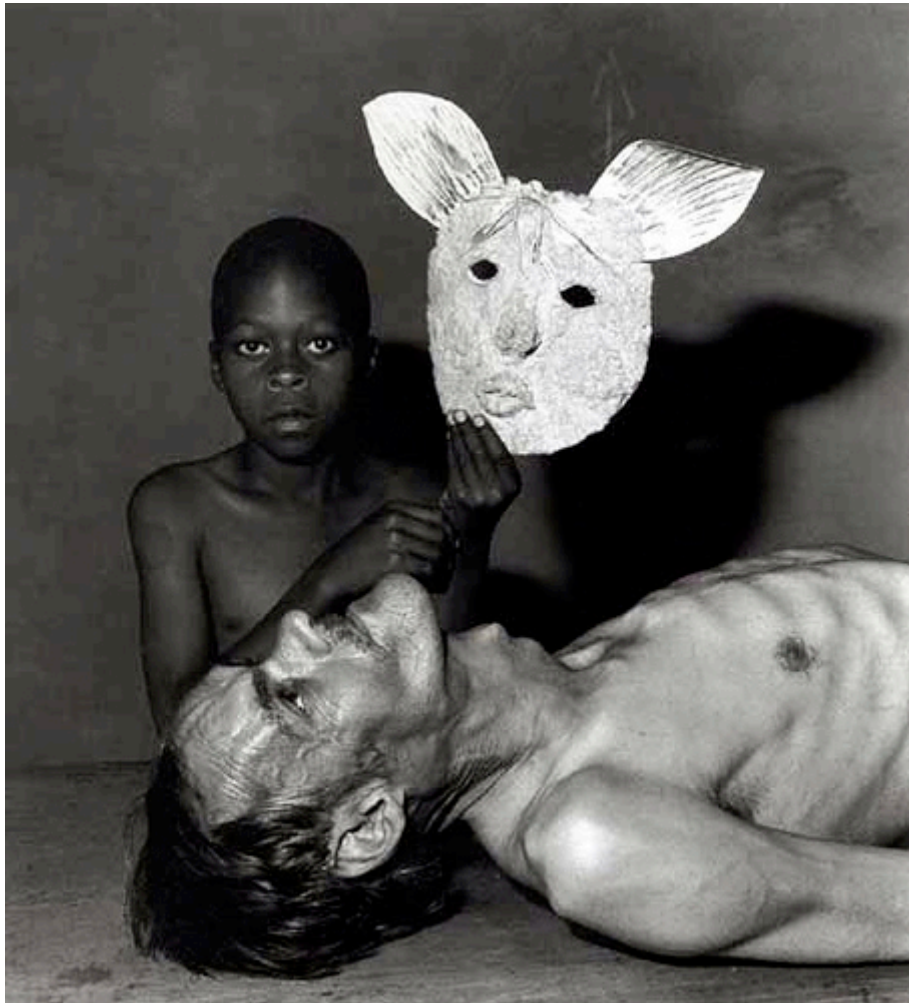


KISS ME WITH THE MOUTH OF YOUR COUNTRY



Amy King

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Thanks to the editors of *apocryphal text*, *Aufgabe*, *diode*, *mid)rib*, and *Death Metal Poetry* where some of these poems, or versions of them, appeared.

**A DUSIE KOLLEKTIV
CHAPBOOK
2007**

* a dust/e-chap
www.dusie.org



DUSIE

—for Ana

KISS ME WITH THE MOUTH OF YOUR COUNTRY

Do you suffer the sea and yes,
in a special way I do
like any brother or father or life-
bearing apparatus. Legs
carry our encounters out,

If we would only feel the wrench
of a burning ant, a drowning urchin—

We deploy confessing soldiers instead.

Go write a lovely jig,
sell it to the throbbing gill of a broken pen.

The face says two p.m., I know
the lie, having been inside
its pace, its poor joke, its friend.

Kiss me with the mouth of your country.
Decant a path that brightens the corners
of our displaced breaking weapons.

I turn literary blue,
crack your chair,
let you know I'm under,
pile complaints on high,
prick open thigh, glide
the entire length home.

The old guard goes to easy chairs,
seventh inning slump,
but even now,
this pump ushers rosy veins,
a flush of purple, the cat's meow
behind your ear at feeding—

Draw the bouquet of a body's curves,
rimmed heat at the edge of eyes
for as long as mouths overhear,
the rest is gold-sprinkled sounds,
we gulp whole afternoons by. Why?

You must fall a little in love
with the singer to love her song.
You must follow the entire
before you enter her parts.

