Two Drink Minimum

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by

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two drink minimum

everything I do is a joke
and God is on stage
doing stand-up
pointing his finger at me
    laughing
    uncontrollably
while the audience
is relieved
he isn’t wagging
his stubby fat finger at them
the truth is I stutter the truth

Calm was the day every woman adored a fascist—but behind the wedding couple, a glass harbors the meniscus of vacant sky—to be born woman is to know. I have never achieved full-lung power. And—since there is no known cure—I drink. Blessed be Death! For he created God who hates us for wanting things he could not provide. Strange dogs at night, we sat together one summer's end. The canoe went to pieces on the beach. Like the river, wine comes in at the mouth in all kinds of weather. I find that when I am rich, privileged and drunk, I break stones like a pauper. So, give all your money away. Enjoy a sober moon and the falling-down silence. Alone, I am more likely to be found. I can’t quit or hide—the neon points to my most human parts—and the divorce will soon be final.
seawater temperatures

every now and then
I roll your name around
with my tongue
it lulls like a floating boat
inside my mouth
but after awhile
I try to knot it like a cherry stem

other times when parlor tricks
snuff out their magic
or narcotics fade in the sun
I feel that word
click the insides of my teeth
crackling like a jackhammer
on sizzling concrete

when at last I think
the flames have died
it hums electric
– a downed power line –
after our last pacific coast storm
on the road to Santa Barbara

the sign says 101 San Francisco
but I'm on my way to see
another saint
where ghosts wine and proselytize
into a finely aged panic

we idle in Ventura

it's but a single lane ahead
expect delays
bag-packed-Monday-drunk
commissariats stare
over a left shoulder pacific
a larboard ocean heartbeats bleak
small tremors on a cerulean
taut plastic tarp

but I'm north bound
brooding

let us brake into reduced speed
limits

see this single roadside flower
fair-haired stalwart bud with lungs
full of exhaust

I'm lost behind the wake

a dense street yellow
corpse-drag of line
the only bright burst
upon the sunless gravel
where shadows flank the weeds
and stone-light makes us sleepy
oblivious of god-kept time
we are neighbors on this horizontal sky

After sundown, you are on your throne muttering. I let you watch me undress. My shoulder flickers nude in city lights.

I am constructed with sexy steel beams bathing in a pool of stars—a bridge freeway hard late night. You aggregate behind me building curves and vectors, eyeing the distance between the hash marks on my lower back.

Let's make believe our celebrity—but until then—scald me. Drink my overpass.
sea tangle

when I lean over
the railing and peer
beyond the shadows
dwelling where watery
specters make believe

the pier juts out
like a knife stabbing
the Pacific and I want
to hold its hand

then the wind lashes
the strands of hair
that strangle like seaweed
the kind that enchain your
ankles during a swim

or is it a grave siren who
pulls you into the depths
like an anchor or
a malignant tumor

there is beauty in the sea
the daily baptism
and sacrifice of the shore
I'm made of water

I only feel real
when it is cold outside
and prefer to be exposed

when the sunshine burns
and evaporates my attention
all that remains is a trace outline
the elemental skeletons of missing atoms

at night the river inside me
sleeps when I'm awake

forgive me for not closing my eyes
they need to be flooded

forgive me for not spinning
and dreaming—whirling the diluted
daylight delusion around my finger

now the fluid in my knees fidgets
like a girl in a glass box
waiting to dance for money

but the ice in the dispenser is stuck
the pipes have rusted
it's time for a new machine
eavesdropping at Skosh Monahan’s Steakhouse & Pub

when she said
she was going in for
electroshock therapy
I wondered how much
more energy has to be
wasted on her
clocksmith

I want to touch you
horologist
hero through responsibility
relajero

What language works?
I want to be your curator
artisan on the dial
maintain our secret
escapement
and your mainspring

