JULES GIBBS
The Dream Will Not Rescue What it Does Not Love

I woke up on this dry slab of granite in the middle of a mad river. I came here by way of dream, spent all night breaking with the familiar for the sheer discomfort of discovery. And here I am. Uncomfortable Discovered. Recklessly by way of imagination. The stones that led me here are all submerged. I can't explain anything. At dawn, word spreads fast. Crowds gather on the banks hysterical and bollering: She's been messing around with historical narrative again. They don't get me; they never get me. Too many double shifts at the granary. Your refrains are silly, I yell back, although I know they can't hear my disdain over the rushing water and their own shouting. They haul out ropes and make a plan. Mob mentality sets in. They want to save me or kill me using tropes, ballads with line breaks that still need work, inexplicable shifts from third person to first. Extraneous language a waste of energy like waving one's arms over one's head. Their technique is passé, too embellished for this post-ironic crisis. The usual arguments over methodology ensue; correct reading of currents, navigation of rapids, whirlpools, water wells and roostertail rocks, a strategy in competing angles of incidence. Because you have to show a little style, even if style has no real function — they anchor parallel lines to the oaks upstream. Devise gorgeously overcomplicated slip knots and tether the ropes to the men, send the men down one by one, each line breaking with a personal pronoun, dampening all the good music. The waters are rising, everyone notes, waters because it's got to be plural in situations like this — no substitute for vigorous and exact description. Who the hell is running this thing? The biggest man with the biggest hands brings a tactile quality to the surface, an element beyond the mere thought or expressed intention. Here they come, the parallel links of men, one by one, to save me, and one's knot fails and he's pulled under — asunder — taking with him
all the men in his line, the risk you run when you rely on redundancy, when you can’t reconcile your action with your title, your title with your theme.
The townspeople are always tangible and clear — just look at them now, running along the banks, sobbing and tearing their hair, yelling into the whorls of black water.
A Sonnet for Lorca Upon His (Failed) Exhumation

The cockroach crushed underfoot had armor and war but no spleen. He was atomized. Pained with stiletto and the shrill laugh of a man: Oh, *mi amor* — the *faena de capa*, shudder of olive tree, crush of mass grave —

Otherwise, the murder was perfectly silent. To be spleened is to cry from a spackled off-center your last *cante jondo*, but you were pliant wiped clean in the manner of a poet, split into two black moons of tolerance. Untroubled lobes of death — spleen to me once more, the way you do. Lather my chutes. Be lullaby bile. Love my one slick eye. Love my wet kiss thrown deep in the pit of matador mucus,

a snail's trail strung *claro torrente* from the gullet like the clear, bright sparks from your mind to the bullet.
Apology for Music

I guess there was something feckless about my love for sound, a feverish translation of material — freckles, child labor, the anticipation of a life sentence — into the sweet dark tongue of the universal. To curate the spine and its three curves into the lilt of a body not limned by the numbed senses. Musik fliegt wenn ich fliegt. If I fly, the music will fly — my urge, to conquer space with sound, to hold no philosophy in the roar and whir of rotors. I sent the quartet into four machines, plotted a tonal flight plan, plotted against the human, fed her colliculi inferior and superior by mic, click-track, force. On the downbeat, the copters lifted — the first notes arrived on earth like ovular bodies that had tunneled inward to unseat the quite hollow of the soul. And then — when the tonnage of steel and glass split the horizon, I knew I’d never make a sound, not broken, not otherwise.
Apology for Creation

As it turned out, we were no more than the idea of ourselves, God’s spittle bubbled on His big baby lips, bacterium of a deity swollen to the size and shape of a forest afloat on a bed of peat. It was the sort of news that brought everyone out onto the streets. We thought we owed everything to The Flood: alluvial fans, dendritic drainage patterns, newts, coaxial cable, permafrost, chakras, geometry, every variation on desire: leather, frozen yogurt, frozen embryos, speed, hip hop, mezcal, you name it — only to discover we were coded in a single protein — our own negative feedback loop. Even on Neptune and Mars, entire civilizations of us had come and gone. Suns born. Earths lost. A trillion times over. Without punishment or reward. We were a repeating pattern, that, when viewed from a great distance, appeared as an elegant, limbless twist, a strand of coiled matter wherein everything that would happen had already happened. Even with Heaven gone, some dropped to their knees. None of us knew where to look. Suddenly, all of our thoughts embarrassed us; the idea of I. The smell of a neighbor’s dinner — meat and carrots stewing — wafted into the street. That, too, embarrassed us.
I've seen a lot behind the scenes — Ginger Pitt, Marquita Devine, blog terms of service, piracy policies, support feeds. I've read the blah, blah cannons: *Guide For Incorporating a Corporation*, the *Buchbestellung Unter Dogdance*, all the implicit barriers at the end of a parallel region. Bhagavan always spoke informally to his disciples—jeune, he'd prattle, digress, renovate his diligent directory, his poignant bus stop correctness. I happened to be his first Western disciple to honor dissidents of India, Russia and China, to balance the US/EU approach: just sharing your life transparently seems to work best: biblical, emergent, a barony all over the world.