RESURRECTION

Best in a year,
we are all meant for
a little nest of serpentine
longing, sliced curtain's tiny
dying sun, a decay of light

I have held the seamstress
woven in my arms
so long, I know the corrective
before our murderers
plant their seeds,
before I filet myself
instead of this gullet baked
with tiny bread crumbs.

A small milk toast, a whinnying yawn:
here is the anti-self
control bought so that you
might press thumbs into shoulders,
mixing in motionless backgrounds

With massaging hands that move,
you turn too deep
in Christ sometimes,
beckoning back your first-born hunger.

O nearly Civilized, how can we become
agents of harmonic intercourse
if we only seek in pyramids,
stepping up and down
the details?

Crumbling under God's only sky,
it becomes His eye we're looking through—
the trick is to gouge out the dark.

HANDS HALF FACE

Don't think of me,
I won't think of you.

You baby pinprick,
rain from the roof of my mouth—
I'm not terrible for them,
I'm terrible for you.

With swarming thunder,
sudden fertile
soil fans itself dark
below your window's belly,
your eternal flame,
your lost ache
regained by touching you.

I am that hand,
that terrible half face
through wooden rooms
under clapboard drains
within the frames of mirrors.
I am that pile of ash
that blows back into you.

EDEN

Beneath cabbage wings I lie,
attending midnight.
Your garden breathes.
This spongy soil bed
enfolds & opens—
earthworms poke my legs,
a way in.
This delinquent disguise
as you sleep away,
air-conditioned strip
of earth behind
a building, Brooklyn
sidewalk and me,
lost weed, skulled
tulip with scalloped eye.
A view to escape within.

FROM THE GIRL BECOMES

The sense that longs
for the sense behind

To believe
a scarecrow's resurrection,

You must, at first, behold the thing
alive.

Then follow rusted iron lattice
through a humid English garden—

A dire pond, burgeoning roses,
a hazy woman, my loosened sleeves,
a learning to, how she.

Just as
seashell cried into seashell's ear,

On the growing limbs of
petals' breath, a sleep on silken blanket.

This crawl space narrows
as the child emerges

Ever more fractal,
ever more motion.

THANK GOD YOU'RE CONNECTING THINGS

There's always corn,
but I thought of lobbing
opal green butterflies,
a swamp snap of lightning
for the mastery of
suddenly sick
and not knowing
if I should or shouldn't stop,
what stop was,
what I was up against,
a cotton gin,
the cotton plant calling
an extraction of sharp
rubber flavor,
a person to come along,
bearing down
with pants legs
that rip the white
from its seedling eye
out.

Am I that hideous
to nature,
a vagrant released
to pass the egg along,
to spin its threaded
words
between a growing child
and thorns that cling,
about a silence
every doll tries to sing,
every limb longs to breathe,
every fabric moves
to speak:
origins in fields,
slaves to do these things.

THE CONTAGION

I didn't wake for a longer time—

I have guided my bones
through neighborhood voltage,
a collage college
where torn things timber.

There, a sensing.

Everything separates
that must come together.

We, the beetles of bunnies,
eat shoots, leaves, and bury
our kin beneath

A fire that burns everyone's everywhere.

A flood that becomes the ground's
saturates a person's over-layers—

Stop. These years protect
the yellowing beasts
from a history of,
keeps a lemon starch
on hand when things,

Our comatose skeletons
begin to and
quicken our
at the start of.

"Cut out a weight
from the gentlemen"
included in that slice of time
longing to ignore.

HOME BEYOND HOUSE AND HABIT

To include beside you an optional woman,
a hair shirt that never leaves—all else
becomes the conqueror's peasant.

The surrounding targets are also tea leaves,
trailing flavors to feast upon
since God was his own impregnated wife.

I never recall the word for posthumous,
and though the heart you gave
was never to blame, it became

The nothing of center,
a victim derivative
controlled by dying elsewhere.

Maybe the world is always a globe,
mobile and upward, sameness irregular,
an egg feeding flesh of itself—

So how am I not a face indirectly:
phantom eyes, lash-tongue-tooth,
a constant kiss against delirium tremors.

The language prophets are dying off
left with other names, who we become,
a shell's cold hatchling, holding its shape.

People have so much business to burn
where the millions choose to sleep—
She is written inward, & hence, beneficial.

Also, your worth in a deck of cards,
handled, dealt, re-issued. Otherwise, we're
each the same: you in nude-disguise, me.

THE NATURE OF NATURE

A newspaper dress,
please don't mock
my noise, my rustle,
the scripts of my plot,
these chrysanthemums,
this zinnia in flight
attached to a blanket
of humidity's film,
the legs of a beetle
on the sun's larvae
that say as much
as we fruit that contend
with gravity's ghosts,
an apotheosis of gratitude
in the blue stone pot
set to boil
on our borrowed
butterfly's stove—
God's straight line
starlit and prone
up there, in the fields,
flickers to see by,
to slow down on,
to pass the nights without.