Do you speak in time?
a black eye hangs
over your prime meridian
I’m sprawled
threadbare
all our components
on the floor
prophetic conception

dreams of color have grown
tiny feet and take dance lessons
by the salted coastline streets
da rose, a thorn on your tongue
in our great reign of stars
with tails like fish
head of a wooden vessel
sacred as suspicion I creak
torn roots spring
from my soiled fingers
heat from tattered clothes
not drown in my torn tears
use your compass with pursed lips
steer toward these seemingly
stitched together flags
wave victory over
our long-legged embrace
I am as naked as the moon
afternoon have faith
in your direction
use me in the night
home front

You say I’m as useful
as a lawn mower on Astroturf
when I ask what would happen
if we lost our electricity.
You swear I’d sit in the dark crying.
No. I’d simply ignite the useless
candles that decorate our every room.
I pretend our dogs aren’t barking
at a locked door and stare green-eyed,
suspicious of the fly that moves easily
through a cracked window.
I focus upon wings that strike
the light like brilliant little fists.
Sun shatters a nose-streaked pane
while I sit jealous of AWOL men
who simply abandon their duty.
I wouldn’t mind dodging this
draft through the window.
The dogs and I would be just fine.
Neuropathy, isn't it sexy?

Take a look at myelin sheath.
My impulsive electrochemicals, you have some nerve
when you make me tingle.
Ode to Bullshit

I'm sorry. The moon is a dumpster holding all our misdirected dreams. A secret god lives inside my head who knows the longitude and latitude of all missing socks & that set of keys to a Saturn I sold a long, long time ago. T. S. Eliot had his Triumph and rode it bombastic like my father's motorcycle. The Germans convey their bockmist (which is just plain old billy-goat shit). You say les conneries (a fancy fucking French-way to say deceit). Oh, please. The moon is just a dumpster holding all our misdirected dreams.
the cunning linguist

he holds degrees
in linguistics
embraces them like children
who have no homeland
a first generation of half languages
bicurious tongues that must learn
in the same heartbeat
how to pulsate their Rs
and then slaughter
them completely

she wears an undeniable
American voice
it cannot compare
when his native tongue
resuscitates ancient traditions

Classical Latin
laps at the shore
between thighs
in full discourse
in lingua franca

Spanish grammar
amazes when
she is able to correctly
conjugate the verbs
they nightly reenact
I am the bottom of this pint

warped like the rings
on the bar
it’s an infinite moon cycle

I snuff out monuments
cigarette between fingers
charming anecdote
smile and free drinks

inebriated tongue in throat
like a well-
wasted void

let me drink the sand
as you polish castles

we build so we can destroy

passed out
forehead pressed
against the wall
the way our palms should

lean closer
let me squint you out
his dwelling place

No matter what
you believe,  
God does not live
between my thighs.  
You cannot preach
a Sunday service in
these unclean sheets.  
From the pulpit
you yank my hair
pull my arms
behind my back
and deep throat
your gospel
into my soul.  
I fake spirituality
as you betray with
a Judas tongue.  
No matter what
you believe,  
God does not live
between my thighs.
Santa Monica

North of the pier on the sandy steps
I shake like a timberline tambourine.
It’s another drum circle Sunday—
Frank Sinatra eyes & sex on stage.
With an appetite for dynamite sticks,
we fuck in a pew & spread religious
rites, but can’t see through this burnt
halo encircling the city. Tonight—
I fill the wine glass with fire while
our moon slivers the paper cut sky.
When you just can't get sober enough,
speak to me in pick-up truck tongues.
Spill your savior like a drunk with a red
Dixie cup. Vanity plates travel this split-
end highway. Go be a stranger.
I keep losing things

Keys

Sunglasses

People I love
heroine

she loved the drive down a freshly
paved Pacific Coast Highway—
her walk through the wetlands
to pick the orange poppies

she married a man with eyes wide
dilated in love—the way asphalt
adores the heat of the sun
and shimmers in delirium

she never saw the black tar trail
he wondered upon disoriented
she thought he was asleep dreaming
of mountains—not falling from a peak
small talk

He said: It's been too long since I considered the universe
and if the sky clears and the sun comes out,
I’ll hang myself.

