



LYNN BEHRENDT

RUN

and other poems

**Metambesen
Annandale-on-Hudson
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RUN
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RUN

1.

this faulty text
caused by reading
my own fear

of mirrors
electricity
love

endomorphie
but powerful
demons

stuffing
a live bird
into a dead one

days omitted
from a calendar
antlers or plumage

become
sand
or stillness

unwillingness to perform
one's own
abandonment

eulogistic
enactment

of good news

easily melted
or fused
to music

2.

charcoal
paper
soot

dirty water
thrown out
a window

surgical
reconstruction
of events, trends

then in the margin
of a book,
snow

walk
in a circle
till you fall

the art
of making
mistakes

delusion
that one is a horse
or fly, goat, cat

3.

history
a stubbly
beard

will be
no different
from this day

lie still
in prayer
a small glass fish

dampened
belief
in property

that life
is struggle
and sleep

mind
a disorderly
lotion

logical
floor plan
drawn to scale

and an ear of corn
an icon
idol

person

tainted
by vertigo

4.

soaked with rain
weeks spent
looking out

not bound
but refined
by rust

practice
of angels
termites, embers

that rise
from a chimney
a life

of small tasks
slow
reckoning

that things
are more beautiful
than copies of things

ear the chasm
created
by running water

SWITCHED

Switched at birth
twice the animal
who you are
not or who you
artfully
become
coy
crux of my poem.

Mattress spring
twirl and tilt
beyond wood
baroque obeying
bray at the baleful
boll weevil
of it all.

WOULD THAT I HAD DRAWER SPACE

Oh! Allah, though he had alienated me.
Yet, *would that I* were a mole on his cheek!

Would that I were a poet. In every sense of the word
a thought-provoking, gentle recluse,
Would that I could infuse wood-sticks with the scent!

Would that I could keep squeezing that sperm for ever.
Would that I really managed to take that bit of advice
would that I could shlump up that hill and eat some food.

Yet never have I stirred from internal Repose.
Never can I escape the eternal
Expanse of now, knowing all things, feelings.
Yet never have I known the Owl younger or older than she is
to-day
Yet never have I, now nor any time left you.

I should never be left alone with my mind too long.
I should never point it at anything in the house.

WARHEAD

A warhead
meadowlark
wet with dew
woke in me
an overwhelmed
lewd melting
awkward karma
spun earth
mown down
then roamed
and dwelt
in cartwheels
since
this long trek
have trawled
wailing
meek
and worn
hewn
I yearn
and wrought.

PLUSH TONGUE

plush tongue
lips plinth
and a torn
needling hunger
lingers
cunt nestled pelt
sophist gunwale
hint girth ingot

the minutes
pile up
in me
a euthanized lynx

trillium mink
in timeline pixels
& multiplex penile
helium tulips
along the hemline
I sigh and sleep
six hours straight
wake no different

the minutes
pile up
in me
my limp heel
or complex plum
a mule
in pumps
nil
or next to
enmeshed
immune

unkempt
stoic
I dreamt
of he
who mines
selenium
a long
litmus mile
I wear lupin

a mother unpins
my hair
the limits
upend
and pile up
append in me
ennui
I lie
and wait
sit up
and wait
sleep

and wait
the mute
suits me

STARS

Disappearing stars in day
and truant sawdust
our little musty love tundra.

THROUGH

Through miserable liberation and endless abstinence
unbearable minutes as sunrise sublime over rows of latrines
and reddest anemones pierce slanted retina
of an inmate's timetable
the autistic twitch & turbine rumble of want and need.

NO LONGER

I'm no longer a child
craned, cradling
lemon oil morning
and I still want to be

nodding in a mine
an ode to red
mild din
charmed if I arch

but I want to be
a lutenist
blowsy subtitle
subtle tidbit

lust not, lost nut
a slutty lilt
to live with pirates

twilight port
a viler plot
a more lively evil
ivory thistle
polite violet pose

thieves' lips
to relive
pivot

because I want to
outwit my own absence
coitus between us

because we incubate

a cabinet
be wet my heart
sweet antics
contusion abacus
now I know,
as much as I can.

EVERY TIME YOU READ

Every time you read
you mediate the diameter
between voyeur
and emission
between daytime
and dreamy oeuvre
words redeem
your mitered devouring
riveting verity, you
walk among the dead.

Gold math anthem
magenta dogmata
melded thong geld
the agenda
and the end
of every lament.