THIS WORD WAS NOT IN ANY DICTIONARY

Nothing in the wood
all stacked,
two women spent
in kitchen's yard,
a tractor passes,
releasing daybreak
dew with heaving
 chests in rest now
press the fishbones
of morning's nest.
Bury this word
silent in us
head-down on
earth's applause—
And work the land,
we sticklers for
the carnivorous lamb,
we tender for
our taxes at the door.

MORE WORDS TO PRAISE SOUND

No one wants to steal
the derivative pursuit without an eternity reel

—One ascends while one descends—

Where next Saturday is error-filled
cocktail parties

—Remaining the same as one—

With novocain,
a dark kitsch from the supernatural slowly
fills the room:

Your basic film noir
sans the man with buttons to collar
and smoke from his hand,
waist to head in tilting seesaw or turntable
fashion that crackles out our habits in abbreviated names

Like La La Love, what I feel,
a smidgeon of pride, the anti-Christ
at my heart's heel,
sweet caress, then pause,
then a twitch of
what if ... never.

She'll find her own kind of altar,
and that will be all else, above all, else.

ANARCHY'S TIPTOE

SLIPS INTO CLARITY

We shall linger on verandas
sipping mint juleps,
ice cubes on fences,
poised by the way
we live mostly for now:
Epidemic methods, petting zoos prowled,

“The past is a foreign country;
they do things in other ways just beyond.”

Winter arrived one primary evening
with delight in abundant birdsong;
it was the arrival of the surrogate kings
that caught out our tobacco stains,
the undecided teeth undressing themselves.

Though I knew you in a moment cutting
up my starry-eyed view,
how many glasses of frail moonlight
were relinquished to reach it?
How many directives to release our own inner
hostages? I remain beholden to these eggs of
stenciled-on faces and wounded-out gramophones.

DRESSING THE WAY

It's easier to wear your vest back to front,
what your mother told you would be the death
of your tiny days should you not grant her
complete immortality with your smaller soul power,
pounded out counts of rubber-soled feet.
Barefoot should not be a way to see the vest
for what it betrays: the torso hot with bodice
escapes. Do you remember at school
when that teacher crashed his bike? You watched
ants carry his bloody puddles off, back to summer
cabins and the queen's hut of a loose dirt hill.
You longed to reduce this world to that exact
moment the fleshy bits became too
large for an ant-size meal. But I'm not going to talk
about any place anymore because you don't listen
to destinations as a process. You are marrow
coordinates I hold in a blurry envelope,
torn shoes, broken sky inside her head, watching
the bike toss legs beneath it. Every object suddenly
had a purpose to be stolen, an impurity to lap up,
if I would only watch and listen
to those less vested with the power of plenty,
the permission of superior phonemes, ones
that crawl from this back pocket, turn a corner
past the ambulance who screams at attention
with a mutated ear for the underbelly, knitting
socks that never demand, only asking we see
a way from a path that keeps us safe and criminal.

WHEN THE BRUISE BEGINS TO FLATTER

I stay here on automatic critique, can't type out
the next graffiti read, extreme rambling after-
effect. Or put up your dukes, we won't want
the clamorous organ echoes turning
our lakes into puddles. When you said he
was not nice to her, I couldn't find an end—
how could he have been but ceased the condition,
the act of interaction? My loyalty was one less,
was not a sign of greed or a caution flag in yellow.
Dear volunteer of my youth – is it a negotiation
or are the pamphlets a suspension? I have lived
like weather falling apart, bringing together
the Christ rotations: fat crows, mourning dead,
and ancient shotguns—you are my sleep
wherever you go; but when you go, the rat will run.
Am I your Japanese pancake? Will you behave
like the shoelaced knot foregoing all partners?
When we first began impersonating antlers
we were everywhere, until non-actions became
our mercurial names, untouchable, sliding,
wearing apart on anarchy's tiptoe. Now
the poems I read in bed will cut my hair tomorrow,
incisions back on the surgery of zygotes,
eventually as masquerading cupcakes,
thumbtacks, hostile borders we lean toward
for a renewed sense of reality.
I am at war with the details of my life.
Back in America, I have made this for you—
a corrugated fix of steel & metal for picket fence
stats. In this country, I slide between them
into postures I heal from and postures I pose in.