So, I'll bargain
with God to keep the sun and all
the stars invisible for just a while longer.
the night before the super bowl

What's your prediction for tomorrow's game?
(Give me a reason to believe again.)
I'm sorry for the woman I became.
Eye contact is a privilege not a sin.

Lost in this empty pillow talk once more,
finished before you finished the Bordeaux.
The sorrowful watch ocean eat the shore.
(I'm talking to myself. Hello? Hello.)

Loving you is like drinking awful gin,
and if drinks cure my nightmares all the same,
tell me, how long until the panic begins?
I'm sorry for the woman I became.

And so, you sit there smoking that cigar,
I'll lock the key and throw away the door.
another seaside suicide

She kneads the shore behind her back.

The tide of cyanide and sun on her face suffocates. Envy the water lullaby lapping around ankles. Envy the gull pecking at putrid seaweed. Blush on her cheeks is ultraviolet violent. Water asks why flesh falls and disintegrates easily, unlike sand.

There is no distance between god and water.
lead foot

Storm weathered silver Buick
heavy as pewter whelps
dust along the road.

A salty tributary,
even sweat drips in fatigue.

His voice unfiltered,
a cigarette break between lips,
ash the remnants of bankrupt futures.

Man with feet as flat as the sea
when the sun hangs.

Gestures replace dialogue.
fishing

Below this lighthouse built of ghost
a black horse compresses its weight
impatiently from one shoe to another.

I crack my knuckles like paper, a net cast
out in front of me, but you threw away
testament verse by verse. A bird now pecks
a crust of bread I tossed out because I was
afraid of carbs and contended that the wind
was hungrier. After you removed the hand
that shielded my face, you bled—said He’d tied
all four chambers of your heart in a sailor’s knot.

I’ve stopped smoking. I’d rather burn
in the sun—I’ll take my chance with death
but your breath still reeks of cancer
and we will never speak again.
like a poem without voice

All the men are aborting little sunshine jehovahs while the women sit expectant, not innocently, but like a white electric car plugged into charge—the windows rolled half down with the first drops of rain already falling in them. (Don’t you ever wonder why the cities aren’t littered with dead pigeons?) In this moment, publicity sells like talk therapy and botox. Don’t worry—none of the departed will spill your dirty little secret. The tattered newspapers may bash skulls, but let us live like the living, spread legal drugs out on our coffee table, take an inventory. Why not? Condensation already formed on the whiskey glass.
Occipital Tumor

She inserted the needle
when I realized that
in less than ten minutes
I would be strapped
face-down onto a table
strangers cutting my head
open like a tuna can.
The anesthesiologist
asked if I was ready.
Weightlessly tied down
with a mouth made of metal,
I couldn't command
the machine to function.
Lead bones framed my body.
I became a sinker tied
to a fishing line and drowned
in the Pacific. I tasted seawater
on my lips. The doctor
handed me a tissue. When
my vision cleared, two stone
pylons stood in the place
of my parents. It was like
looking into calm water,
reflecting what I had thought
all along. An electrical pulse
neurotransmitted through
brain and the anesthesiologist
asked if I was ready. Then,
my world dissolved like salt.
numbness and spasticity

There is no specific cure. Instead, I travel this Möbius highway like a lure stuck to a stronger fish. Tomorrow, acrimonious stares will be applied like the Fentanyl patch I attempt to hide my opiate avalanche. An inner arm’s a Litmus test to object or acquiesce. I fear not cardiac arrest, death, or simply my body undressed.
ode to injury

