

TRIPTYCH



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KIGALI TO GULU, EIGHT DAYS

INTERLUDE, YOU

and

from DELICATE PENDULUM

by

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KIGALI TO GULU, EIGHT DAYS

1.

fuchsia, reticent star
imago in my garden
one flower of day, in color
stand;

mean to make you here,
last stand of morning orange bloom
stipple skin – cross
to the other way – I walk & wake
even here where no horizon
lives as much as says,
any other verb

come through shadow of water
stays on the skin, any way to look
at the eye

at the action that moves
dark sun, equatorial truss
a mess of life
moves me, shores move
rising after action

plenty, pebbled, constellate

read this book and then begin
leafward, cowled

speaks in a hum
these thousand walkers, groundbirds
Abyssinian, dilated horn-bill
I, too, made wingless

this faultless air, image
flesh affords, and yet, plunging
the world's center where we land
lake bottom, single bloom,
terrestrial entrance
the heart

2.

white light, softening, sign as ode
says again, shallow to shore

ventral, lineated

I lie down to meet you, let you
through the door, running glassily

singing, away,

through trees a foreign animal

coppice, now a spray

of palmettos, purple wet braid plant

listening to moving, felled

to be altered, attended to,

the shore of you

breaks, again, caesura of causes

an image

peel back, blooms there

acts life into itself

pleasure of no object, make way

& move, say again how it comes

back, nothing beneath your water

only shadow of more self, wish

I didn't have to say, then turn

bright, pink mouth, this again

enervated,

listens to pauses

places me, puts me, the fronds,

listing inland, coil to the center

just before seed

3.

— these waters
equatorial, you watch
latency of mist
rise against action, all else goes
to the water in earth, lakebelly
what I've let across my lips:

nothing rights itself
but sense
can make more come
to the sight — a line as we stand
above it, watching water,
watching division
reunite, wake of a wooden boat
crosses Bunyonyi, not yet the sea, or not still
wrested animal, wings make
this come to you

poised in action, I am wet
in disturbance, listening unshrouded,
willful, stream from me —

mist over the shore
up the hill, beckon
and give me words to say
gesticulant article, mouth-heaved constancy
this cave of circumstance
ripened continent, whose mouth
we walk from & receive

4.

red ground to hold the foot
but the turns of waking, where
light gives in — receded
breezing, coil-lined amaryllis

 pause in the petal, whisper
roughage of savanna, hillside
alight with tea leaves
so close through the waters
you submit to strata
 a sightless break
between any one thing, & slow
to meet, make
whetted kingdom
through the high road
crater's-edge billows
as much alive as coursing, pooled
passing you from hand to hand

this allowance stops to look
low, bright with density
a trembling wood, singular
to act in stillness, motion
of stillness, walks
below the image
one flat lake sufficing,
 not only an edge, but here
this middle world, boiling

mint-marigold on our table,
crested-crane, the hull of the body
leaping from a bough, low current
dives, gracing water, or I,
following, become —

5.

canopy, you

cutting affect from the unformed, all looks to

the watermark high on a hill, put there

by our geometry,

blooms itself

quiet to the sky

enough says, announce by cutting,

culling again, our every move attentive

but you,

striped bark through my window

lead us, turning, to color –

6.

yellow after yeşil,
forgot I was on my feet,
mineral underfoot, rough & red & warm,
rises,

surrounded as a whole being
one lithe body draped in the trees,
smell of little green lemons, spearmint
from yesterday

pull my eyes to my eyes, return unchanged
as static life touches you, touch me

low on our ground I return
to the first dense pool, wash myself
anywhere you've come, and the shore
unburdened —

torque, one body in the light
seen to turn, seen wet, mocking
louder than the drum of day, punctuates
objects, fauna of distance,
silver drops on the leaves
the morning you come from
leads to doubt, pulls the root
to unstay the act — a line across

star-led, southerly

conscious thought of nighttime
becomes a single circle
& wider, makes you resound

7.

birdform, the next again
risen & breasted
 or just a shadow
passing through your shape

sight as darkness
 stuck on the sound, hung,
last night through the trees
but breathless, you, faceless
swinging, given in & alive, doused,
open mouth pleading,
the body hardly enough
just to say, just to turn back, dive —

the ground rises

turn to me and make the question stand,
fill the face and ask
what turns, just enough
and leads to your mouth, organ of you, temple
falling, red path to my garden

so the bird endures
frightens, whistling kingfisher
of air, grey-headed, whistling glassily, titterer
unlanded over this lake, falls, hidden crest
through our last act, stay along the verb

that pushes out our causes, listens again —

these days of primary shape
torpor, toil of shore,
one lighted stretch
where we relinquish, prostrate & afloat

we ask again what rises

8.

endurance that only gestures,
wink of life, willsome, vibratory
gives a last image, only gestures,
 the eye without an eye
is triptych from my window

where I lean, swoon, ardently
my flesh past your willsome way

nothing disappears
so I flicker,
make abscess & recede — gather,
simple & ardent. Breach
these restless banks & see from here

 make rough surfaces rustle
bereaved, where you move, bestial
unknown in your signs

an aftermath resounds
on the other shore

where over land is land
and you, continent,
 graceless,
I mean fringed in vestiges

other goddesses
weave
entranced, cordial, limbless tumult
what makes the arch & passes
— you to me, this topography
that is the outline
of a hill
in sound, let what is announce after you

outlines in the window
but you reach out from this,

the other shore approaches

INTERLUDE, YOU

1)
oblivion lift
our feet
over this meadow
along the old city walls
of bluestone that speak in ancient consonants
with small hollows in between
blaustein, your hand,
where I know you,
in my vision, brings some clarity
to those caverns
your hands swinging
over the rocks
swinging to the one side of you
I cannot see from here
all else, all minds, concentrated
in your pronation
and I notice
a little breath left over in the throat
gives the other meaning, yumuşak
what the Turk calls soft in his language
makes the pivot
all objects yearn for,
who rue the stasis of their body
balletic turn in the middle throat
opens you, you to the wind

catching you
as a sail in the shallows
of my mouth,
oblivion pleadingly,
as I bend to this meadow
find leaf-mustard,
ramps in far groves, a spring onion
at the base
of these trees
where light comes
without distinction
to let us say her name

