POEMS FOR
TEXTS FOR
NOTHING

(derived from Samuel Beckett’s Texts for Nothing)

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For the memory of Marthe Reed

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POEMS FOR
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#1 WHAT POSSESSED YOU

sorry body

hands stretched
to where there was a rock
we sat to read it
kept thinking I was going to be eating
you said that you would read it

black sandbox

Harriet my mother my mother my father
yes, keep track of the sunglasses
my reaction?
we’ll have enough, it’s enough
the dragons can’t hurt people really
they’re really here to protect people

home

marching vessel
where were the dangers
friends, heroes, tables, cooks
we were staffed and somewhat trained
and we seemed to know what we were

sunk in our caves

Toots, you said weakly
we walked up a slope
what possessed you to always get everything right?
I saw the melting pile of you to come
The things too must still be there, a little more worn,

where would you go, now that you know? Back above?

creaming off the garbage

nothing showed,
and the mind slow,

of

having said all, your all,

not been fruitful,

The day had
#3 I’LL WILL IT

then:
into my leisure
aboard the tall building

no:
falling backward
you didn’t think I should
fall on my belly when I was pregnant

the heroes:
with their go-to-bed cutlasses, hammers
the apron days, the far days
array myself
but it was enough to pull me out of here

the way:
to stay
I ask myself
is that hard to do?

the war:
ended not so very long ago
but it ended
the silence, the political deafening

into my story:
the raven of which,
well, I hope she starts quotthing

some:
will be students and some will be in school
I’ll will me a body far from Mississippi’s
were they hard were they easy

strong winds:
brought a lot of people
did they mind sitting on the grass?
a ray of greenness where a drop
of rain came through
with a form and a world,

dead like the living.

he couldn’t have that,

This evening, I say this
evening,

life alone is enough.

and again this voice cannot be mine.
#5 I'D GO INTO THE FOREST

not a mute performer
but a crowd, it’s noted
what a game
mental process
into a darkness

let the bags
let the flirt hang
how were they packed
do the balloons
what a relief to know
I’m not a matriarch
you’re helping me though
helping me out
comma, hold
was holding you

like this?
in one hand
ragdoll
Do my keepers snatch a little rest

the eyes take over, and the silence, the sighs,

how is it nothing is ever here and now?

this infinite here?

and that ant, that ant, nothing leads to anything.

with its view of the sea,

the word hear, the word tell, the word story,
a brief story,
rounded up
flat shirts
warriors

the distance you’ve come
looking back and seeing
the Connecticut shore man

that made someone nervous
kinda feel like we’re used to it now
from being away

but maybe you shouldn’t experience
yourself as tidying up
we should go back to the conference room
perhaps trying in its dame
lame togetherness or something

ark for spinach
green beans and lime juice
seat us first

you gave Nixon his alibi
neither one of us answers the phone
run them aside

trees abound
little florets
the unbounded intensity of wheat

see the finished
joys and mischief
leading us astray to fate
I speak softer, every year a little softer.
every year a little slower.

for ever the same murmur,

free in a dream of days and nights,

as if to grow less could help,

The mistake I make is to

try and think,

here I’m a mere ventriloquist’s dummy,
#9 THEY DRAW ONE ANOTHER BACK

might look
like-minded
to a kind of irrational
surface
moments of grief
that’s how it goes
can’t wear sandals
without drainage

I hear voices
ok—sometimes
that’s an example of a little story
I had something once,

Inanities, agreed,

of consolation

for today.

I must not be too affirmative at this stage,

No, no souls, or bodies, or birth, or life, or death,

it will last my time,

some other evening, not this evening,
too late to get things right,
and hurts
as if he didn’t quite
didn’t know it *deep* in time

what is this awareness of words
and churning
each word a different
probably
forgive you for saying that
about him
but what value do they have
thirty-five and a half

who was that
New York state
belly friendly blues

but peekaboo

a bed is something to embrace
this evening made of
what is this evening made out of auntie?
but what did this evening have to make itself out of?
did he want to answer
maybe you live in the one of the nicest
just a wee peekaboo here,
I came back again
so long as the others are there,

beyond

all doubt on earth,
long enough for things to change here, for something to change,

this impossible

dreaming of the night without morning,

there are voices everywhere,
#13 BUT WHO CAN THE GREATER CAN THE LESS

sometimes
awakens
a hand
monster
tears in its eyes
before and after
pictures
they wondered
what’s become
of the huge carcass
in her car
that took another
five minutes to undo
and that’s ok

earrings
nose
flower
the answer
they go upwards

and under the foot
an introversion
this is super sad but
you need to take that apart

somewhere in my
pictures
here is one of you
it wants to make
a hand
and perhaps the rest will follow
a face
the sound throughout
the city
fruit
we’ll buy fruit
No voice ever but it in my life,

there won’t be any life, there won’t

have been any life,

of things that don’t exist, or only

exist elsewhere,

got out of here and go elsewhere,

perhaps it will end on a castrato

scream.

we’re ended who never were,

so many times the

same lie lyingly denied,

there is no one and there is someone,

still all

would be silent and empty and dark,