Enjoying complete and total confidence every time, he preached beautiful Costa Rica at pre-development prices; his obsessions with Ruth and New Carlsberg's misogyny grew nauseating, like his Hong Kong top-up for the best international rates. Basically, that was it; it ended kinky, deluxe: my friend Mohammad Swain and I decided to bet who could plod darkness, who could minister first to Syrinx —

*long time, babe, long time.*
Talking to Your Doctor

Go cervix! Your burly creature
thrives in its little cavern,
untervlissingen,
your little joss.

The men don’t know we name him
Ronnie, a precept
revved for the pullback, to vend
as in, refi your car,
be a better lover in the vernacular —

Howdy, we’ve got matron lumber,
a repertory built in solid
rustic materials where close attention
has been paid to every detail.

Gewinnspieleinahme, unkindly primeval
in the name of La Scala, hope to god
the slide stained potassium brown
clears the marshal.
Hope to god your check is still waiting.
Pay Attention, the Angels Aren’t Fucking Around

We are a barefaced November in Hamspshire
bootstrapped captives of usury
testing the sweets of life. Sap —

a few drops in any drink is all it takes
to achieve

madcap substrate, audible prowl.

Poeta nascitur non fit. Listen, a nod
and the canyon has calcified
the implausible Modesto Quonsets —
a virtuoso scald.

Un message en provenance du site; we’ve already approved you
for a columnar unit — obtrude,
do something about it! Ye, thou hast
well been accursed, said the Lord: Heal. Quadruple.

Avoid enhancement pills, Saskatchewan shampoo. I is prevention,
sayeth the Lord, I is revisal, easy,
just drop me a note.

Heft u een pagina toegestuurd, meaning:

This is our last attempt to reach you —
give us your opinions and be rewarded — our
error page will use nurturing colors such as blues and
grays instead of reds and yellows. Better believe it
ye Repressives, ye Segreagants, a new you in 2008 —
this is not a joke: exquisite whiff
of scattergun abutted,
a revolution in weight management is finally here.
when i stand before the bathroom mirror and the door is partially open, I feel what Bachelard meant about the extension of infinite space found in familiar objects, in this case, the door — familiar as every door and every door a perfect metaphor for the other door it stands for — seems to extend beyond itself, an extension of energy/invisible matter/intention, a force that intersects on a material level with my brain

if i give in to the urge to close or open the door so that its energy extension is no longer occurring on a plane that intersects with my brain, i feel that I have given in to the thing that hovers under the surface of thought like a sleeping bat in folded wings

the desire to slam the door or wave away the extended door energy—or the infinity—is as strong as any desire — sexual, animal, illogical in its urgency.

it makes my brain ache, and i don’t mean just metaphysically.
i want to pause here to be sure you're still with me. are any of you experiencing similar conflicts with the energy of inanimate objects and their infinite extensions? even so, only three or four of you will admit to it.

what if it's not the door extending through space, but it's my brain projecting itself to intersect with the door?

despite this thought produces a secondary feeling, a kind of irritation with mirror rituals — like applying mascara, or flossing my teeth. the wand. the clumps of paraffin, oil, ceresin, methyl cellulose. that implied critique that extends 4000 years into eyes dressed with coal and tar. it could be that I am — after more than 13,500 days of repeating myself, tired of ritual. It could be a matter of imaginary numbers, and not imaginary planes. There's no way to know.

I could say it's his fault that I'm spending so much time dwelling on this relatively minor problem, but the truth is

i've been This Way (capitalized and italicized) since I was a child.

(It was horrible to be a child. We'll all sit down in a nice room with coffee someday and you'll tell me how you survived it. Having to count to 37 37 times before you could take 73 tiny steps to reach the swing-set — it had to be exactly seventy-three or something terrible would happen. And on your way you had to simultaneously count 80 dandelions, which is \( 3 + 7 + 3 + 7 \) times seven minus three. Which is significant. Kids are hyper-attuned to the consequences of numerology. If you disobeyed the laws of the numbers, your head would collapse or the earth would open up or it would rain. Fortunately you never caused calamity. Well, sometimes it rained.)

Most of my days were like this. This Way.
Now I’ve learned — mostly— to correct such thinking

for Real World Behavior — e.g.:

“we want to rubbish you,” says the house

and no one ever says back:

“the whole house is a fucking freezing iceberg nightmare”

— for, and after, Michael Burkard
Our Subject is Too Large

1.
Our subject is the fifth state of matter:
how much gets suppressed
how much travels light years — and faster —
then settles, afflicted, in small rooms
where lamps fire filaments
in weary vacuums
and the clocks are all possessed
of a mass sensibility
is anyone’s guess.
Our subject hovers
near the fourth state, edges
of normal objects, lifts them
into counter-radiation, lingers
over snapshots where it once
had a mind
and a zip code
the authority to control its own
nerve and tone.
Inside this rift our subject
can amass or disperse a cloud.
Can sing. Can riff.
Can make rain fall.
Or not.
2.
Our subject speaks too much
of darkness, the arc
and ache of the carnal.
The source of the bark.
The yowl.
Not why it happens, but where:
its copse, its bole,
its labial wanderings.
Our subject doesn't get
aroused although it's often seen
in the company of fire
embracing bolides.
Our subject departs at an atomic weight
of 39 — the human tipping point.

