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Winter, snow : an inquiry into vulnerability

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Winter, Snow.
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Master of Arts

in

Anthropology

by

Wanda Orme

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Professor Steven Parish
Professor David Pedersen
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2012
The thesis of Wanda Orme is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

Chair

University of California, San Diego

2012
‘The water in which one drowns is always an Ocean’

- Armenian proverb
Please do not
Knock on my door
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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Winter, Snow. An Inquiry into Vulnerability

by

Wanda Orme

Master of Arts in Anthropology

University of California, San Diego, 2012

Professor Steven Parish, Chair

This thesis attends to vulnerability as both essential and contingent; a quality that is universal yet inheres in bodies as result of relations - the weave of worlds. Navigation, structured by the drive to certain forms of relationality, is both product and producer in the cartographic becoming of being. Despite careful steerage, we may consider the possibility that resonance enables one to be 'taken up' into forms of relationality aside from will. The moment when worlds collapse into bodies; the weight of sadness, the glimpse which cannot be shaken. Drawing from fieldwork with chronically homeless and recently housed individuals in Boston, I hope to elucidate how vulnerability is manifest in bodies as a quality derived from the relativity of component parts, or from those exteriorities to which one may be proximate. Vulnerability is therefore a measure of 'exposure' - a state of being 'open to'. The orientation and degree of this openness may be pre-determined by prior forms of relations which configure the realm of potential, in turn constituting the horizons of being and the routes we navigate. Resonance carries forth, structuring the forms we attend to, feeding desires or re-fashioning them in light of new attentions. Thus, this thesis hopes to demonstrate how vulnerability, as a state of being brought into relation with that which is exterior, is a necessary foundation of all being; the nature of this vulnerability is shaped by the paths we travel.
Preface.

I step into the torrent of signification which is a return to transcripts. This secondary alterity, perhaps more deeply felt in a return to attendance-towards aside from the resonance of co-presence.

To live with, beside, transcript, voice, has provoked within me the need to permit escape, overflow; a sluice gate of sorts. Where what cannot be contained is not lost but permitted the bleeding escape which is that of life lived.

Perhaps this cannot be written. One never steps into the same river twice.

But then, all rivers run to the sea.
I.

This is not the beginning.

‘Embryos, trees, develop according to their genetic preformation, or their structural reorganizations. But the weed overflows by virtue of being restrained. It grows between. It is the path itself.’

(Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 30)

Here in lies a map. Taken together these fragments comprise the material renderings of encounters which are themselves necessarily ‘becomings’. Pinned to the page, words are an attempt to convey that which cannot be reduced to a singularity, point of fixity, or essence. Instead, what is presented here comprises a collection of textual and photographic renderings which allude to, but can not be taken to represent, the subject of their composition.

This is a polyphony in conversation with itself, and with that which is both exterior to, and constitutive of it. I borrow directly from the works of Deleuze and Guattari, Benjamin, Barthes and numerous literary and artistic influences who contribute to the form and content of this ‘assemblage’.¹

Foremost in this however, are the voices of those with whom I interacted during fieldwork conducted through the Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program at various sites including but not limited to; homes, streets, clinics, shelters and respite centers in the city of Boston. These voices are presented here in transcript; there has been no editing aside from the alteration and removal of names to protect the identity of those involved. It is to these voices and others that this work attends. I am honored to have been graced with such words and have done my best to honor them in return.

¹ ‘What is an assemblage? It is a multiplicity which is made up of heterogeneous terms and which establishes liaisons, relations between them, across ages, sexes and reigns - different natures. Thus the assemblage’s only unity is that of co-functioning: it is a symbiosis, a ‘sympathy’. It is never filiations which are important, but alliances, alloys; these are not successions, lines of descent, but contagions, epidemics, the wind.’ (Deleuze and Parnet, Dialogues II, 1987; 69)
Although necessarily inhabiting a shape which suggests progression, these pieces constitute a map of the between; there is no beginning or end, no unifying totality to which all aspects may be subsumed.

This work strives to elucidate the essential relationality of vulnerability as a state of being arising from the formation, or potential formation, of relations which are necessarily exterior to the bodies which are taken up into them. Following the works of theorists such as Levinas, Blanchot and Bataille, I attend to Liberston’s assertion of the necessarily exterior constitution of being in which he proposes that ‘unicity in proximity is an ex-centric heteronomy whose center of gravity is always outside itself’.\(^2\)

Implicit in this conception of the ex-centric orientation of interiority is the notion of the impossibility of totality arising from escape. Against the formulation of escape as originating from an inherent ‘unknowability’ in-itself of all things (attesting to the existence of a transcendent, sensorally inaccessible realm [see Kantian metaphysics]), I propose that attending to escape is the very work consciousness undergoes in its attempt to comprehend alterity. Thus, escape is not a universal and inimitable ‘unknowability’ which totalizes through its commonality; it is instead a more radical alterity, predicated upon a conception of passivity, and against the notion that ‘the inadequacy of comprehension and exteriority may function as the vicissitudes of a larger equation’.\(^3\) The escape of alterity therefore, does not merely frustrate comprehension in an epistemological universe, instead as Libertson proposes; ‘it creates subjectivity in a universe of inspiration. As it escapes comprehension, it concerns and changes subjectivity.’ \(^4\)

That which comes to pass in communication evades totalization and recedes into indirection or ambiguity, approaching as it escapes; ‘its distance is a contact, its inaccessibility is an involvement’.\(^5\) This bleed out is the continuity of existence; it attest to the partiality of capture. Thus, Massumi states; ‘If there were no escape, no excess or remainder, no fade-out

\(^2\) Liberston, 1982; 5
\(^3\) Liberston, 1982; 1
\(^4\) Liberston, 1982; 4
\(^5\) Liberston, 1982; 3
to infinity, the universe would be without potential, pure entropy, death. Actually existing, structured things live in and through that which escapes them.\(^6\)

This map is an alternative to those rendered by bureaucratic initiatives which aim to quantify the content of populations, or those left on bodies which stand as a marker of journeys travelled. It is rendered both in the between of the fragments present here - in the interstices of asyndeton - and in the ‘between’ of the encounter. These middle grounds constitute planes of becoming:

We said the same thing about becomings: it is not one term which becomes the other, but each encounters the other, a single becoming which is not common to the two, since they have nothing to do with one another, but which is between the two, which has its own direction, a bloc of becoming, an a-parallel evolution. This is it, the double capture, the wasp AND the orchid: not even something which would be in the one, or something which would be in the other, even if it had to be exchanged, be mingled, but something which is between the two, outside the two, and which flows in another direction. To encounter is to find, to capture, to steal, but there is no method for finding other than a long preparation. Stealing is the opposite of plagiarizing, copying, imitating, or doing like. Capture is always a double-capture, theft a double-theft, and it is that which creates not something mutual, but an asymmetrical block, an a-parallel evolution, nuptials, always ‘outside’ and ‘between’.\(^7\)

This ‘theft’ of the double capture is the creative moment arising from that which is the overflow of being brought into relation-with.\(^8\) Here is not a point of recognition, but a line of flight; ‘for recognizing is the opposite of the encounter’. Thus, this paper does not seek recognition; it strives not for answers, end points, or knowledge readily distillable to transferable parts applicable to whichever purpose they best serve. Instead it speaks to the

\(^6\) Massumi, 2002; 35  
\(^7\) Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; 7  
\(^8\) Deleuze and Guattari use the term ‘Capture’ to describe two actions. The first involves refers to the operations of the State, the second (employed here) ‘defines a co-existence and articulation of becomings in terms of the assemblage of heterogeneous entities and the formation of territories.’ What is foremost in both instances is ‘the affirmation of the event-bound and transformative character of relationality (or interaction), such that capture, whether understood as control or assemblage, is always an ontologically constructive operation and can never be reduced to models of unilateral causation.’ (Toscano, 2005; 40).
contingency of all being, the line which can be traversed but which cannot be reduced to a point; ‘finding, encountering, stealing instead of regulating, recognizing and judging’.\(^9\)

In that this work aims at an assemblage, it too is vulnerable. The forms of relationality into which it enters render it open and without resort to a totalizing image from which to draw the capacity for reductive engagement. (Recursivity - it’s opposite, is the only viable option here, as a bringing into relation with which effects change throughout the assemblage).

In their analysis of the ‘concept’, Deleuze and Guattari propose that the concept be understood as both ‘whole’ and ‘fragmentary whole’; whole in the interior work it undergoes to totalize components such that they are inseparable, fragmentary through it’s relation to other concepts inhabiting the plane of immanence. Concepts set relative horizons that function as limits, they ‘pave, occupy, or populate’ the plane of immanence which is the absolute horizon dictating the limits of potential.\(^10\)

Utilizing Deleuze & Guattari’s formulation of ‘concept’ allows us to conceive of how ‘worlds’ may be brought into being aside from a transcendental or a priori formulation. They are born of relations, and therefore cannot be conceived of aside from experience. Created and refashioned through the shifting landscape of coming-into-relation-with, concepts are therefore dynamic, circumstantial and contingent; they cannot be hypothetical or conceived a priori. \(^11\)

Concepts, ‘worlds’ or ‘wholes’, are constructed by and through the relations between their constituent elements and these relations must be understood to be external to their terms.\(^12\) Such that concepts can be viewed as manifest ‘wholes’, these are produced by the relational situation of aspects; the totality of any element participant in the whole is never

\(^9\) Deleuze & Parnet, 1977; 8

\(^10\) Deleuze & Guattari; ‘Concepts are like multiple waves, rising and falling, but the plane of immanence is the single wave that rolls them up and unrolls them.’ (1991; 36).


\(^12\) Deleuze & Guattari, 1987
fully or essentially present. Something of the relata always escapes; any manifestation of a thing is local and contingent, and these relations never exhaust the relata.\footnote{Harman, 2002} This focus on exteriority is crucial in shifting the generative element from interior to relation, and thus enabling a conception of formation in which the resulting ‘whole’ is a product not of essential qualities of relata but of the \textit{relational qualities which inhere in them}.

