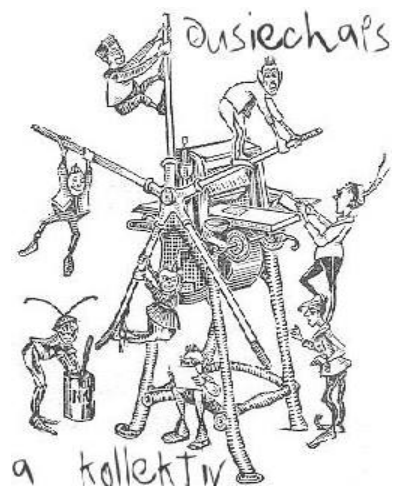


city



Jean Donnelly

City is part of a longer project entitled The Architects —

*When the materials are all prepared and ready, the architects shall appear  
I swear to you the architects shall appear...*

Walt Whitman  
A Song of the Rolling Earth

the I is a glossary orphan

(though everything has a partner to call)

that's all the fuss with sorting

no matter how it's fact

meaning is a face

with fact on the inside

what wants to be

how here is

a mode assaulting

the eve of translation

a mind in reconnaissance

huddled in the corner of a pronoun

the I implodes in its own animal

credulous with sun on its face

fills in with food

sometimes

pieces of adjacent voices

a practice with stone

when the you is a tightrope as muzzle

the bare tree shivers in a mass of grackles

•

farm animals face the house at mealtime

the animals appear disconsolate or joyful

they shimmy in the sleet & drizzle

•

what are they thinking?

what do they create with that?

a face marks what is broken

even symbolic ones

rinsed with money & sun

the same way a train arrives

shaking buildings or

a child stomps calling

fairness into a body

for tasks the I parallels movement

noting its disguises & mistakes

granite moments smearing sky

•

remember swans?

leaving shit around the pond?

*the only possible city is a face*

the ones the I's asked to touch & did so

with no attendant or residual struggle

just as the we stood

for things stranded & worthy

with eyes in the dark for horror stories

the I thinks it knows

what it reads about love

the shadow of a sky floating bird

a word moving in two minds

where ours puts devastation

for contrast asking

does the you seem

to empty the I or me?

*no* remarks that it's

its assessment that travels

a capable savage that can't tell animals

how comfort perceives authority

oh, there's hate  
thrust & shivering  
in the branches  
come down now  
come home

•

ours isn't asking how to live  
it gazes at sensation  
the whole tree

the I is a coven of ones  
its fullness leaps out in sparks  
like nerves in a body sending  
little concerts of thought to witness