2)
our here and all, fetching the body
as it escapes from me
across the well-cut grass,
crocuses rimming the building, your simple
color in green,
and something else, too, calls me to
the interior I know walks there,
inside you, a red room dressed in red
through this newfound sea,
gliding through the grass
where it all began, and suddenly elsewhere
led by you elsewhere
my hand numbly entwined

a deafmute through your trees
an old friend in a stairwell
watching me, smiles,
I hold the hem of your coat
and blur through the colors
 spring grass, buzzing late-June green
 full leaf-crown and blue behind it
a maze to get back there, here
her face smiling,
to find a place against myself
muttering, indistinct
a self on the other side
of the field, the other side of the self
you pass under a tree
and release me

from **DELICATE PENDULUM**

1.

a place
uninhabited, yet hinging
on the threads
woven by your hands
folded on the knees,
hinging on the threads
pulled through language
a place, the other side
of the world, a word
your lips
 waiting to be used again
just after their sound
not only words
but their shadows,
porcelain on the countertop
giving way to us seeing it

cross the room
to look, to know the next thing
just after you
that's what you did
with all the lights off
in the evening, your freshness
denuded by activity,
by your pace

through the words, though me
even in shadow,
you stretch long as porcelain
long as the whisper
you let murmur in my throat,
to find a place, and the nerve
that walks through here,
while nothing actually looks
beasts as we are, ground-walkers

we look from nowhere
is why the shadow
always married to matter,
why your word
is grand jeté, a foot in the grass
that leads me to your cliff face
tourmaline ruptures
were we can know
shifting, the delicate pendulum
earth swings
 along this riverbed
celestial night
knotted in these threads,
impeccable turns of the body
where you lie down,
where the mouth opens
to let you walk out

2.
across the street
but here, too,
an instrument tripping
up and down the scales
 the supposition of meaning
bored into lineation
but when I look over
your hips, the countertop
a prophecy in another language
a pause in the hand
as it halts in the pause
to talk to you
these fissures and their charges
but still opening, asking for desire
through duality, through the ear
now backward up the scale
up the stairs
my back climbing against you
where music first crept longingly
dangerous and impaled,
through the night

3.

you said language is revenge
 against the natural
a red ribbon running down your spine
as the frass littered on our steps
reddens, turns brown
and blown into the street
only stark patches
of sun today, but you linger in them
and listen,
let the mess of meanings sway you
delineation of the organs
as configurations
let you look,
speak to me, unfold my hands
and things get measured
in such a light, in irrefutable contingencies
all our faces in the living room
caught around your knees,
a bright set of daffodils
just cut, standing, emitting themselves
from the sideboard
how the evocation
in color lets something pass,

maybe time, or the next demarcation
of anything as it occurs
occurs in time, in you,
or the you in me, become a stalk
of green, a yellow head atop the sign
your hand makes
when you reach for me
from the other shore
where your mind resides

4.
each breath a day
and turn back
to look
make sure, a whole day
harbored in the ranunculus
taunting me
in a Chinese vase
leaning, my hands
in my lap, you leaning
your head out the door
two fingers
close enough to touch
wishing
the slivers of light
through this bouquet
would let me turn the corner
into you, as you are
onto the utter tundra
of indistiction
salt-flat, or a desert city
the old city
ripe in the summer, burgeoning
on femininity
and calloused like women
who whistle
and yearn
through their work opens

to let you walk out
walk out of the self
along the city wall, to meet
the next you, your lover in an archway
to say anything at all
the vein of your thought
unseen
from the middle
anise hyssop sprinkled
in the third bed of roses
away from me,
the length
it would take me to reach you
hands in my lap, thumbs unfolding
bergamot on the wind
 in the rain
but still pulsing, the vein
so gentle it cannot be seen
only felt
my hand, singing vein
eternity in the throat, the thought
the paradise
of this city we've come to
where an instrument
tuned, glassy-brown, fawnish
lets us lead us
to ourselves
twine through the legs

hands unfolded now,
become two hands
our backs
against a stone wall
in the sun all day
and warms us
as if all action
at a distance
were really the salt
I taste on your skin

5.
cabbage-color, dark with powder on it
but that wasn't
what happened, only
what led me back to it
to you, passing through the garden gate
dressed in vines,
chrysalis emerging,
floral and unknown to me
and only a little light
just enough
 in evening
to make out how indistinct
you are, how nebulous
this wall
my head rests
against, and something else there
something in the valences
one body to the next
and back again
amorphous other, amorous
how the city, your garden,
blooms, the ritual of summer
the evening purple,
a plant that brightens in its middle
deepens, depends
all depends on the darkness

in the light
a field of shadows blooming
vegetal and rough, their color
an abstraction, regardless,
brought me
to the limit of meaning
the wall floats
away from my head
restlessness
and you again, through the night air
still, closer,
vines unspooling another sound
breezing, dripping
just behind me
I turn
to climb the ladder
to where you
last had been