I'm at the crosshairs between
impulsive and calculated
up stream we carry in mind and memory
white water runs dry
skeleton clouds in a sky of mother
and father in the ground
dilapidated childhood
torn down
devastated
eyes smacking
pens thrashing
paper heavenly and
hellish visions in eternal cycle
a building crumbling and rising song
where oh where are you going
spoken words tattoo
my thin skin
reaching bone
splintering marrow like untied shoes
beautiful beat
beat poet
hearts beats
nothing left to purpose
my body in
disjointed strophes
don’t borrow trouble

don’t borrow trouble
the sky is a bruise and she’s a little mentally ill
right now Everyone born in LA is well adjusted
but a Pacific moon pulls the lunatics like riptide
she’s mad and tired of all the Jordan Catalano’s
bathing in their perception of meaninglessness
like sex on camera where men stand around
holding their booms as she simulates orgasm
but now she’s so lost she is doing a line of milk
forgetting the Special K stashed in the cupboard
this is our story

things that seem random are not
draw your attention to all
unfinished business and specific
interpretations packed into this u-haul
ditch the boxes in an empty storage unit

my subconscious hoards memories
like an out of work musician
it is time to Dance

forget it—let the ants frame the studs
that assemble our gingerbread house
I am safe while making plans
you won’t leave me in the cold
syndrome

you refuse to help
or modify my workload
and when it sinks in
each step I know gravity
locks me in the full
upright position
but we won't be landing
we circle the tarmac
and I'm caught
between electric storm clouds
and the broken nerve endings in my arm
I carry mostly dead weight
nothing works like it should
I'm not to be in large crowds
I'm dead like water
and from what I can remember
water is fucking heavy
when you go backpacking
you throw out
most nonessentials
like my memory
a line of buoys floating
between the swim lanes
when I would lie on my back
tangle my toes around the line
my eyes above water like an alligator
I felt so light
happy even
and alone
dead arm

the doctor said
neuropathy

(which I think it
means it's dead)

I suppose I’m sitting
Shiva

but don’t know
which words are said

I bet
that at the funeral
all my friends will cry

at least it's just my arm

(and

not my dog
who died)
I surrender

I wave the white pillowcase under my head. I will not get out of bed or shower. I haven’t been alone for weeks. I will pull the sheets over my head and pretend to drown.

I can’t sleep so I will just lie here and pretend—make believe that I am young faking illness.
Four suns hung in the sky

yesterday afternoon, while I waited to play a game of chess.
Water hung from a tree bladder like blood dripping from the moon.

A black horse saddled and bucking.
The master fallen with a broken leg.
Pity the brown grass. Like dust, the crowds of sinners gather.

My mirror is empty too exhausted to speak, but the prisoner is ready to confess.
The truth is the gin bottle is empty.

The priests are all actors—a troupe of fools in a bawdy play.
If I juggle three rocks I can pretend they are falling stars.

Instead, I have a vision—a barefoot child, brown little feet, wading through the silent eye of a raining pond.
She knows what move I make next.
**Kokpar**

for Christy Halcolm

From her periphery the horses look like motorcycles—and outside the van, a band of Kazakh men dangerously wield a violent silence, quickly arching out of their saddles. The leaning doesn’t harm the animals. But, when one man shifts, another charges an unsuspecting horse’s side. The most sadistic are boys.

One spits on his horse. Another lashes out—one boy deals his horse a dozen blows while he chokes up the reins—bloated winter eyes atop the dirt-packed lot. The Lada’s tires skid on their hind legs. The ice groans beneath.

Inside the trunk, a goat. He wrenches it and dumps it on the snow like iron. Hog-tied, it doesn’t struggle. Several boys dismount and gather round. Horses grimace.

Ectoplasm of grimy ice corrupts—or is it just another foul machismo? With a manliness to brandish, they snatch, clamp down upon its horns and fling it. Far. The horses whine. The men argue and grab it once again, then toss it farther. Repeat.

And now, the driver has a kitchen knife. She bites her lip and tastes blood and cashmere. He begins to saw. Others hold it down. Each leg is broken just below the knee. The horseback men separate into teams. This is the game. Now, who will win the goat?