Concepts do not tessellate; as fragmentary totalities, concepts are ‘not even pieces of a puzzle’\footnote{Deleuze & Guattari, 1991; 23} for their irregular contours do not fit to each other permitting the assemblage of a totality without overflow, escape, or gaps. Instead, they are centers of vibrations which ‘resonate rather than cohere or correspond with each other.’\footnote{Deleuze & Guattari, 1991; 23} The type of resonance may dictate the formation resulting from proximity. The way magnetism rearranges the order of being. The way shocks continue to be felt long after they have ceased to be manifest in the exterior.

This is not to say that ‘vulnerability’ can not be held to manifest in bodies, however this quality is derived from the relativity of component parts; or of those exteriorities to which one may be proximate. Vulnerability is therefore a measure of ‘exposure’ - a state of being ‘open to’. The orientation and degree of this openness may be pre-determined by prior forms of relations which grant form to the realm of potential, in turn constituting the horizons of being and following this, the routes we navigate. Resonance carries forth from the present, structuring the forms we attend to, feeding desires or re-fashioning them in light of new attentions. Thus to say that ‘vulnerability’ is contingent upon relations, is not to assert that a person cannot be ‘vulnerable’ at or before the moment of being brought into relation with. It is instead to propose that at base, as a state of being in relation-to that which is exterior, vulnerability is a necessary foundation of \textit{all} being; the nature of this vulnerability is shaped by the paths we travel.

We navigate through complex movements of bringing into relation-with. Relationally drives us; it is the at the core of being. Shift, slip - sliding through, between and

\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{Harman, 2002}
\item \footnote{Deleuze & Guattari, 1991; 23}
\item \footnote{Deleuze & Guattari, 1991; 23}
\end{itemize}
across relations we map ourselves into territories of existence; the map maps us. We are embedded in a cartographic becoming which constitutes the totality of what can be called ‘worlds’ - both relative and absolute. These, like the ‘concept’ of Deleuze & Guattari can be held to be both relative to their own components, to other concepts, and to the plane on which they are defined, but also ‘absolute through the condensation carried out, the site it occupies on the plane, and the conditions it assigns to the problem.’

Like fishing nets in water these are changed and shaped by larger currents. We weave the net in its submersion, mend holes, cut away parts or lose ties torn away by the tide.

This network is the weave we can call a ‘world’; fragmentary yet whole, relative yet absolute. Open, liable to change; ‘vulnerable’ through the very nature of its foundation in relations of exteriority. We may call the meshwork woven by the movement of lives lived, following Lefebvre, an ‘archi-texture’. This, against man’s preoccupation to build, attends to the extrinsic ordering of relations on an ontologically flat plane.

Interventions pertaining to ‘vulnerability’ have failed to attend to relationality as the core motivator of movement. This manifests, for example, in the desire to be brought into relation-with, as well as the complex navigations we undergo in order to distance or avoid

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16 Deleuze & Guattari, 1991; 21

17 See Lefebvre; ‘The social – relations, institutions, conflict – is woven by lived human bodies in everyday practice and in conjunction with other non-human bodies (organic, inorganic, and imaginary). Rather than a text to be read or decoded, the world is a “texture” to sense and to use; a lived fabric of rhythms and relationships understood through praxis ‘(Lefebvre 1991a[1974]:222).

18 ‘Flat ontology’ is a term coined by DeLanda. He states; ‘While an ontology based on relations between general types and particular instances is hierarchical, each level representing a different ontological category (organism, species, genera), an approach in terms of interacting parts and emergent wholes leads to a flat ontology, one made exclusively of unique, singular individuals, differing in spatio-temporal scale but not in ontological status.’ (2002; 58).
relations with others. Desire attends not to lack, but to the positive drive to relations.\textsuperscript{19} These longings are movements. The push and pull of tides. Isolation then surely, is at best the loss of relationality-to, and at worst the trap in which I am bait. Safety is not closure. For life demands that something always escape.

Capture is implicit in the motion of being brought into, pulled out of, avoiding and attending to relations, however this capture is always and necessarily incomplete. Perhaps in the end the greatest struggle is against absolute capture; the point at which overflow ceases. This is the final closure. In its totality one is rendered singular. A total capture then (what may be conceived of as an impossibility), is death.

I propose that vulnerability inheres in bodies as a result of relational moment(s) and is thus not a quality that is inherent in, or held by, any sole individual or thing aside from the relations in which it exist, the relationality which is essential and constitutive of its existence, and the desire for relationally which is itself structured through resonance. This de-centering of the concept refutes any claim to essential vulnerability, aside from that which is universally born of a being’s necessary existence within a network of relations.

\textsuperscript{19} See Ross ‘Desire’ in \textit{The Deleuze Dictionary}: ‘Instead of a regulation of desire by pleasure or lack in which desire is extracted from its plane of immanence, desire is a process in which anything is permissible. Desire is accordingly distinguished from that which "would come to break up the integral process of desire" (D1993b: 140). This integral process is described in \textit{A Thousand Plateaus} as the construction of assemblages.’ (2005; 62)
II.

{kingdom}

The unspeakable, said softly,
steals over the land:
already it is noon

- Ingeborg Bachmann

what is it, to live with fear?
does one swim through it, as water filling in front and behind, below and the constant
effort to prevent it seeping, flooding from above too?
does it resist your stroke? or cave to it; pushed aside like so many leaves on the
surface?
do you feel its weight, or does it carry you? born along on a tide
does it sleep when you do?
can it be still, motionless; or like a gilled fish die if movement ceases?
what would you be without it?

A warning from the US Coast Guard:

‘The ocean is always looking for a way into your boat.’
A: oh i know i got something to tell you, i got many things to tell you
um
i left
remember i told you i came to Needham from NY? I lived in Brockport NY, engaged
with a $9000 marquee diamond on my finger
for a year and a half, my fiancee
stabbed me with a butterfly knife
it’s a knife that opens up like the wings of a butterfly
it’s about 6 inches long
didn’t go through though
stabbed me there it didn’t stop bleeding for like 5 hours Elevated with pressure
that’s nothing, he burned me there
then on my breast that suckled and nursed my children
my right one (whispered)
Over ten times he burned me with cigarettes
I had welts on my head
I can’t hear very well because he punched me in the head so many times
He took a chainsaw, this long the blade was,
and put it to my throat.
He made me crawl on the porch
down the stairs to get a rope
he made a noose
put it, i mean wrapped it, he was a sailor,
wrapped it around my neck and asphyxiated me three times i almost died but i was
smart enough to put my fingers up under and pull and turn my head this way,
cause if you do that, if you turn your head that way so you can breathe.
Kicked him, pushed him away and pulled it right off
threw it and hid it behind the couch.
    Gun to my head
    Knife to my throat
    Endure torture for one year and a half,
cause i knew if i left
he was mob connected
people have disappeared because of him
and i knew because he gave me Every Detail.
    Which way the water flows to get rid of the body
    what chemicals in the water,or you put on, to disintegrate bone.
Right?
    I knew if i left i’d die.
    I have three children i had to live
so then

W: so how did you get away?

A: we came to needham
i didn’t want to leave.
I was twenty minutes from my children,
but he lives with their father.
I wasn’t welcome anywhere in my hometown that i grew up in
That i gave so much
gave hospice care
health care
health care proxies
elder care law
um.
I don’t know what else to say,
i’m too tired

W: yeah, you look tired
A: but i survive, you know?
W: yeah
A: rejected by the army because i’m 5 ft tall
i’m in army one
y’know these people that fought nam or whatever,
i serve my country my god my country every day.
Work is love made visible (whispered)
and hands to work
look at my hands
i’m only 49, i don’t care
Hands to work
Hearts to guide
Fingers to the Bone Bleeding

I’m an,... love to garden

W: ...to tend to things and watch them grow
A: god does it,
god makes them grow.
He causes the hummingbirds, i mean the bees to pollinate, to multiply y’know, so neat.
Some, some plants are a-sexual, they don’t need any pollination, or any male/female, they’re just, y’know what i mean?
it’s just so fascinating that
the plant world
and the Animal Kingdom
they came before he created man.
You know, it’s Christmas time
Jesus said I am the bread of life
who came down from heaven, the manor from heaven
where did they lay him, because there was no room in the inn?
In a manger, do you know what a manger is?

W: tell me?
A: it’s a trough, t-r-o-u-g-h
they put the feed in there for the animals (whispered)
he puts them first.
Grain.
The plants.
The animals.
The plant and animal kingdom.
Genus.
Phylum.
Y’know what I’m saying?
W: yeah

--------

A: Didn’t prince william just get married?

W: he did

A: do you know him?

W: to kate middleton
   i don’t know him personally, but i do know of him

A: he was diana’s first born son

W: he was

A: he cute his hair too short
   most gorgeous man i’ve every seen?
   J.F.K. junior

have you ever seen him?

W: i think i’ve seen photographs, i’m not sure

A: look at him, study him
   he was born the year i was born.
   His father died, november 11th or 21st, something like that, 19...61, i was born in 62,
   my parents loved JFK.
   I don’t adhere to any political monarch, dictatorship...
   anything,
   dynasty
   Nothing.

   I wrote.
   I wrote this.
   I’m a.
   I obey
   I’m a bond slave
   which is a willing servant in the year jubilee, the seventh year the slaves
   were set free they didn’t have to serve
   a bond servant willingly served god
   and how you could identify one was they’d take their ear and, put it against,
   a door i don’t know, a wooden, something wood and take a something like
   that, a wooden peg, and they’d bore it through their ear and that’s how you
   knew
   that’s y’know
   he gave his life for me, i give it back (tears/whispers)

   I don’t

I can’t even give you my address because i really don’t have one,
I’ll probably be here.
III.