3.
Once we thought our purpose
was to describe and distinguish;
now we know — no.
Anything of this kind is just
bundled anguish,
a protest against a self
that moves in bright streaks,
onmi-directional,
continually lost to mass.
4. Our subject is a criminal-hero caught in nets and tanks, entangled, slightly enraged, too large to set free. Our subject frees us of outcome and income. Our subject doesn't pay.

5. The chain gangs who study our subject are guilty of the most fashionable offenses: prana, élan vital, chi. They levitate, interfere with violent crime, bliss.

6. That our subject is lost to itself can only be sensed when it collides with unknown boundaries, say, the cell wall, and revisits, not to be hemmed back in to the whole but like fevered electrons returning to their nucleus to be blessed. The motive is energy, but the motive is arrested.
7.
It’s futile. There’s nowhere left to go.
No one can find work.
Moths have gnawed black holes
in our subject’s best cotton
oxfords. Still, our subject needs
a home and an occupation,
which is provided by his small prison
operations that have cropped up
nationwide, set up shop in erstwhile
warehouses, dealerships, big boxes,
vuggs in the collapse
of time and economics.

8.
The claustrophobia is cozy
and the food is made
to comfort — pomegranates,
Gewürztraminer, stout, burnt steak,
chocolate songbirds, lemon chiffon cake.
A generous host, our subject forgives us
our ignorance, asks us to sit, gives us
something to sip, a little something
to chew on. The guards who keep us
from knowing our subject
bear a vague resemblance
to the old notion of stardom,
ex-Presidents. Our subject reassembled them
from the ancient shells of bugs,
that higher collective state
we failed to achieve
The Middle Distance

The 39 pries open with a wheeze—pahhhb-hiss—and whine of hydraulics, to a putrid breeze,

mix of over- and underclass, smoke and Jontue, humid saints of latter-day who shove through

as the driver chants “Move back, move back—and smile.” For every one who complies, six collapse

further upon themselves. There are entire societies who cannot comprehend the art of staring

into the middle distance, the deep rest of unrest, the easy disease, the unfulfilled need to bear arms.

And conversely, there are humans who cannot fathom the poem, even though the poets

are trying to write about the same middle distance they stare into every day. In the press of damp bodies

nothing mothers or authors. Hands are two lost children in the crowd, illiterate but effective.

Every block someone must stab a small pig to make the bus stop. A man in a suit grins, his face open. His tie bears an image of the Blue Tara. Her crescent eyes smile inwardly.

The injury moves us all. We gather the momentum of a collective violence, but never the physics
of mobility, never upward — wherever that is. The Blue Tara has the power
to make everyone look — then look away, back to the common low center
that does hold against the stop-start push and sway, the two-step stagger of laborers
bound to their inertia, the murderous smell of fish, the art that doesn’t move us.
Corpse Messaging

Six heads roll onto the dance floor in Tijuana
to say something about
saying something.
If we read it right, motion
is the snitch—the noise says stuff
our mouths don’t, like, tell me for real:
when I dance like
this, do my hips look big?
Do my delta waves seem stressed,
fitful at six cycles per second?
In the air of narcocorridos I can’t hear
what you’re saying, our words sink
in oceanic time, a heart-beat beat-down
that makes me want you to want me:
so hard. You swerve, hip and skull,
but between us a straight line
grips. Death can’t mess
with us. Motion is noise.
Noise is sex.

Eventually even the terror
becomes hysterical. Texts delivered
on whipped-raw backs, limbless torsos, severed
— ah, enough of this!
Six heads roll onto a dance floor
in Tijuana and you go:
   Joke: These guys, they’re no-bodies,
   and I go: I’m nobody — who are you?
It's possible we've been
desensitized—you get what you don't
deserve—the love (like the dollars and *crystal*)
is a sterile dust that will float away
on the wind, ride the thrust
of an ocean stream while we stay
put, marry ourselves. The losses
(but not the lost) eventually wash
back to shore, get reabsorbed
into the continental shelf.

We thank their (missing) bones
for new information about the silver
trail-lines we don’t know we spin. Our movement
reacts in ways we can’t control
to the irritated corners where La Familia men
take note: *los malosos*... *los otros*... anything
might re-up the violence. An inside joke
that ricochets from my body
(body) to your body (body)
could be skewed as collusion.
So I dance like I want to have at least six
of your fat kids, a bounty
of replacement and abstraction.