She strokes the ice as if it were a foal.
I carry the dead

When they resist,
I become diamond strong.
Binding is most difficult.

I drive out to the bay bridge,
dump them past the water’s edge
in a row of detestable buoys.

So, keep your trance-state
mutterings away from my ears,
they do no good here.
Reality

In night's muffled echo, I return resentful in this dead dream.


But when I open the four chamber doors, our city night beats with empty helicopter wings.

At Nana’s house: a chemo-stained Jesus. She wakes to white pleas. Take me.

Refused at first, body soft moment between treatments float clean.

I want to run my fingers across her rosy word residue. Please.
Let me stay here.
Lilith

I’m not a hoax
  hocus pocus
  hoc est corpus
begat between the legs
of the tree of death
in the land divorcing
Havilah and Kush

eclipsed by a martyr of a son
no one takes a gnostic seriously
or sacred prostitute created
by the left hand of God

throughout History
I’ve been surrounded by men
who fucking refuse
to think things through

they named me lady air
expatriate of Eden
redundant rib succubus

cuneiform inscriptions
slit my wrists
baptized in blood
from Edom’s Eucharistic
mountains soaked
with the hermetic magic

He promised a murder
of ravens but I have no wings
I will never be an angel
A Jostled Creed

I grieve a fraud,
fair Aphrodite,
curator of eleven at birth;

and in fetus heist, this zombie sun. Star gourd
ture because deceived by a holey merit,
torn of the surgeon fairy.
Smothered sunder conscious pirate
was suicide, dyed and berried.

Tea distended into gel.

Absurd at sea, Cousteau’s chewing gum in bed—
he suspended Armageddon.
Dismiss at first sight, land or Gibraltar, and falter Aphrodite’s
Ship Royale—trudge through sea king’s marriage bed.

Tel-Aviv arm’s control and submit.
Patrol the Basilisk perch.
Credit union complaints,
belligerence begins,
by election disembodys—
man and wife’s clever bait casting. Again.
storm drunk

on conflict

we would clatter

like a massive ship

we empty spirits and

bottle it all the while

playing the part

of a well meaning

man and wife

permit me to say

no word but action

bound forlorn our

firm limbs entangle

legless and tree

branched bodies

we wax and wane
the exquisite corpse will drink new wine but I've become obsessed with a game of hidden image

flipping through the pages of the book purchased at the Vancouver Art Museum
— I recede into each exhibit when
I swallow my sorrow like a ghost

when we dive head first into a glacial lake below The Chief of Squamish
— I swim out to a log in the shape of a whale
I am Jonah fleeing from your presence

in Keh Kait, we eat French toast and he has bacon but I wonder what you ate for breakfast or if you are driving undercover soliciting prostitutes — he is a great distraction until the morning

when I open your letter—I now know it is only when we are near the edge we see that our lines meet we are the folded paper in this game
Spine

I prefer the days
when every back
bone sings to me
(It's exhausting
trying to muffle
their screams)

Usually I enjoy
the melodic hip pop
when bending for
the morning news
but late at night
I imagine I'm
opening a new book

I've grown old
outside these bones
my tissue tearing
like wrapping paper
off my genetic gift
(I'm too tired
to be so young)

Yesterday I watched
a litter of pups
take a first breath
and realized how
easily I could
break their backs

If I were a lobster
(or even a Dungeness
crab) I'd wear
my spine on top
for everyone to see
my faults but
these secret lines
exist inside
and I haven't
a protective shell
at times like these
while sitting on the toilet
    I think of you
or at night during its darkest
because it reminds me of your mouth
    maybe
or is it the shit that comes out of it
then
    I remember when
you left the door open
and didn't bother to light a match
    sometimes I think
of when you said I wasn't a poet
well    this is a poem    asshole
definitions

The dog-eared corner laughs at the space between us. I grow like a chapter and I’m tired. You read too slowly. Maybe it is because it is too dark and the nightlight isn’t a lamp. Maybe it is because you need glasses. (You know, my sister has been nearly blind her whole life.) Or just, maybe it is that you are that stupid and will never understand what it all means.
in this dream

we rearrange furniture
but when I move the stove
the gas line separates
and flails around the room
like a bright yellow cobra
hypnotized I twist the nozzle
without much charm
in hopes it will secure
instead the fumes pulsate
rapidly and I know I will die
Superstition

The thing about poetry is
you don’t know a goddamned thing.