{gift}

How it happened for me?
well, this one is a winner
i got a special gift, from god,
some sort of nautical
  navigational
  understanding
  of where the enemy is.
We walk worlds; the resonance of being carries beyond and interpolates that which has been to the now which exists only in its recognition through passing. Potentialities map the incipient present; trajectories transverse. We tread carefully.

The notion of vulnerability has come to dominate both popular and policy discourse pertaining to chronically homeless individuals. Interventions such at the Vulnerability Index\textsuperscript{20} quantify human suffering through a checklist of symptoms and ailments which rank individuals according to the number of categories, indexing vulnerability, to which they conform, and confer upon them a concurrent legitimacy for entry into programs such as Housing First.\textsuperscript{21} Little attention has however been paid to the subjective experience of vulnerability as lived by so called ‘vulnerable’ individuals.

The Vulnerability Index can be seen to constitute a map of the bodily traces of experience, rendered for the purpose of navigating ethical responsibility. However, proximity to death as indexed by physical well (or ‘ill’) being does little to elucidate vulnerability as it may be sensed or lived through by those on the street. Solutions to such vulnerability as it is rendered indicate a similarly uni-dimensional appreciation of its manifestation. The provision of overtly unconditional housing to individuals undoubtably mitigates harm, however mortality and housing failure rates speak to the naivete of discourse which posits housing as ‘the solution to homelessness’ and the panacea for ‘vulnerable’ individuals.

\textsuperscript{20} Common Ground, 2012.

\textsuperscript{21} ‘Housing First’, also known as ‘Rapid Re-Housing’ see p. 20 for further explanation.
W: how old were you when you ran away?
S: 11
   came back for my 12th birthday, got some presents stayed around for a while
   left back out again
   never came back
   came back a few times
   got sent to schools
   no big deal
   st Cabrini
   catholic
   westpoint
   this
   that
W: where were you living when you ran away
   where did you stay?
S: in a truck
W: in a truck
S: mostly in a truck
   men took very very good care of me
   made sure i always had weapons
   made sure i was never hurt
   called me something special
   i couldn’t understand it
W: you were so young
S: yeah
   that’s what they thought too
   they were right
   but they did
   they kept me well
   they kept me very well
   made sure i wasn't hurt
   made sure i was always fed
W: was it your choice to be there?
S: well
   it was better than being told i was a lier
   and being
   being marked for death
   yeah
   so it was my choice
   if that’s your two choices
   that was my choice
   yes
i don’t prefer being dead
it shows me no sign of love

but, i’d have rather been home
but there was something wrong
something very wrong

Unravelling. It is Massumi who has stated; ‘will and consciousness are subtractive. They are limitative, derived functions that reduce a complexity too rich to be functionally expressed’  

We disentangle chaos as we are born forth to it; attendant to a complexity which is always in excess and a realm which must always exceed itself. Attuned to this we work selectively, carving paths which as waterways, once cut must spill necessitating a constant effort; one of care and containment, but also of defense and rebuttal. We build dams.

Can we consider the possibility, against discourse which situates the behaviors of the chronically homeless as ‘mal-adaptive’ - exemplified most crassly by those individuals who inquire as to whether startlingly high mortality rates are not simply demonstrative of

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22 Massumi, 2002; 29

23 Hwang and colleagues examined deaths among 17,292 adults seen by the Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program from July 1, 1988 through December 31, 1993. This cohort was observed for over 50,000 person-years, with an average of 2.9 years of observation per person. The average age of death was 47 years, with a median age of 44 years (compared to an average life expectancy in the USA of almost 80 years).

Homicide was the leading cause of death in the 18–24 age group, AIDS in the 25–44 age group, and heart disease and cancer in the older group from 45–64 years of age. An overdose of alcohol or drugs accounted for 6% of the total deaths in the cohort. Heart disease was a major cause of death in the 45–64 age group, and death from heart disease was three times higher in homeless men 24–45 years of age than in the general population.

Mental health and substance abuse were not as strongly associated with death as were medical illnesses.

natural selection - that these individuals are doing exactly what they must to survive their worlds?  

Nautical, navigational understandings map territories in ways which necessitate strategic movement through them.

Metaphors of warfare litter the landscape along with the absolutes which are its foundation; good/evil, black/white, love/hate. Visible, palpable, but only to those with the gift; ‘I got a special gift from god’. This double vision reveals the co-presence of opposing forces which exist not only in the same world, but in a relation of no distance that renders temporal chains of cause and effect irrelevant to a movement between the two. This is a world of precarity, slippage, collapse. One in which the realm of the potential 25 as a tapestry structured by the temporal condensation of past and future presses into the present as felt.

This pressing in is the ‘il y a’ of which Levinas writes, the ‘there is’ of an immediacy which in my regard regards me. What is it of the watcher which plays so deeply to fear? It is interesting to consider that among dichotomies so often voiced, ‘god’ as benevolent omnipresent entity frequently referenced receives no complementary opposite. Perhaps in this instance silence speaks of its object as negative space does so in image. The echo carries past into potential. Resonance collapses distance.

\footnote{24 Ingold states; ‘Living systems are characterized by a coupling of perception and action that arises within processes of ontogenetic development... \textit{skilled practice involves developmentally embodied responsiveness.’} (2011; 65)

25 Massumi states; ‘The virtual, the pressing crowd of incipiencies and tendencies, is a realm of potential. In potential is where futurity combines, unmediated, with pastness, where outsides are infolded and sadness is happy (happy because the press to action and expression is life). The virtual is a lived paradox where what are normally opposites coexist, coalesce, and connect; where what cannot be experienced cannot but be felt - albeit reduced and contained. For out of the pressing crowd an individual action or expression will emerge and be registered consciously’. (2002; 30-31).}
gifts make other people jealous, ‘evil’?

S: evil as in
not angry
violent
they want to get rid of it

i’m just tired of it
i just want to go to bed and stay asleep
i just want to rest in peace
i’m tired

i’m too tired
i’m too tired to be beaten up
i’m too tired to be second guessed
i’m just sick, and tired

physically, mentally

just

W: i’m so sorry

S: it’s not your fault

W: no, but

S: it’s nobodies fault
truly, it’s nobodies fault

W: it’s not your’s either

W: do you have any family?

S: pffft, distant
the only way to call my parents is if I’m dead.

---

S: was that any help?
not really huh

W: you don’t have to help me
it was,
but i don’t, i just want to talk to you
i want to know about your life

S: it used to be good,
used to be real good.
Even though
i had nowhere
i had somewhere to be

lay down in a forest where it was soft and warm, i was fine
and then they want to drag me out of it
which is the only thing i had

W: who? who?

S: i don't know who

W: where was this?

S: All over america.

i just can’t do it anymore
i don’t have any strength left
i really don’t

W: we have a bed for you tonight
away from all of this
where you can sleep
and feel safe

S: thank you

W: and dream of forests
nice warm places

S: whispering wind

W: yeah
and mossy green green ground,
and branches and stars

S: it's a beautiful place
there's no better

Man can’t build any better.

Vulnerability is relational; one is vulnerable to, towards - both orientation and movement. Vulnerability is sensed not as a singular, embodied state of being-in-the-world, but as a relational moment in which the incipient realm of potential, some part of which must become actual, presents a threat; a threat which is felt in the capture and closure of coming-into-relation-with, as fear.

To feel vulnerable then, is to be afraid.

To live with fear.

What is it to live with fear?

Run, hide, fight, survive. Guard oneself, make careful maps; attend to threat with the love kill intimacy of the hunter.
VI.

{winter, snow}

J: desperation...like like, there are times when you, I guess it has to do with emotions and all that, i know it probably won’t make any sense but emotions have a big thing to do with it, like you feel loneliness, you feel like you, what’s that world they use? like uh, oh i can’t think of it, um, i don’t know, doom, like the end of the world, it’s all over with, you’re throwing in the towel, i don’t know, am i making any sense?

there are certain people that I see that are out there that I know are vulnerable

W: how do you know they are vulnerable?

J: because they’re, they’re helpless and they can’t defend themselves and they cant protect themselves, y’know what I mean?

i think i’m vulnerable, i don’t know
i always call myself hardcore, because i slept right there on the concrete, right through the winter, through the snow, through everything, y’know and um, i didn’t feel vulnerable, even through that which i should have i think
i don’t know

W: what was different for you that made you not feel vulnerable?

J: um, i guess because, you know, i’m not trying to sound like a tough guy or anything cause i’m not a tough guy, i just felt like, i wasn’t scared that’s crazy
people would say y’know, aren’t you nervous, aren’t you scared y’know to sleep out here at night and blah blah blah? and i’m say no, y’know, and I y’know, and I had a few situations that happened to me and i was ready you know, i know stuff like that can happen, i got stabbed by a guy, y’know they jumped me at night, i was sleeping under the blankets in front of the train station and i got jumped by a group of guys...

i should have felt vulnerable doing that but i didn’t, that’s why they call me crazy out there, y’know, i’m not crazy, i just did what i had to do, i chose to stay outside because i don’t like the shelters, i don’t like the way they’re run, i want to blow the whistle on them, someone has to look at the situation, it’s out of control.
VII.

fragment.

i didn’t lose my mind
i’m not crazy
there were times i thought i was y’know

i broke down a couple of times
not many times
but
you just get tired y’know
    you get tired
    you get tired of it all
    sick of it all
    as they say
    y’know

the repetitiveness repetitiveness
and uh
it’s not easy y’know
it’s definitely not easy
Between the lips and the voice something goes dying.
Something with the wings of a bird, something of anguish and oblivion.
The way nets cannot hold water.

- Neruda

Housing First moves away from conditional models of ‘housing readiness’ and promises the sole opportunity for a life off the streets for many individuals. Through this program individuals are able to move into housing directly from streets and shelters without fulfilling the preconditions of treatment compliance previously associated with this process. The housing provider is required to offer support services, whilst continued tenancy is not dependent upon the engagement of these.

