



Horse Sense

**Jordan
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By

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for Marlee and Bella & Peanut

We Were Brought into a Straining Shape

there are little runts
and blunted
comments, middle names

for everyone, the slightest
impression embossed
on a handkerchief

squeals for one better
truth to try and imagine
one better truth,

exhibitions in the sense
they pour, nervous
as donors are we all

May Mean

There is that driving again. Every day, sitting in something not made for you, entirely suited to a larger body, a belief to be taken along with songs from this time or another time, and nothing else. Well, there's also the awful attentiveness. The planted and unmoving parts from us, swimming beside before falling behind, that add to the panic, the childish and unrational wind, unclear and lumbering on the outside, the speech of places left behind.

Givens

I accept, combinations of unlikely
to unanswered, I accept the darkness
of triumph as apart, I accept the numinous
risings gone once convinced, and the collapsing
recline of a cold, lost balloon.

I accept, the lowly surgeon who's taken
with the worker's old work, I accept a second matter
that stares long after the first, I accept
the untimely hero bored before ruin, and the son
asked to cut his father's last hair.

I accept, what is and what weakens to reprove,
I accept all the rooms filled with gods
obsessed and alone, I accept the nearest to fire
or the closeness of hope, and the plan to end
saying, I will say it once more.

Facings

There's an ease in which to waste a catching up.
To sit back, I suppose, always vocal enough
to account for each visit when a name appeared
and lost all privacy. Love is the way through
that rids those predictions of more than they try for.
The unconcealed slight, happy in the afternoon,
happy to be the bother that's slow to reach
the richer finds that will one day ask me to forget.

Love

for Marlee

I told them, you can take half the conversation
away from a stranger without them ever knowing

it, take the real side away, and then turn it
into that place, that day that never happened

to you, some intended thought, now yours. There,
you will have it for years, or because of the excitement

that will no doubt accompany this treasure, the night
will come when, not alone to repeat it only to yourself,

perhaps, lying down in a close but uncomfortable
position, faced with a person equally as exciting (in

their own way) as what you've heard, you will tell
them this side of things, so they can stare at you

as you tell it. And afterwards, before falling asleep
near them, they will tell you, I know, I was there.

Old Parts

There is now one good ear left.
The last one to go, was too heavy
on the cotton and not the common
sense. There is no longer any dis-
illusionment about what will give
up next. The mugs are now filled
with boiling white tea. The stapler
is used while squinting towards the
light. Gloves, although lined with
rabbit, weigh down these hands, so
they often rest there, long overdue,
dangling and down by my side.

Grafts of Centered Stillness

"Give my love to, oh, anybody."
—JAMES SCHUYLER

there are less
ends, throated

in the spirit
of readiness,

a life holding
hard, steady,

and off, a
piece of this

word to prove
through, spent,

whatever that
means, what

the day woke
to, gave in

for, there are
years caught,

conglomerate
of the forgotten,

my forgotten
and their sense

of what thus
errors don't

do, or stand
for over time

Primers

and after these years, once their speaking is made
complete, not for them it's said, but alongside a life,
they will begin to tell of what went into them,
what amounted to, time apart and the well formed
tour, nights and walks for lunch, counted as one,
the first evening at home, when home meant not leaving
or wanting to leave, totaled as two, those arrived at
days, recalled exactly as they were, and so, extended,
no longer to go on as what was left of them, but to settle
without sift, to consider each moment that coursed as able, as
so good at what they do that, when they spoke up and announced,
this is how we are to end, it began, and what once stood
as surroundings, moved behind these times to form
the unheard of hours, waiting to open without falling
forward, vacant and unlike any other time before

For What is More Rest

There is a looseness in tending
to look back. No, it's as it is.
There's nothing to it that differs
from what happens elsewhere,
what accumulates and is
everywhere for now. Tonight,
I just thought I saw into a playful
determination to stay around. But
no. I haven't even come to it yet.
There won't be the time, the haulage
to take care of burdens, so sight
can go clear, and ends can go on.

Piquante

And I've fallen off a stool
which means, I wasn't meant to reach
so far out first thing in the morning.
To be sitting there. To have a very important center
that regrows each day with minimal
water, minimal outings. What a difference it is
to be between the unwritten and the unsaid!
There's a cookbook I'm skeptical about, so
I've left it in the drawer for months
now, where I know it keeps on serving
the same dish, day after day, without pictures
to account for all it's done, without an organism
to break down starch, and sugar, and taste.

Marching

There were more answers than one could prepare for,
tasting of cow and other horrors that tempt a thorough
cleaning. There is no defense for the visible. Once said,
they are then attitudes, named into persistent orders,
growing backs that seem quite aimless and unquestionable
to what supports our usable state. We call it an attack
but it isn't so. Suppose we are the same to hide from it
though, that as it ages, we are going, going under
what answers us in return. A pound of heat, whenever
it's about. A pound of heat against the meantime for now.

The Apartment

He asked, who lives there,
then brought over his
laundry, covered all the
windows with socks, his old
t-shirts, pillowcases now
separated from their sheets.

The day seemed to go on
forever. The sunlight, and only
the sunlight, almost made its way
through, went on trying to get in
for a very long time.

Materials

I build what stays still. Those things,
yet to guide themselves through
successful tendencies. The shirtless
and aware, those terrified communities
who know exactly where the attention is heading,
how it will go on to grow, to threaten what means
nothing to me now, much less to go on dwelling
in the tolerance of there before.

Now we have to go out and lie

The compulsive nature
of the body says

twins work
to develop

the concept of
eye level.

*

Not by accident
the owner

of the theatre
lost skin

in sunlight.
Going, going,

going at night.
Maybe, it truly is

a growing
problem.

*

In defiance
of a time like ours

the island
hails

the first washed
ashore

as the pudenda
betrayed

by several
oncoming

and ungrateful
new waves.

But You're Here

As I tell my story I spit
because of what would otherwise
come out. A generous leaking
from being so insistent
and seemingly like this.
'There are two mothers there
to wipe my chin. One collects
the truth, while the other motions
for me to keep at it, don't
stop talking, I'll know exactly
who it is that left you
soon enough.

In This Town

the later for the reason
to look in, the whole time

knowing what they knew,
gone from the time made

of theirs, but so outspoken,
remembering, nodding or else

seeming thin to outlast
spellings, personal doubts

before words, what's inside
the easy thought to rise, years,

just being those, opposed
to calling this growth, or

not there, no, there's touch
in whatever distance reaches

to use, to mark for itself
the residual or inhabiting layer,

the unloaded visit suspending
entrance, where returns stay,

closing in on what tells
of where it comes or goes

The Retired Couple

Stop licking the bread
before calling me into that impossible position again.
'The night to remember is impatiently waiting
to be left alone.

It is said there is a greenhouse in this night,
filled with a kind of bamboo
that can tend to itself.

I mean, that's actually why it's there.

To live without us, without so much as a visit,
doing whatever it is the unthinkable do.

Keep Away From Reach

“Beware the good man.
He has no forgiveness.”
—PAUL HOOVER

The mark of the lifelike
is a certain rendering of what passes,
or what is soon to go.
It needs a lowered head,
a pulse in defiance of precedent,

a storm undergoing surgery, warm
and unmoving, those furthest away
slowed from reaching this earth.

Jordan Stempleman is the author of *Their Fields* (moria, 2005) and *What's the Matter* (Otoliths, 2007).