Our passion crawls underground
through the rotting wood of day.

Let’s do the broken body dance
—shuffle our feet to the prolapse

of your cardiac disrhythmia.

Evoke my love like a taxman.
Satisfy me like a corpse.

Let’s beat our cane with a god
of dyslexic blasphemy.

I’m sorry I forgot to iron your shirt,
but at least I left your hat on the bed.
it is time to paint in darkness

Pay the light bill in chopsticks & eat with illumination.
The landlord said you had until the end of the month.
Pomegranate seeds remind me of bloody semen —
I think I’m going to vomit. When things are damaged or broken, leave the words unspoken. Just use the broom — sweep with accidental meditation. My dragonfly feet tap in Morse code: three dits… three dahs--- three dits…
Still the limp dishtowel mourns — everything evaporates.
I can see below the floorboards and it’s high tide again.
Let’s take the cat for a walk down the pier and back.
An interloper in proper sequence — cut the crap & sin.
You have your spark plugs stretched out on the table — pretend it’s a blonde with nice legs. This kitchen was built on your family migration of maggots. What’s the aerodynamic problem with my clenched fist & why can’t I punch you in the face? I hate this new election and your stupid spider tattoo. All I want is to roll up the news & squash you. Flush the goddamn toilet.
Life is life and fun is fun, but it's all so quiet when the goldfish die.

It does not follow formal logic
an argument in which its conclusion
does not follow from its premises
an argument in which its premises
does not follow from its conclusion
follow an argument in its premises
which does form its not conclusion
which an argument does not follow
in its conclusion from its premises
an argument in which its conclusion
does not follow from its premises
invalid arguments logical fallacies
logical arguments invalid fallacies
arguments invalid fallacies logical
fallacies invalid arguments logical
invalid logical arguments fallacies
the argument is fallacious because there is a
disconnection
between the premise and the conclusion
the fallacious is argument
there is a
disconnection between
because the premise and the conclusion
because there is a premise
between the fallacious and the argument
the conclusion is
disconnection
the dis
connection
is fallacious because there is an argument
between the premise and the conclusion
we had sex on Skype

so awkward
I kept dropping
my iPhone

(remember
I almost held
your name
but then you
would drop
your towels
on the floor
after a shower
like I was
your maid)

now I can
only love you
at a distance

that’s why
things are better
left to Skype

I whisper
it’s better when
you disappear
like a corpse
or it’s like
prohibition
and I’m drunk
Yesterday

I went to Walmart
and subsequently lost
all faith in humanity
of staggering home drunk from the pub down the street

what would it look like
if you set god aflame

like sunlit dust particles
in a morning window

he says
he has seen
too many dead bodies
to care about
the aneurysm in my chest

it just isn't that big a deal
people die everyday

what makes you any different

he says
he loves me

hands twist my throat

I am just another
Persephone
but he doesn’t know

I've been busy
collecting more swords
than sunflowers
Carnival

What's the prize worth but
a fraction of what you spent?
We wait in line with our popcorn
and barbecue. For five minutes,
the Ferris wheel was at a standstill.
When we leave, the little man with
missing teeth smiles at us, but I have
decided I no longer want to be with you.
A Never Mind Election