Units are targeted to meet the needs of the most disabled and/or at risk individuals and eligibility for this program now rests predominantly on the measurement of a frequently employed yet under theorized concept; that of ‘vulnerability’. Bearing forth to increasingly dominate discourse surrounding street populations the concept of vulnerability has, like many others, become an attribute to be discretely measured, numericized and ranked.

The ‘Vulnerability Index’ (the antecedents of which lie in measures of environmental and economic vulnerability) is used in Housing First programs across the USA to determine those most in need of a home, it’s coefficient; proximity to death, its mantra; ‘a tool for ending homelessness.’

Eight markers identified in an earlier study of homeless mortality have been taken as a base for the calculation of vulnerability in this index, these are:

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26 Common Ground, 2012
27 O’Connell et al, 1998
- more than three hospitalizations per year
- more than three emergency room visits in previous three months
- aged 60 or older
- cirrhosis of the liver
- end-stage renal disease
- history of frostbite, immersion foot, or hypothermia
- HIV/AIDS
- tri-morbidity: co-occurring psychiatric, substance abuse, and chronic medical conditions

Since September 2005 BHCHP has referred fifty-seven patients to the housing first program Home Start; of these fifty-seven, fifty-two patients have enrolled and forty-nine have received housing. The average age of the fifty-two enrollees at the time of enrollment was fifty-one years old. The five individuals referred but never enrolled either died before they could enroll, were denied enrollment by HomeStart, or were lost to follow up for too long for HomeStart to enroll them.

The forty-nine individuals who have received housing through home start have collectively held eighty-four apartments from 2005 to present. There have been thirty-one moves to different apartments or returns back to the street to avoid an official eviction on the tenant’s record (something which could potentially jeopardize an individual’s eligibility for an apartment in the future). Only one tenant was official evicted, while four tenants were asked to leave the HomeStart program because they were on their third move and HomeStart would not re-house them unless they went to a substance abuse treatment program. All four refused the substance abuse treatment program and returned to the street.

Since the onset of the study in 2005, fifteen of the fifty-two enrolled (29%) have died while in housing. Overall twenty-one of the forty-nine (43%) people placed in housing have left the program due to eviction, being asked to leave by HomeStart, from an injury so severe that they are unable to care for themselves, or due to death.28

That over a quarter of individuals placed in housing have died during the five year period of this study points to the gravity of health concerns for these individuals. Housing may placate our sense of responsibility to care for the chronically homeless, however an examination of the mortality rates of the recently housed is cruelly demonstrative of the lateness of this intervention in many cases.

28 Roncarati, 2011
Interestingly (and distressingly) the observation of an approximate 30% mortality rate has been replicated in an earlier study of mortality within the street population of Boston. From 2000, the Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program prospectively followed a cohort of one-hundred and nineteen chronically homeless persons who had been living on the streets for at least six consecutive months. 75% of the cohort was male, and the mean age was forty-seven years. At the end of five years, thirty-three individuals (28%) had died and six (7%) were in nursing homes. The average age at death was fifty-one years. The most common causes of death were cancer and cirrhosis, and only one person died of hypothermia. During the five years from 1999 through 2003, this group had a total of 18,384 emergency room visits.

That the statistical incidence of mortality should be almost identical in housed and street populations in Boston (29% and 28% respectively) raises important questions about the role of housing and further problematizes the rendering of housing in the light a salvation from the suffering caused by homelessness. Although for many individuals housing may provide the necessary foundations to reconstitute a life away from the street, it is clear that for others housing may serve solely to alleviate suffering in the years before death. Palliative care has only recently become a topic for discussion in policy pertaining to care of the homeless, however it is of well know centrality in the work of care providers. Caring for the dying is often the role of street physicians, shelter workers and nursing staff who can do little else but mitigate suffering and quiet anxieties pertaining to death.

It’s is interesting to note the findings of a study by Song et al which demonstrate the centrality of concerns surrounding death and dying in the daily lives of homeless people (unsurprising given the rate of mortality amongst this group), and further, to consider the potential implications of a recognition of the prevalence of exposure to death in the early lives of homeless individuals. Childhood trauma has been shown to be an antecedent to

29 Hwang et al, 1997
30 O’Connell, 2005
31 Song et al, 2007
chronic homelessness\textsuperscript{32} and the regularity with which this trauma takes the form witnessing death is yet unknown; however in my own experience death as experientially near is a prominent theme in the life stories of the chronically homeless. Levinas’ assertion that one’s own finitude is rendered not through a relationship to one’s own death, but to the death of others, is relevant here.\textsuperscript{33}

To fear not death, but dying. The resonance of all deaths in my own cessation. Dying is empathetic; the suffering not singular but many. When I stop dying I stop having to live the deaths of others. My death is my own, however through this is born not authenticity but impossibility.\textsuperscript{34} On the singularity of death, Libertson writes; ‘Death is the extremity of the essential solitude - the alteration - or interiority. “One” dies, because “one” is the ontology of separation. Death is inadequate to identity, as is life.’\textsuperscript{35}

Death can never be adequate to its task. Levinas proposes that death, as the ‘impossibility of possibility’, is never present. If to be vulnerable is to be brought into relation with, we may ask; can one be vulnerable to that which has no presence?

To be vulnerable to death is an impossibility as death \textit{is} such impossibility. To be vulnerable to death is to be vulnerable to \textit{dying}; conceived and conceivable through the deaths of others. Dying has a presence; dying is a haunting.

\textsuperscript{32} Herman et al, 1997

\textsuperscript{33} Levinas here counters Heidegger’s formulation of ‘being-towards-death’ in which authenticity in life rests on the singularity of one’s relation to one’s own death. For Heidegger, finitude is essentially non-relational; an authentic relationship to death is one in which death is owned and internalized as ‘possibility of impossibility’. Contra Heidegger, Levinas (also see Blanchot) states that death is the ‘impossibility of possibility’. One’s relationship to death is construes through the experience of the death of Others. Over this there can be no mastery.

\textsuperscript{34} (see above note ‘24’)

\textsuperscript{35} Libertson, 1982; 76
'one thing
when i come in my room
this is my quiet time, y’know
it’s not to say anything y’know like a kid or anything like that y’know
this is my quiet time
when i’m in here
don’t bother me
y’know
it’s simple as that'
IX.

home - street - ethics

For many, housing is the lynch pin of a road to recovery, however in a great number of cases the complex causalities of ‘homelessness’ and the effects of years of sleeping rough, both physical and psychological, can not be rectified through the provision of shelter. The singularity of the term homelessness belies the enormous heterogeneity of experience which leads individuals to life on the streets; in some cases a house is not a home and a home is not the panacea of the homeless.

Housing brings forth a new form of isolation. The conditionalities upon which the retention of a home resides often prevent socializing, inviting friends over and in many cases necessitate a rupture or radical reformation of prior social ties. The idea of the homeless as isolated individuals - the archetypal ‘lone wolf’ - has been demonstrated to be the product of a view very much from the ‘outside’; the homeless do not pan handle in groups. Many of these individuals maintain complex webs of social interaction, often shaped starkly by the paucity of resources, but also friendship and love:

Andrea has been offered an apartment, however will not leave her boyfriend on the street. His criminal record means that he is not eligible; they refuse to be separated.

Homes draw walls across social ties, they include but also exclude, concealing one from the world and in turn revealing an individuated self with whom one must reconcile:

Joe relays to me the paradoxical discomfort of a bed, choosing instead for the first two months to sleep on the floor next to his new mattress. The TV cabinet with no TV positioned to obscure a lone window in a small room. Tents pitched in lounges. A plethora of actions could be regaled born of the need to create a space which does not feel so profoundly unfamiliar.

Windows make one feel watched who is used to sleeping in the open. Telephone lines complicate the paranoia of a woman who is not used to being found. The chronically homeless are highly skilled at navigating the landscape of the city, however the daily
demands of keeping a home can often prove to be too great. Evictions and returns to the street are common.

We stop by Anna’s, I am surprised that she is still alive. In her late 30’s she was living in shelters and suffering from such severe cirrhosis when I met her 3 years earlier that each drink promised to tilt the scales a little closer to death. The last time I saw her she was rosy faced with distended stomach due to chronic edema. I do not recognise the woman at the door and for a second I question her identity, until she breaks into a grin and wraps her arms around me. Her joy is contagious; induced by crack cocaine and effusive, it overflows her. She stand at the door, slightly ajar but blocking our view. When we enquire about visitors she denies but a man’s cough will later interrupt our conversation. I tell her she is looking well, she proudly proclaims her weight loss (predominantly a result of crack cocaine use) and flashes her stomach from below her t-shirt with a grin. I write:

Anna is flying  
I can feel her joy  
in her arms  
my insides turn  
atoms for worlds.

It is hard to delineate the complex causalities which link Anna’s abstention from alcohol, use of crack, and transition to housing. However, anyone engaged in relationships with such individuals can identify with the paradoxical joy (perhaps this is in fact relief) which one can feel at a woman living in a home and using crack cocaine; a woman who is ‘less likely to die’. Here new forms of assemblage shift resonance.

