining presence  
like air's drifting leave, unnoticed  
never again counted as environmental heaviness.

Jennifer Greidus

FRAIL FRAGRANCE

My night moth seems baffled  
And flickers her wings against my nostrils.  
I suck her into the vacuum.  
I tell her about the building up and tearing down  
Of beauty and civilizations, and the language of fashion that falls.

She tells my smooth teeth  
That she knows, it's her secret, and to keep it down.

Jennifer Hollie Bowles

Longing

I long for summer, the hot  
sweat caused by an imaginary  
sun that takes pictures of you  
and changes time into feelings  
that glow with hidden phrases

I long for fluid transference,  
sockets pooled by liquids  
that show me an imaginary  
place where I had to find you  
so I could lose him