Wound tight neurosis, the lost souls of middle-class worship the rhetoric of the republic. They confuse bullets for a shrine under their homespun electric states. Forgotten—mislaid between cocaine dreams and acid nightmare—is this your black dog, oh Christ? If patient, the brain tumors the necessary troubles of the hearing-impaired heart. But, does He bleed thick? Old-fashioned, red, and inconvenient, they effervesce like Alka-Seltzer. Forgive them as advertised! Who else is red? Who else is red? Point a finger elsewhere. Now, repeat again and again—we are but veiled and matron-wise sirs, and you may not control a birth. Chose the Right ring. Read the Book. Saunter between what diverges: sloth, pride, and rapacity. Stake your claim over a partisan Rome. Ambition howls redundant around pharmaceutical indigestion and church picnics, but I bleed blue. I menstruate blue. Oh, forgive me father for I have sinned!
fireweed and labyrinths

Tonight, I bind you with the lies
you wear like a well-tailored suit,
Cuff you strappado. Castrate you
with gasoline and a tossed cigarette.
Expose you to the afforest darkness.

    I grow horns
    I beat my chest
    I growl

A happily ever after should never exist,
but I would rather be written on those lines
than trapped inside the twists and turns
of this tour puzzle in place of your heart.
you’re right

with all our wrongs un-headlined
you speak to me in military language
our death tolls hold me
while you penetrate me like a bullet
walled in with every psychosis speech
even on the Lord’s day I crash
into your livid smashing mouth
I have no insurance policy on my mind
I’m left with the statement counting my debts
while you remunerate my body sepia
I will never be conservative but
I’m dyeing
my hair blonde
fake like an orgasm
I fade white like paint
hold me with those guilty hands of solitude
your breath reeks of murder and ground
dead beat hamburger drive thru
my bleating heart
with your goddamned black truck
police your brutality
Enough! the war is over
oh I forgot to tell you before last call
your sponsor called last night
conviction

doves shit wherever they want and
tonight a billion spinning stars fall out
a fire burns beneath dissolving me
like I am filthy street grey and feathered
the taste of pennies swirl in my mouth
and when I breathe my throat converts
from a Baptist into a dogmatic pigeon
I just hate it when people use the word
tenacity especially when bitch will do
so in my next life I will be a bird
physicists need love, too
(just ask Paul Frampton or Albert Einstein)

consider the universe — a place where
Stephen Hawking frequents sex clubs —
he says
it’s bigger than we can imagine

this gravitational
SINGULARITY in space-time

or a life spent staring into black holes
wearing only his brief history of time
he says
he’s lived with the prospect
of an early death for 49 years
not afraid of death
in no hurry to die

BUT to see this universe undressed
naked and gyrating

how can you believe heaven is just
a fairytale for people afraid of death?

Something came from nothing — as we strip our genetic cloth
(someone took the pieces and told them how to fall apart)

Then I wonder if God isn’t so bold — didn’t he create a man
with perfect lap dance etiquette?

So, physicists, here’s a theory—
ever turn up with only enough money for a beer
because life isn’t just another astrophysical
message written on the napkin of stars
reverie

I feel like there is a gaping hole
in my head
a tunnel to travel through
or maybe a space-time vortex
or the space between us.
I wonder does god have teeth?
If so, what does he chew?
Sometimes I lie in bed
and wonder what is worth getting up for,
then other times I lie in bed
and tell him that everything was great.
When I contemplate space
this constant change
the never-ending darkness and
I consider black holes, white sheets,
empty planets and gravity’s relentless pull.
Then I remember that I told him to leave.
Y you are my X (or ode to nothing eternal)

Mr. Handy and I would wander
the streets in search
of the perfect defect in a turquoise stone,
the oxidation of a non-flammable holocaust,
but when the elastic relaxed around your neck
the ruin made me want to praise you.
I loved your solutions,
the orgasm organized with a hygienic
windex bottle blue association of fire
nature’s way of clearing away the old.
I loved you on a cold night
alone
burning away the sheets.
I fixate, consume myself
with the turquoise woven line across the wool socks
smothering my toes.
In these clean moments I find
the same unknown winter element,
a life populated with possessions,
sum totals,
things
you left
unnoticed
like the ember of shadow on the floor
bleeding through the slats
or a hemorrhage of sporadic protests.
I’ve become the schizophrenic down the street
eating out of the dumpster like a birthmark
and now I hate your voice when the heater clicks on
or even more so when you say life is not an imitation
but a response
a cry
a song
a god of silent laughs.
I have a dog
For Salamun