Geoff can hardly stand. He leans against the polished glass of Macy’s in downtown Boston holding a filthy polystyrene cup. He is housed, but he explains to us that his weekly paycheck has been docked $35 for poor behavior and because of this he cannot make his rent. This is the penalty levied for making a mess of his apartment having invited friends over.
At Sarah’s home we find Mike, he’s been sleeping on the couch despite having his own place:

Dr. Adams: ‘How’s the drinking going?’
Mike: ‘Um... I had a drink friday’
Dr. Adams: ‘How’s the not drinking going?’
Mike: ‘Um...... I get bored’

Codified and sanitized within the Vulnerability Index we find a quantification of human suffering. The number of hospitalizations or emergency room visits, presence of disease and co-occurring substance abuse or psychiatric conditions and a history of frostbite, immersion foot, or hypothermia (taken to be indicative of particularly harsh street living) can be taken as measures of the burden of suffering in the lives of these individuals. In this way, one can ask whether that which is being measured is vulnerability to death (‘most likely to die’), or if the index can be re-conceived of as measure of the damage wrought by years of subjection to relations with (proximity to) entities more palpable than death; entities such as abuse, disease and neglect. Perhaps then, what is being assessed in proximity to death (the Vulnerability Index) can be thought of, drawing from Levinas, as form of suffering through which death announces itself.36

Levinas’ formulation of vulnerability, predicated upon the ethical demands of an infinite Other necessitates the presence of that other not only as a condition of vulnerability, but of the being to which that vulnerability is essential and constitutive. The infinite Other places demands upon us which arise involuntarily from the encounter; the face in its vulnerability places demands upon me, a putting into question of my own spontaneity which Levinas calls ethics.37 This ethics, rooted in phenomenology and born of intersubjectivity, places one in a position of responsibility bearing forth from experience founded not in predictable or rational calculation, but on an ethics of care with stems from the proximity of an Other.

36 Levinas, 1987
37 Levinas, 1969
The Vulnerability Index may thus constitute a mode of bringing forth the presence of harm as it inheres in an individual's body only a result of damaging forms of assemblage. The Index therefore quantifies vulnerability, not as an essential quality of being, but as a state of having been drawn into detrimental forms of relation, and extrapolates from this to predict the future continuity of damage. From this measure organizations derive a method of quantifying ethical responsibility born of this bringing-to-light of suffering.

The Vulnerability Index can therefore be seen to constitute a map of the bodily traces of experience, rendered for the purpose of navigating ethical responsibility. These bodily traces (traces is perhaps too soft a term) may further be conceived of, after Foucault, as the inscription of wider relations of structural inequality upon the individual.38

The Index situates ‘vulnerability’ in a bounded body; it becomes a qualitative measure of being, however what is obscured through this is the exteriority of qualitative transformations. In recognizing the Vulnerability Index as a gauge of the form of suffering ‘through which death announces itself’ (following Levinas), we are alerted to the legacy of experience belied by the a-historicity of the measure.

38 Foucault proposed that the body is ‘...directly involved in a political field, power relations have an immediate hold upon it; they invest it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs.’ (Foucault in Rainbow 1991,173)
The resilience and resourcefulness of the chronically homeless is often humbling; death comes at the end of a long road for many. In re-conceiving of vulnerability and thus of that to which the Index purports to attend, we may be pushed to recognize it not as an inventory of individual ill health, but as a reflection of society’s multiple failures to protect individuals from those forms of relations which do harm, and perhaps most importantly, in the instances where such prevention is impossible, to mitigate the effects of such harm upon them. 39

39 See: ‘Trauma’.
Trauma is an experience pervasive amongst the chronically homeless. Numerous studies have identified the links between homelessness and trauma, citing trauma as both as a risk factor for homelessness (Browne 1993, Christensen et al 2005, Herman et al 1997, etc) and as an integral aspect of the experience of homelessness itself (Goodman et al 1991).
In a study of lifetime prevalence of trauma amongst homeless men and women in Sydney, 100% women and over 90% of men reported having experience at least one traumatic event in their life. 58% of homeless individuals in the study had suffered serious physical assault and 55% had witnessed someone being badly injured or killed; prevalence of traumatic experiences of sexual assault was also shown to be high, with 50% women and 10% of men reporting experience of rape (Buhrich et al, 2000).
Statistics demonstrating the high frequency of traumatic experience in the lives of the homeless are replicated with distressing regularity throughout studies; across international borders the experience of trauma is demonstrated to permeate lives both prior to and during life on the streets. The relative paucity of interventions aimed at addressing this traumatic experience (Christensen et al, 2005) becomes all the more disturbing in light of this.
A number of studies have focused on histories of traumatic sexual and/or physical abuse among homeless women. A study in two cities in New England found that 89% of homeless women had experienced physical or sexual abuse in their lifetime (Goodman, 1991). Similarly high prevalence rates were revealed in a later study conducted in Massachusetts (Browne & Bassuk, 1997) which found that 92% of homeless women surveyed had experienced severe physical and/or sexual assault at some point in their lives; 60% of these by the age of 12 (Browne & Bassuk, 1997).
In a study of data collected from homeless individuals with co-occurring disorders admitted to the Seeking Treatment and Recovery Program (STAR) in Jacksonville, Florida, Christensen et al (2005) found that 79.5% of individuals evaluated acknowledged a history of either physical and/or sexual abuse. Of this population 100% of homeless women with co-occurring disorders had experienced a life altering traumatic event while 68.6% of homeless men also reported histories of traumatic experience.
fig. 2

X.

{Triptych}

[the only thing
god don’t like
is bad people]

~

[they say god only gives you what you can take]

~

[I don’t know,
I don’t think god’s sense of humor is very funny sometimes]
XI.

CHANGE MACHINE *

* Insert bills as shown
A: Where am I from?

A: Fairport
   f-a-i-r-p-o-r-t
   fairport, new york, one word

W: How long have you been here?

A: In Boston?

A: I came june....20th about, 22nd, this year 2000, i’ve only been here about not even 6 months, almost 6 months and i came to, ready, i’l tell
   and then if you have any other questions cause I, y’know
   i moved, um
   um,
   that’s insignificant
   so i came from NY
   um to Needham
   Needham, MA. To visit
   within 2 weeks, i volunteered at the Needham free public library. Only visiting. Ended up staying,
   my first apartment i got september 1st, on um
   in needham heights
   then i moved into a room
   in about 2500 square feet
   in needham
   almost just around the corner down the road around the corner
   and then the woman was an 88 year old, i don’t know...
   she grew up in Manhattan, special schools
   brilliant woman
   88 years old
   beyond measure, she was abusive, evil

W: towards you?

A: her daughter even said my mother, it’s not safe for you there, my mother’s emotionally and physically, not, she almost hit me, but she physically abused me by making me... like i was... oh it’s too long a story, anyway she kicked me out, for no reason,
   in the mean time i had just moved there accumulating things writer poet historian
   it’s needham’s tricentennial, 300 year celebration
   i’m a photographer i did all the photography
   and i’m a poet writer i started writing collecting little even spoons and stuff y’know, flowers, from the gala affair, y’know, in the meantime... she kicks me out, i moved all by myself,
   put all my stuff in a garage,
   millions of dollars worth of stuff,
all my children’s Christmas gifts, my best friend’s, my son, my other, he’s my best friend's son
she kicked me out and then she probably gave away all my stuff so then I have to start over, I get, have to sleep in her back yard under the constellations, falling stars, it was amazing...my three fish died
it was so cold
I had sleeping bags and I, you know I love to camp, especially in the middle of winter but, so then, I said, I have to go to Boston, um... I didn’t ever know how to ride a train except for in Canada

W: how old were you at this point?
A: I’m 49, it just happened
November, about November 1st, a little after November first, I had to shake her hand, she said if this isn’t out by Monday at 10 o’clock I’m taking it to the dump,
Everything I owned, all of my jewelry, I have a $5000 dress, she probably...I don’t know where it is, I don’t care
So then I come to occupy Boston, I was home for the first time

W: where’s home?
A: Fairport

My children are there, home for the first time in years upon years upon years and...
I knew exactly what was going on all of the time, took care of everybody, the police,
Everybody but I left before they they raided it and took it down they raided my tent
I had my raised birth certificate all my federal ID my purse my underwear (whispered) my coats I had fur coats I mean Neiman Marcus or however I mean beautiful coats shoes boots everything history beyond measure gone.
They raided my tent they took everything down I bounced before they, they raided it first, but then before they took occupy Boston down I left because I knew they were coming while everyone else who were the head of all what’s going on didn’t understand what was going to happen

W: how did you know?
A: because i serve god
i wish to be wise beyond my years and he grants it so i’m married to him

W: yeah

A: I gotta show you this
it’s called a friendship ring it was like less than $5

W: it’s beautiful

A: it’s the father and son, the trinity,
Eternal rings of love that never end, all interconnected
and (tears)
anyway, so that happens, i’m homeless on the streets doing drugs (whispered)
y’know like to get rid of my pain

W: which ones, can I ask?

A: i tried crack cocaine, like 4 times to take my pain away, i went to emergency rooms,
‘closed’, ‘sorry ma’am we’re closed’
i have a viral infection
all over
my whole body’s filled with it
because i was on the streets freezing
Sleeping with men because...i needed to survive and keep warm
Stealing food from people that were gluttons, but they denied me, to stay alive
while they have money in their poc... it was just crazy, so
then i went from occupy boston to the streets, to Rosy’s place, write this down, to
Rosy’s place, well st. francis first, Rosy’s place, Wood’s Mullen - they gave me ID,
from there to long island, from long island to pine street inn, from pine street in to
the best doctor i’ve ever met in my life
we were equals
in intelligence,
although he of course
was a little more
medically, technically correct
sent me here
yesterday
i haven’t even been here a day yet

W: how have you been here?
how have you found it here?

A: hm
that’s a multifaceted question and answer
how?
love
hate
good, evil
black, white
um
i’ll leave the rest to your brilliant mind
you speak for me because you’re, i wish i could speak like that me j’parle francais

W: oui?
where did you learn french?
A: hm fairport NY, buffalo NY, i have a bachelors of science degree dual certified, well i lost my certification, but dually certified in four years in special education and elementary education

W: wow, were you ever a teacher?

A: uuh, rochester city school district

W: for how many years?

A: oh, uh till conception, 8 months no, it was, yeah, january to... june
5 months
i moved to california against my wishes

W: why?