There are times when
neither waterwheel nor hem
neither meshed nor weathermen
nor teething esthetes whirling

nor steel leatherettes
nor tethered shrew hens
nor ethereal wren are enough.
When thrown wrested emissions
are a healthier, wetter stem.

tripod deltoid adroit rapid wizard

*jolt of hazier wheel & drop jewel
a whale's wiretap
width of a sled wept
dew peeler
sleep jotter
ad helper
wiser joist
pilfer whistle lithe prow
ports leashed and zipped
header whet west jet reshaped
torn welt
lowing owls
stowaway lips
whipped zero sphere of roe
pale pleading*

As I disappear
I call these languages
of the body up
a slip into radical lips
as I disappear
into a palace of airspace
all you asked
to write that silica diary
as I disappear, spiral
& displace these bodies
I call into being
beside those
bees hoisted
my hidden odes beneath
bedridden sobs
want to be innocent.

SHORN

I don't understand rain
I am maligned
and lame and never
learn I rename
my alms
every day
it is normal to sell
among us and
I await a signal
scroll
through a long corridor
adrenal mill of
drenched
I want to say song

but I won't
want to say you
my garland loins
with nary a sill to surrender
lion sure brave of course
alone nonetheless

or worse
and not bitter
buried in shroud
of linen
lines getting longer

and I a blond
video of a novelist
well that was me then
this is me now

and I lean into
the untasted
over and over
dressed and undressed
mallard overhead
things with gills
things I can't rein in
ring true
and too
loud to my own
deafness
shorn
why that word
again
shorn for godsake
who uses the word
shorn?

Drama for dinner
droll gilded eggplant
every morn
the same norm
worn to the rind
red inside
in a sunken den
it never ends
angina and lindens
remade made up and
spent and I thought

at least I'm not kept
everybody knows
it's what is
I rend.

AND OF IVY AND VINES

And of ivy and vines
invaded veins
a convoy of doves
lifts the nova

and do you also
detest that dress
thin, silk, surreal
shakier rust color inhalation
lit silk slur
inhale an ashier skill

each of me
sheds a skin you
no longer need
how desire
changes it
self into
if you don't like it red
slipped into crevasse
her dress
clung
like.

I hear torn
moon indoors I'm
torrid tonic and dour
drum neither moldy nor
molten I just wanted
talk coiled in a lyric
similitude spun
some other way.

LISTEN

Listen to the furnace
breathe in each line

take my time
not much

of it
lifts

its
itness

into that
something

that really is
something

lighter, Spring
think of that

or you might dream
the sound of sifting

soothes you
listen to it

way way up
above

birds trees
things in air

this week

I wish didn't

happen this
week

could have been
cancelled for all I care.

Harsh ice on the Hudson
ice on all the trees.

IMAGINE ME ANTLERED

imagine me antlered
engraved, fallow
deeply indented in your life

what if I owed you money
if you tied me to a bench
and slathered mud on my breasts

I permit you to disentangle me
drown me in a river
and fish out these shards.

And you dipped your hand gently into water.

Imagine I am a dark rock
you find when you're nine years old
that you think could be from Mars
imagine leaves crowded around me.

DE KOONING RETROSPECTIVE 2011

Things don't keep
they rot
the world
and we mere
plums my darling
our ungodliness
cleaves to
things that measure
things that fill
space
and the space swells
with emptiness
that is not
you said
white
and I thought about
how things lie
under the surface
of white
and try to push through
brushed over
 the things contained
in the canvas
and the tension
in skin
De Kooning's arm
as an old man
the steadiest stroke
wide arcs

eased the edges
somehow knew

the edges of things
aren't edges really
and I thought maybe
we're not so different
maybe we're not
so far apart
and maybe my skin
and yours
is only that -- the mere

appearance of edge
and I wanted to cry
in that last room
because suddenly
there was air and light
and things lifted
up off the
surface because
they were trapped
on a surface
that didn't exist
with the dark
pushing up from below
and white pushing down
from above
impossibly mottled
with impossibilities
just as love is nearly always
impossible and untimely
and we spill into it
trying to ease the edge
where you end
and I begin
where George Oppen
lost his mind
and Willem De Kooning too

lost his and
maybe if I lose mine
there will somewhere be a room
with light and air

waiting for me too
maybe you will visit
maybe you won't ever die
nor will I.

Sharp women
angry at Picasso's planes
pink
you said
pink
the women
reddening
into mountains
skin and ground
ghostly teeth
faded into texture
of how things feel
 I have you said
beautiful skin
note how you and I
shift into
pronoun-confused light
we lose an hour
it gets darker
but today the sun was out
& air cold
and I missed you
again, whoever

you are today
the lines at the end
defining less the shape
they pretend to contain
turn into
characters
a map of blood vessels
puzzled corpuscles
soon the snow
mutes the surface
the apparent
transparency
of everything
and nothing
turning to green.