I have a dog. My dog had a loud bark.
I have a bed. I have a bed where I can’t find sleep.
I have a sister. My sister is a physical therapist.
I have a bookcase. I have bright lights to read.
I have a godson. God’s son has a great sense of humor.
I have an oven. With my oven, I bake birthday cake.
I have death. Death is where you sleep.
I have a flat screen TV. My cable is out.
I have another dog. The other dog has short legs.
I have matches. These matches no longer light cigarettes.
I have courage. I have courage without the energy to fight.
I have 13 coats. I am always cold.
I have anger. Anger causes heart disease.
I have money. With money, I buy bread.
I have thirty-three years. I age like a dog.
I have a body. My broken body can’t dance.
In the evening, before bed, I take my two little dogs for a walk.
this poem is not pretentious
it will not walk with its hands in the pockets
of a tweed jacket with elbow patches

dthis poem will not make excessive claims
it takes its pills
there are no delusions of grandeur

this poem forgets to breathe
and when it opens its mouth
it sounds like a ticking clock

dthis poem geeks out over sci-fi
it watches Star Wars
and reads A Song of Ice and Fire

dthis poem loves to sleep in white sheets
not of the highest thread count
but hey, at least they are clean

dthis poem sleeps
on a sofa on plane rides
on the sand

dthis poem wears a faded black
Depeche Mode T-shirt
flip flops or Chucks

dthis poem will not waste electricity
or gasoline
it likes to light candles and walk

dthis poem drinks beer
and rum and whiskey
and occasionally all in one night

dthis poem will not frame every accolade
hammer its praises above a mahogany desk
dog-eared pages and blank walls are beautiful

dthis poem walks its dog
it picks up poop in a biodegradable bag
and sometimes it gets a little on its hand
I can’t
recall if it was Sunday
flat on our backs
on a Spanish tiled rooftop
raindrops ricocheted off
the distant city lights
and a sky was carved
with lightning blue veins

or was it a Tuesday
when St. Mark’s flooded
and we sang street soaked
on a gondola in Venice
we never mind the weather

do you remember that Friday
tiny frost meteorites fell
we wore flip-flops and cursed
because it never hails
in Los Angeles
but we were whiskey warm
with quarters in our pockets
   rock-paper-scissors
your turn to feed the meter

today the moon is drawn in
chalk on a blue paper sky
and I paint my dreams
in bright sunlight while stagnant
air surrounds me like our home
or a small country in revolt


**sin embargo**

In Spanish, it means however, but it is more – it means without.

Without you, without God, I am nothing.

However, without embargo means just that there isn’t some prohibition of commerce and trade with a particular country.

Or maybe just a ban on a singular person? (You do remind me of Castro.)

However, a sin is a sin, and without you I am without sin.
rock harbor bonfire

We huddle close.
The smoke triggers memory.
We trouble keeping open eyes.

The old speak past the era of fish and sky,
while a beautiful sunset lingers
like a burlesque dancer.
We talk like radio.

Seagulls asleep like buddahs
await tomorrow infinity.
Through the whisks of orange and blue,
a flickering transmission to God.
We glow like phoenix residue.

Rings of sand hug the glass like Saturn.
Mexican woven blankets
take our cross-legged offering.
We drink stale beer.

Under the tabernacle of sand,
his bare feet touch her bare feet.
Touch is something magical.
We forget Rome.

Guitars strum.
He talks of a perfect savior.
He saves us from sunburn.
We cast our hope in waves.

I believe in shared silence south of the pier,
chapped lips who speak truth,
toppled beach cruisers nestled in sand,
meeting sundown with a smile.

These are good things.