A: conceived my, cause my first husband who my children bear his last name unfortunately um Forced me to go i was married i have to follow my husband He’s a wolf in sheep’s clothing a pastor of the word of god who beat me over the head with a bible not literally but, he’d say and say ‘literally’ for me

W: ‘literally’

A: ahhhhh ooo my god, i love that, yeah he’d tell me that the bible says if i told you to scrub the floor with a tooth brush you would have to

W: did he make you do things you didn’t want to do?

A: oh, always, you’re body’s not your own it belongs to me he’d abuse me some much verbally emotionally psychologically spiritually that, i would still go in to him if he wanted me physically because it honored my god who i was really married to he was my introduction to christianity they asked me when i came here they said ‘what religion are you’ i said all religions i don’t adhere to a religion there isn’t just one and maybe there is but i seek the truth jesus said i am the way, the truth and the life and no one can go to the father but by me and it’s true by his blood he shed he was the perfect propitiation do you know what propitiation means?
W: i don’t know, what is it?
A: ok, god is an angry god, he hates sin, he creates life and death, good and evil
Christ, is the appeasement of his wrath
which equals propitiation
I don’t know what, I think I, I think I’m finished
W: you think you’re finished?
A: i don’t think i have anything more to say
W: that’s ok
A: do you think?
W: I think you probably have more to say, but you might not feel like saying it
A: I sure do but, what, I’ll give you three questions and you have to go but
W: why don’t you ask me a question?
A: wait, yes, would you like to meet somebody?
My sky
interchanges with yours,
so does my dove
now
it flies over yours,
I see two shadows
falling
in the oatfield.

- Bobrowski

J: he should be in here for christmas
A: is he still walking?
J: not very well, at least he wasn’t when I saw him
A: it’s a shame man
W: how long have you two known each other?
A: 7 years
W: wow
J: is that right, 7 years?
A: best friends man
J: how did you guys meet?
A: met him down at the 711
J: down at the aquarium there?
A: he said, ‘c’mon, i got a drink’
i said, Jose, I don’t know you
oh c’mon!
that’s how we met
he’s not cold, he’s not...?
J: no, he wasn’t when I saw him, but it got colder last night so I bet he is now
the van’s still stopping by to see him every night so the van checks in on him each
night, as you know, but uh, we’ll get him in, we’ll figure out a way to get him in
A: I went to the hospital y’know
J: I know you were at MG
---
J: what was it
A: shaking
J: was it coming off alcohol?
A: shaking
J: did you get it so bad yo were seeing things as well or where you just shaking?
A: shaking
J: that’s tough isn’t it
A: yeah
J: so how long, you met him 7 years ago, so how long have you been outside?
A: long time
J: longer than that huh, wow
A: so tonight it’s going to snow
J: it’s going to snow tonight so this is the place to be
A: wow
ahhhh
J: so you’ve been out there a long time, do you ever go to shelters?
no, you don’t like them?
A: I don’t like shelters
J: you never see Jose in a shelter
A: Jose, he don’t like shelters
W: why, what is it you don’t like about them?
A: I don’t like em
J: too many people, or?
A: ------
W: but you and Jose stick together?
A: yeah, i’m going to go and see him now
W: You’re going to go and see him? try to get him to come in
A: yeah, he got food?
J: yeah, we took him food but he wouldn’t take it
W: he took some soup but said it was for a girl. does he have a girlfriend?
A: no, he don’t got no girlfriend, I know him
I know him by heart
I’m gonna see him now
J: you’re not leaving now are you?
You’re leaving today?
noooo, ok...
W: where are you going to go?
A: Jose
J: ok, and you’re feeling ok, you feel well enough to go?
ok, hey, stay a while, stay for christmas
we’ll get him in here, you stay
A: yeah
J: it’s cold, it’s going to snow tonight
W: why are you going back there?
A: i miss Jose
he’s my friend
W: i understand
A: he’s my brother
he miss me
W: yeah
A: y’know
i don’t know, maybe I’ll stay here for christmas, i don’t know
i don’t know
he got a lot of blankets?
W: he had three or four
A: oh good
W: yeah, does he have a phone?
no phone
A: nope. he try and get a house he don’t wanna get a house
W: why not?
A: can’t stand by himself
W: yeah, does he get lonely?
A: no, he can’t walk, move, y’know
it’s hard for him

W: so you guys look after each other
A: huh?
W: you guys look after each other
A: yeah, we watch together
I watch his back, he watch mine
he said, ‘I’m hungry’, I give him food
he don’t eat, he don’t eat too much
W: he doesn’t does he. no.
A: he don’t eat too much
he drinks a lot
W: yeah, I know
A: he drinks a lot
by the time i go there he’s drunk
W: yeah, you think so?
A: I know him
I know him, he’s drunk
W: do you guys ever fight when you’re drunk?
A: me and him? no way
W: yeah, you guys never argue?
A: ah, we have argument, then, we come back
W: yeah, you always come back?
A: we come back
we argument
I leave
he's looking for me
‘where he’s at?’
‘where he’s at?’
I said
‘I’m right here’
‘can’t see me?’
‘I’m right here'

    he’s ok
    he’s alright

W: he’s like your brother
A: he’s alright
A: I don’t know, maybe I’ll stay here for christmas, I don’t know
W: seems like a good idea, it’s going to snow
A: i know
W: yeah, it’s going to be cold tonight, it’s better to try and get him in than you out
A: yeah
you gonna see him tonight there?
you gonna see him tonight?
XIV.

Solitude
Once removed
Twice felt
'cause when I go out, I go out

Not far from me there's an old holler tree
Where you lay down a dollar or two
You go round the bend and you come back again
With a jug of that good ole mountain dew

They call it that ole mountain dew Lord Lord
and them that refuse it are few
I'll hush up my mug if you'll fill up my jug
with that good ole mountain dew

The preacher came by with his head up high
said his wife took down with the flu
And he thought that we ought just to give him a quart
Of that good old mountain dew

Well they call it that ole mountain dew Lord Lord
and them that refuse it are few
I'll hush up my mug if you'll fill up my jug
with that good ole mountain dew

My uncle Mort he's sawed off and he's short
he measures bout four foot two
But he thinks he's a giant when you give him a pint
of that good old mountain dew

- Willie Nelson (from an old Appalachian tune).
Let us consider the three great strata concerning us, in other words, the ones that most directly bind us: the organism, significance, and subjectification. The surface of the organism, the angle of significance and interpretation, and the point of subjectification or subjection. You will be organized, you will be an organism, you will articulate your body—otherwise you're just depraved. You will be signifier and signified, interpreter and interpreted—otherwise you're just a deviant. You will be a subject, nailed down as one, a subject of the enunciation recoiled into a subject of the statement—otherwise you're just a tramp. To the strata as a whole, the BwO opposes disarticulation (or ‘n’ articulations) as the property of the plane of consistency, experimentation as the operation on that plane (no signifier, never interpret!), and nomadism as the movement (keep moving, even in place, never stop moving, motionless voyage, desubjectification). What does it mean disarticulate, to cease to be an organism?

- Deleuze & Guattari.

Vulnerability is predicated upon the primacy of a bounded body positioned in relation to others. There is a relative order of value intrinsic in this notion; to be vulnerable has come to infer, in popular usage, the desire for preservation in the face of actual or virtual threat. Primacy has been placed on the potential for damage inherent in the state of vulnerability; efforts attend to prevention, ensuring that that which is vulnerable should not be brought into relations which would take it up into a new forms threatening the integrity of participant components.

The agentive power of the object to which one is vulnerable escapes it to pull in; a recursion of sorts. It is through this recursion that the vulnerable is captured. The qualitative nature of the recursion dictates the resonance which comes to bear through and between beings. One could propose that this qualitative spectrum is what structures the outcome of vulnerability. The nature of capture is perhaps what stands between love and subjugation.\(^{41}\)

\(^{40}\) Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; 159

\(^{41}\) I am reminded here of Critchley’s thoughts on Love; ‘Love is nothing more than an activity of making a transgressive pledge, which is an openness to receive what is not in your power’ (2010; 70). ‘Love - to go back to the idea of annihilation - is the attempt to eviscerate oneself in relationship to another who possesses you, but whom you don’t possess’ (2010; 73).
A body-without-organs may be an articulation of being which eschews the potential for vulnerability as, in the dissolution of the distinction between interior/exterior, participation in(as) the plane of immanence precludes the notions of self/other upon which the negative connotations of vulnerability rely. If being becomes solely relational, with no hierarchical drive for the preservation of those components identified as *my* being, then otherwise ‘damaging’ assemblages may be viewed as shifting webs of proximity and connection in which constituent elements are condensed to new and novel forms. Alcoholism, aside from a focus of preservation on the self can be viewed as a coming-into-relation with Spirit (Spirit of grain) which provokes a new assemblage of being. As in all relations, there is something of the relata that escapes; the capture is not total.

In the instance that capture is total the constitutive elements cease to exist in their contemporary form. This may be the moment when the body is taken up by alcohol (a becoming-Spirit). Such becoming is manifest in way the points of waves on the ocean are taken up by sunlight:

Here at the very tips, total capture; the becoming light of water.

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42 Deleuze & Guattari state; ‘The body without organs is a question of making a body without organs upon which intensities pass, self and other—not in the name of a higher level of generality or a broader extension, but by virtue of singularities that can no longer be said to be personal, and intensities that can no longer be said to be extensive. The field of immanence is not internal to the self, but neither does it come from an external self or a nonself. Rather, it is like the absolute Outside that knows no Selves because interior and exterior are equally a part of the immanence in which they have fused.’ (1987; 156)
W: how old were you when you came here?

S: well. chelsea was about 9 when i got out to boston
i lived in Quincy

W: is that your daughter?

S: and uh, like i said
that was around 911
then i stopped paying my bills
i says, what’s the deal?
y’know i don’t get any i didn’t stop paying my bills i didn’t have check
so i really didn’t have any except for electricity
and that kept getting cut off
and we kept turning it back on

but i spent almost ten years
in the burger king doorway
right in front of fleet center
i died over 8 times
went right back
i mean you gotta keep going

W: how did you die?