LOOK

Look in the dictionary
don't look back
Persephone
there are buildings and streets violent
things and also dew in the morning

industrial city
to enclose or perform
technique not matter
green fodder into silage
I bewitch no I endow with a soul
to enclose in or as if in a sphere
to give shape to silicate base
afterward to take place

to follow then see someplace else deep
and extensive learning eventually
a mountain in Greece where you are Euclid
and I am in the E's
linking eulogy with that which is air and smoke

my allegiance to myself deceives me
for which there is no cure
or speech undeviating attachment
faithful is the word

difficulties expected
music for this fan palm

slowing down better
herd things
a flight of fowl
company of beards
number of watched blocks
body of water
whipped or ridden
flat mass of ice on your surface

my hair knotted like leaves
leaves is a code word
earthy and vaguely green and spring or fall
especially a dance
form or phrase
where a is a constant
deed and document

the quadrilateral dictionary and set sail
it seldom carries a parallel premonition
seldom looks back
conjecture the future
this schooner fore and aft

small blue small white those code words
forged to give you reason

you draw up my slang
messy and tattered and frayed around the edges
brought out by the sun
of my body in comparison

young side of hoof leg sexual union

employed to protect wildlife
not gambol plural ambiguity

and that's about all
look at the dictionary
above sea level
map measure stand under
my idiom designated
abject I recommend
inanimate objects remain so and the quality of
being empty's best grafted
the word for unable to speak
ceremony of beginning
I indicate precision
detail the culture
float across
light blue flowers
round seed pods
experience index an indictment
drawn up into state of being
neither right nor wrong
but simple and hip bone swivel the creative.

CONTRACTABLE SOUND OF CRICKETS

bird flies out
into the open

pale, single-
minded

broken reed, spirit
even the walls

can be sold – hot pitch
between planks

pulleys, sea coal
wood tube

barrel, cut
cable

invisible gold
head

scars
clay feet

flags – lilies –
shoulders

invisible horse
w/long teeth

shabby, pierced
shoulder dream

contractible sound

of crickets

tie its back legs
don't disappear

as expected
objects in mirror

ignore the kicking
between planks

objects
against themselves

the honey month
firewood

tiny mote
bloodstream boat

tenterhooks
stretched cloth

shambled
line

corrugated sheet
someone's home

TOURNIQUET OF FACTS

Do you shush your soul
with others' yowling,
cede to
unpinned swoons
then swoop into
final linty opus
with tiny insults, sooty
and unlit?

Hushed, do your lips
always do this?
Do you believe nothing
of this viral neurosis
to be yours
my words, worries
in silvery rows
you view as if
from above
my river of vile
rules, rivulets
down the drain.

Have you a tourniquet of facts
wrapped around the small truth
that everything once rosy can rot?

Do you not sort or tend
your sordid errors?
Try on your irony ever
or last resort
just trot out oysters
with pearls of meaning
for years enroute
to edge of story

your torso or nosy tongue
rise and rung of tipsy ladder
say you're sorry ever?

Haven't you a small ship in you?

I BELIEVE IN SKIN

I believe in skin
invisible vibes
bikini eel vines
bees in the ivy
I believe in ink
and sin
I liken ibis to levi
vein to kiln
leaky lives
seek an evener
line
sine bilking
libelous sign.

OEUVRE

I love your penis
novel I could write

ivory visor pinup
nips in soupy revelry

pious
yet eviler

my oeuvre oily
slick with noise.

GOOD MORNING BLACK SKY

Good morning
black sky

you're welcome,
clean towels in the dryer

thinking about edges
just out of sight

silent, silent
is a poet's word

love is the live nerve
feeling I have now

no such thing
as nothing

rises from the black lagoon.

Am I crazy?
No, in the morning

I crave speech in my fingertips
some kind of bird.

Bird a poet's animal
I crave an ascetic

cup of tea not the
roiling gnarled cup.

Winds from the west

I could say azure
to describe the laced spaces
between the black branches
that's a poet's
color and
how can anyone
live her life
the first time?
No leaves
morning heaves
itself into place
a shrugging sea creature
creature, a poet's
notion but I see
eat nature.
Dichroic glass
wherein things
are reflected
inside of things
who could possibly
step out of it?
It's me
Lynn.

Sheen of light on a lake

a pine tree's drooping bough

"Bough" for sure
a poet's word

in a breeze
I assume.

When I know full well
I want to anneal

yes, anneal's
a poet's idea

hot red metal
that's pliable.