S: um
between alcohol poisoning
the cold
the,
being allergic to the emergency blankets
the living in the doorway, having to walk back and forth
i mean all the elements
included
Pine street inn; ‘It’s like something out of the wild west’

Heavy bodies and gaunt faces. The spaces people choose for beds; pressed against walls, blanket bundles beneath illuminated ‘EXIT’ signs. Later on the street a man passed out on the steps of a house, legs splayed, belly up to the sky. Passers by must think him dead and so appear not to see him at all.

The neatly trimmed facial hair of a junkie and his companion who despises ‘The Homosexuals’, ‘The Homeless’.

Five donuts a gift from a guy outside 711; he goes into great detail describing their flavors. Good deeds accompanied by too many words.

Later Dan, so long off his HIV meds, shadowed by suited man who is explaining to him why he must quit drinking.

‘Who was that?’

‘They’re co-dependent’

Outside 711 too many voices to be heard. Katy with fresh scars on her arm, heavy eyelids;

‘I’ll be your man, I’ll take care of you’.

The touch of hands coming to meet my wrist. When the kind AA hostess checked me all the way through to BOS from my stand-by flight in Portland I laid my hand on hers in thanks. No resonance in the flesh and I was left only with a sense of my own singularity and the lingering image of her silver airplane angel broach.
S: How it happened for me? well, this one is a winner i got a special gift, from god, some sort of nautical navigational understanding of where the enemy is.

W: ok

S: ok, so, i lived I came from Cian went through all these other, um hignham, um, hingham learning center, all that and got into um, german town lived in german town for i say about 6 years, and all of a sudden y’know, when 911 came i’m laying in my bed, having a nice satin box, i’m throwing it out of the window. I’m like something is very wrong here. Somebody needs to fucking listen up. I got nobody to tell. I’m in a room! in the middle of nowhere! And when i wake up in the morning, so the black box is missing ...

W: which black box is this?

S: the one from the plane that hit the building and ever since then i’ve been able to target every terrorist that came in

W: you’ve been...?

S: able to target every terrorist that’s come in

W: ok

S: and i've been there and i get, of course, in big trouble, and i end up going to jail because i happen to be making a big stink about something that i know nothing about.

W: right
S: and it keeps going on
and i’m like,
what the fuck?
I mean
and y’know
these things on TV
these things are the weirdest things.
I can interpret something that nobody else can interpret
and i get this thank you over the TV
and i’m like
‘oh, isn’t this befitting!’

W: yeah

S: and i’m like
but there’s still no help abroad, for me.
But a thank you.

W: and they say thank you to you?

S: right

W: have you always had this gift?

S: i don’t know,
in manner yeah

W: since you were a child?

S: yeah

W: how did it manifest itself when you were a child
what did you feel?

S: well, how it manifested when i was a child, was um,
i ran away from home because my sister was trying to kill me

W: why was she trying to kill you?

S: i have no clue
hahaha
to be honest with you
i don't know
and so
dad told me
go play on the highway
so i went and played on the highway
it was like a radar device
i could tell you where any cop was at any time
you know
there it is
you better slow down blah blah blah blah blah
before their radar boxes even came on

i’m like
I don’t know

And they call it something special and it’s no big deal to me anymore
I’m just so tired of it
I don’t care anymore
I just want to go home
I’m tired
I’ve had 4 children
Everyone wants my fucking kids
They want to raise them
They want to give them
They want to do this
But fuck me

So I’m just tired of it
Sick of it
And then when it comes to me
I get the short end of the stick
And I become the bad guy
And I didn’t do anything
So I don’t know what’s the matter

It’s just a mess

And I just want to give up
I just want to give up

There’s no room for me
There’s not
There’s room for everybody else

And every time I get somewhere
I could be happy
Somebody demolishes it

I’m just tired

W: I know
I’m sorry

S: Too pretty
Too fucking smart
Too strong
Deleuze, in his exploration of the artwork of Francis Bacon, proposes that the scream demonstrates a ‘coupling of forces’; both the perceptible form of the scream and the imperceptible force that makes one scream. The scream inheres in a body, but it is a relational moment of becoming-proximate which renders duplicity in sensation and the invisible visible. The resonant co-presence of bodies collapses in the moment of expression; the scream is the singular exertion of self in both defiance and recognition of coming-into-relation with. In depicting the scream Bacon aims at rendering visible not spectacle, but

43 Deleuze, 2002; 52
sensation. As viewers we are spared the immediacy of the horror to which the subject of the painting reacts, however the resonance conveyed is perhaps more haunting. Echoes are the presence of absence.

The scream is the vocalization of a relational resonance registering proximity. This can not be viewed as a lineal temporal unfolding but a collapse, infolding to condense a new formation. Proximity in this instance should not be taken to indicate nearness in location, nor the ‘physical’ presence of relata, but instead that moment in which the infolding of exteriority collapses distance. Thus proximity/resonance and relationality can be be viewed as co-occurring registers, each constitutive of the moment in which bodies are taken up into new constellations.

The constitutive elements of a relation need not be physically present to be granted ontological status as an object/body or being with which relations are formed. The virtual crowds. The night falls. The day swims.

And what of emptiness? We can consider the possibility that the voice screams at absence, or further has been employed as a locator device in search of resonance. Perhaps, like a bat’s echolocation this scream spreads through silence searching for resonant bodies. This of course is a relationality of another form; that resonance of absence which must be a presence.

Resonance collapses distance, and it is this collapse of distance which inheres in the body. At the moment that spatial collapse gathers relations into the body that which existed in the realm of the virtual has become actual (here I refer to Massumi’s formulation of the virtual/actual in which the virtual comprises the realm of potential, some dimension of which will come to be actualized). This transformation may be enacted, enforced or result from a process of slippage or realization. It is in the precarity of this assemblage and the relational properties of its constitutive elements that vulnerability resides.

A bringing into relation with transverses bodies and surfaces; in resonant contagion we are brought into a relational moment with the body subject through a body of art. Deleuze refers to the language of the scream as an ‘analogical language’, one which would be a language of relations, consisting of ‘expressive movements, paralinguistic signs, breaths
and screams, and so on.” In this he rejects the notion of analogical communication founded on resemblance and digital communication founded on code in favor of a formulation of ‘sensible (sensual) resemblance’.

Resonance evades the aesthetic and reductive framing discussed by Desjarlais via Derrida. Following Desjarlais’ assertion that the homeless ‘can be felt too much’ I am aware of the risks of a reductive containment which may be enacted in the framing of unstable forms. The ‘excess of meaning’ proposed by Desjarlais to be effected by the presence of homeless individuals (or, I would propose - alterity in any form) drives a desire, born of the need to comprehend and revulsion in the face of overabundance, to situate subjects within an architecture, ‘a rhythm or structure that gives form and meaning to the formless.’ (The parallels which may be drawn between this and housing are interesting to note). Thus, to house individuals (conceptually) enacts an encasing which is protective, not for those so ‘safely’ contained, but for the being for whom to presence of the Other is a demand to attend to excess from which one recoils.

Citing Derrida, Desjarlais urges an awareness of the aesthetic retreat from excess; ‘There is an excess here, a surplus, a superabundance which opens an abyss. The imagination is afraid of losing itself in this abyss, and we step back.’ The stepping back is an aestheticizing of the threat, making it no threat, only a representation, a fiction. Thus we fall easily into a ‘poetics of homelessness that deploys the perceived qualities of animality, death, and darkness with an aesthetic of ruins.’

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44 Deleuze, 2002; 93
45 Desjarlais, 1997; 65
46 Desjarlais, 1997; 66
47 Levinas states that the presence of the Other instantiates an Infinite demand; ‘the face is present in its refusal to be contained. In this sense it cannot be comprehended, that is encompassed’ (Levinas, 1969; 194) thus, ‘it is not the insufficiency of the I that prevents totalization, but the Infinity of the Other’ (Levinas, 1969; 80)
48 Derrida, 1987; 128 quoted in Desjarlais, 1997; 67
49 Desjarlais, 1997; 65
The desire for comfortable comprehension drives the enactment of forms which situate the source of discomfort within a delineating frame acting either to reduce its contents (preventing escape and overflow) or to re-situate such contents at a distance which renders null the discomfort otherwise born of proximity. The attempt to construct an assemblage is born of the need to eschew this reductive framing. It cannot be totalizing for something is always absent from its rendering; something always escapes. This escape is the result, not of an abundance of the quantity of feeling, but of a ‘qualitative surplus’ (emphasis my own).\textsuperscript{50}

splinters;

What is caught in the voice? Something lingers of words long after their vibratory presence has ceased. Through the small bones of my ear resonance carries, I find another’s voice in me; that presence at no distance. This conversion of distance to intensity through resonance can be conceived of as the ‘the qualitative transformation of distance into an immediacy of self relation.’\textsuperscript{51} Voice haunts as echoes index the form of absence.

‘The struggle with the shadow is the only struggle’.\textsuperscript{52} Voice is the unfolding of collapse; it is the defiance of condensation. There is a reason why liberation is almost always celebrated, inaugurated, indexed by voice.

What is the connection between the voice and dying? How could I not honor your words? Here something is preserved. I cannot commit the violence of translation. The voice lays claim to the world; the selective work of consciousness laid out through lips to map the land of being.

\textsuperscript{50} Massumi, 2002; 217
\textsuperscript{51} Massumi, 2002; 14
\textsuperscript{52} Deleuze, 2002; 52
To let voice resonate; a need to do more than preserve - beyond the grasping attachments longing for continuity - a desire to let go. Flow may be a better verb here, one that does not suggest liberation from origin but a seeping beyond and the potential for the carving of new channels through momentum. Water, flowing will find a way.

And what of death? Word remains. To etch the world with voice. To write of beings is to write of the perishable; what is will be lost. The voice bleeds but can never to submitted to total capture; it is a dying that refuses death.
i just want to curl up and go to bed, get rid of this pain, take my medicine, get better, get stronger, go home, live my life without somebody living it for me, making my decisions for me, telling me how i should feel tyranny

if i had to spread my blood over it to get rid of it i would that’s how serious i am if that’s what it takes I’ll do that.
S: nothing compared to mom
not even his race cars
nothing compared to mom

W: and you?

S: i’m just a pretty little girl
from a beautiful marriage

W: did they try and find you?

S: yeah right!
they knew i was gone
i’d come back if i wanted to come back
i didn’t want to come back
i’m a lier according them

so let it it be

go find your way in the world

W: and so the men looked after you

S: yes

W: for how long?

S: god, till at least,
still today
this one just wont go away
and they’ve tried
some kind of job, i don’t know
i’m not very grateful for it

i’m even grateful for some of the worst things
i’m just not grateful for this/
    i find nothing in it
    nothing but pain

W: what are you grateful for?

S: i’m grateful for being alive
i’m grateful for people
i’m grateful that i don’t know
i make people smile
i make them feel that miracles are possible
i make them feel again
that there, that there is still something
and its not dead
    i’m grateful for smile on somebodies face.
i’m grateful to see an uplifted heart.
i’m grateful to lie my head on a clean pillow
and a blanket that came from god only knows where
but it was there
freshly laundered

so i’m grateful for my pink blanket
B: you know what, i should probably take my medicine like i’m supposed to like from my psychiatrist

S: yes

B: three Klonopin and three Klonodine a day and one Paxil
i always remember to take my Paxil because i notice if i don’t i do get a little wohoo y’know

S: have you been taking it or no?

B: no no I have been
but i don’t take the Clonidine and the my sister’s freaking me out
i just got off the phone with her a little while ago and she’s like just totally mental

S: well it’s hard to see someone you love y’know be..

B: well she’s got cirrhosis and i drank like way longer than she did but she drinks hard liquor i only usually drink beer i mean once a while i take a swig of vodka or whatever but that’s it like i mean i’m not going out buying half gallons of vodka like she does and she’s just um she doesn’t care anymore and it’s sad, cause she’s got three grand babies, you know what I mean? plus her youngest is 16 and her oldest is 31

W: do your other siblings drink as well?

B: oh, we’re all a bunch of drunks, we’re from a long line of drunks my grandfather and my grandmother on my father’s side, they were both drinkers my father was a drunk my older sister...that’s the one I’m talking about i’m really worried about it though because she has cirrhosis in fact we were in andrew house together right now, listen they gave her 17, what do they call them?

S: librium

B: librium, they gave her 17 of the right, like, within a few hours, so she was, she fell and hurt her foot and her knee they had to drain her knee, right they put a needle here, a needle here, and one in the front
and she said on both sides it was just like water but the one on the front was all puss
and you know, all like, infection or whatever
and then um, she started throwing up blood
now,
they gave me three libriums at three o’clock
and three more at 6 o’clock
so i slept through all of this,
y’know what I mean
i never even got up
except to use the bathroom or whatever
and um
i go ‘where, where’s my sister?’
like like
‘where’s my sister man?’
‘where’d she go?’
and they go
oh they had to take her out by ambulance because she’s throwing up blood
now she said three um,
last christmas she was in detox
it’s it’s just since my mother died
now last night she starts
and i’m like
I shouldn’t ask
---
well i didn’t ask her anything anyway
---
you know what she’s angry
she’s angry because my mother died
and now she tells me my father molested her
and molested my younger sister
and ‘did he molest you?’
and i go
not that i know of unless it’s a block
i mean if he
and they both look like him
and i look like my momma
so if anybody was going to be molested i would think he would try and molest me
because i look more like my mother
i don’t know
it’s just a sad story y’know what i mean
sucks but
i don’t know

i’m still waiting for my friggin son so i can wear this dress

W: i was just looking at it, it’s beautiful

B: yeah, but i need a belt
i just wasn’t something loose though that hangs
not something tight that i look like a bail of hay tied in the middle
I wish to talk with a spider,
I want her to weave me a star.

- Neruda

Sadness is itself a capture; it takes hold of me, I am immovable in it. The viscosity of being changes. Sadness is a resonance. But still, something escapes.

Some part of the voice attests to this escape; it takes flight. Bataille states; 'Ecstasy is communication between terms (these terms aren't necessarily defined), and communication possesses a value the terms didn't have: it annihilates them. Similarly, the light of a star (slowly) annihilates the star itself.'

To attend to escape may be to attend to a process of loss or a form of dying. That escape should be both the process of living and of dying harks to the epistemological value that I ascribe to paradox. Paradoxes, having no opposite cannot be inverted - there is no counter measure which would render the sum equal - thus there is no absolute solution (from the Latin *solutio*; to ‘loosen’, ‘unfasten’, ‘dissolve’) to a paradox. Perhaps this is why nets hold true in water.

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53 On the capture which is emotion, Massumi writes; ‘Formed, qualified, situated perceptions and cognitions fulfilling functions of actual connection or blockage are the capture and closure of affect. Emotion is the most intense (most contracted) expression of that capture - and of the fact that something has always and again escaped. Something remains unactualized, inseparable from but unassimilable to any particular, functionally anchored perspective. This is why all emotion is more or less disorientating, and why it is classically described as being outside of oneself, at the very point at which one is most intimately and unshareably in contact with oneself and one’s vitality.’ (Massumi, 35)

54 Bataille, 1988; 30.
I have spoken of vulnerability as both essential and contingent; a quality that is universal yet inheres in bodies as result of relations - the weave of worlds. Navigation, structured by the drive to certain forms of relationality, is both product and producer in the cartographic becoming of being. Despite careful steerage, we may consider the possibility that resonance (the infolding of relations to an immediacy of self relation) enables one to be ‘taken up’ into forms of relationality aside from will. The moment when worlds collapse into bodies; the weight of sadness, the glimpse which cannot be shaken. Shocks carry. Waves sound and resound.

[Resonance is the tendency of a system to oscillate at a greater amplitude at some frequencies than at others. These are know as the system’s resonant frequencies; at these frequencies, even small periodic driving forces can produce large amplitude oscillations, because the system stores vibrational energy.]55

There can be no final word here.
In place of closure, escape (infinity)56; let it bleed. Please.

Be vulnerable.
Let the resonance carry.

.............

55 Crowell, 2008-11.

56 On ‘Infinity’ Libertson states; ‘For the idea of exteriority which guides the search for truth, is possible only as the idea of the Infinite. The conversion of the soul to exteriority or the absolute other of the Infinite is not deducible from the identity of the soul, because it is not proportionate to this soul. The idea of the Infinite does not proceed from ME [Moi: the self], nor from a need within the Self which precisely measures its gaps [vides]. In it the movement proceeds from the pensé [the thing thought] and not from the thinker’ (1982; 215)
can i stop there please?
do you mind?
before they really bury me
please
before they really really bury me
look what they did to the last one

which?

jesus

look what they did to him
what the hell do you think they’re going to do to me?

there’s two sides to every story
there’s a good and there’s a bad
they’re equal
there is no better than the worst
there is no fair without unfair
there is no equal

and if that makes sense good luck
Appendices:

Meister Francke; ‘Man of Sorrows’. (c1430).

‘He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.’

- Isaiah 53
B: what can I do for this though, 
look at this 
it comes and go though 
if i don’t sleep 
i get it worse 

S: yeah 
that’s kind of common 

B: but you know what, i had two broken cheekbones 

S: and i think now, because of some of the structural abnormalities now of your facial 
bones because of what’s happened to you before, you’re probably, because of, you 
know when people get tired and get bags under their eyes, your cheek, because of 
the way it’s shaped now, i think you’re going to get that, it’s going to look a little 
sunken 

B: what can i do for it though? 
like i’ve been watching different things on TV, they said like take two spoons out 
your refrigerator 

DS: It seems to me from all that you’ve been saying that in the end what matters most to you is not an immediacy in the work’s reference to reality, but a tension between juxtaposed references to different realities and the tension between a reference to reality and the artificial structure by which it’s made.

FB: Well, it’s in the artificial structure that the reality of the subject will be caught, and the trap will close over the subject-matter and leave only the reality. One always starts work with the subject, no matter how tenuous it is, and one constructs an artificial structure by which one can trap the reality of the subject matter that one has started from.

DS: The subject’s a sort of bait?

FB: The subject is the bait.

- David Sylvester & Francis Bacon, (1975; 180).

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d;

rapture

‘Rapture’; “to be caught up”

from the middle Latin raptura (“seizure, rape, kidnapping”)

deriving from the Latin raptus (“a carrying off”)
W: so, i go to sleep on the plane, and i wake up in london
A: i hope...
W: yeah so do i, i hope it’s safe
A: don’t worry, even if anything happens to you i’ll still see you
i’ll see you
y’know
god like everybody
the only thing god don’t like is the bad people
for you are good people
i can see in your face
the bad people, i can read people’s minds
i see people
i can see how they look
W: you can see it?
A: i can read people’s minds
like this
i see whether a person is real good or real bad
in their face
in their mind
it’s hard man
y’know
nobody have that..
god give me that
y’know the strength
W: yeah
A: nobody have this strength what i got
only one give me that strength was him
when i see that person
i can read the person’s mind
i see what that person thinks
W: yeah
A: i can tell what’s a good people and bad people
W: what do you see?
A: huh?
W: what do you see in people?
W: have you always been able to see since you were a child?
A: well...
W: or did you learn?
A: well, i went to church and god gave me this strength because i went to the church
when i was a little boy
A: no, there’s too many people no have this strength
Sadness
you burn me
like a child
I run from your hot shadows.
These black stones
weigh nothing
but sink all the same.
Bibliography


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