ANARCHY'S TIPTOE

Who's to say what magic is when we've got vistas
to explore? We'll spend a day at the Hindu temple,
watch a man who loses everything still hold his hands
like being married. And a younger man dreams
of lions, a cave, an imminent slaughter the Lord
intervenes on. His voice took the sword from my hand,
pardoning ballistics. I steal ballet from a brandy flask
in the midst of biblical highways. I had to meet you
crying though, which is often called "cutting it close".
What has all this to do with us? Ultimately, a few drops,
regardless of stories told, get to sparkle
on the cup's quiet rim. The lying puppet then bounced
into my arms, and suddenly, I was a mother.
A massage specialist on the next seat over tapped
her cloven hoof to a single beat and remembered
Santa Claus out loud. Long ago, when the world chirped on,
my father and I lived with an airport. The girl back then
could barely lift her head to nod at traveling villagers;
she was too small to reach the ledger to print her name upon.
They called her "Christmas" in honor of northern stars
falling down around me, lifting us to a safer place
like an old Parisian house covered by vines where
twelve more girls lived in two very straight lines.
My lovelier brothers acquired the nicknames
of Big and Little Dippers. Divest your interest in
how men are the new women. Plagued by family
when the house was wild, a tight corset wouldn't pinch
the waistlines nor squeeze the chests
into sea pails with shovels. My grandmother was a gambler
from Holland like Baby Mountain wandered the banks
of the Seine. Our theaters and music halls drew
passing widows who sang from these pleated hills.
They housed small Dutch dolls with black-brown eyes
the color of shiny marmite. But after twilight, sleep
became an awakening—our antique shop is very still now.
Usually no one goes close enough to notice the noise
of biding time, a vastly off-white habit from patience.
Enclosed in this forgotten basement, the galaxy is
an awfully big place, and I am still feeling
the walks between steps, drowning in part, still
footed forever with this forever project of waking up.

THE CONVENIENCE OF TRUTH FROM THE DARK OF NO THOUGHT

Half lit with half light in twilight
tonight, cutting nicotine twice, a valiant
disguise that people remark or rely upon
blacked-out vocations like the deadly habits
of executioners. Only by a miracle of dying
dinner bells did you eventually photograph
this sprayed-on dream, an opinion bereft
of supply & demand, but where you go walking,
I write tele-scripts for tomorrow's play date-in-
progress. We both grow bowling pin legs
turned toy nightgowns that spin in Goya
paintings across each other's brow, nose
and lips that hint at genetic clumsiness.
Even God is dangerously subject
to damp basements and teeth that smoke,
abundant as a split potato that looks similar
to her swollen version of vaginal fields, and you
outwardly turn as famous as the people
you squirrel within yourself, famous as whales
beaching within that most basic of elements:
a boiling water of the second slicker skin.
Now watch me turn into your intimate book
from whence you will play the baby
bunny back into swaddling blankets the color
of wheat flour, leaving the rest of us
at the bottom of a bottomed-out hat, burning
with whispered-on appetites, waiting to be plucked.

DARK LIGHT AS MIDNIGHT

I'm doing this talking as an arm reaches out
from hunkered-down words, leftover on a plate
of pork fat and greased potatoes sunk
through a sea below the reaches of ankles,
dull hooks, and coffee punctured floats
into hardened coral, an ossified limb some jetty
past pig-like remorse for circumstance culled
in oceanic programming that misleads
our audience not quite tied to the running board
of a bodily jalopy five thousand knots from being
united with me onto you, and I'm still degrees
above a distressed canary's dusty yellow
in its aging coal mine, even more miles above
an iguana who knows no one besides
I told you once, I'll research a robbery again:
Language is the arm of behavior,
a tongue mustard causing sway, belly dances,
circumstance of plush-crushed red, rose-hued
tentacles grabbing the ends of velveteen minutes
that continue to feel like normal in
exchange for us, the "we" we come upon
on shady dark stools in backroom encounters,
sexless winter now, summer's backroom of progress,
wine of the bluer bare sounding songs
of Halloween vowels, or starlit Christmas
decorations in uteri, such as more
than signatures, we are a species, a curtain call
heard in voices, thinking you were among them too.
The next day faded from brown hairs on a limb,
Michelangelo turning crosshairs to sunshine,
people moving on, and instead of anything,
these soft bodies make good lovers breaking ground.

A LINE DRAWN ON THE SIGH OF OBSESSIONS

The occasional cheese and cracker is as occasional
as the common misfit—or is as common as the occasional?
From whatever end, sleep well, dear you who rejoices
to hear that no disaster has accompanied the first morning
gestures, when flies begin to stir an essentially tragic ape
who refuses to take on tragically the merit
of his own rejections at coffee, juice, meats and cheeses.
Dear anxious brown-throated cricket, I open my chest's
isolation, a bare cliché of chirping kidneys hidden;
the ant factories produced there are aloof,
imitating most common enemies, crawling through sleeves
of pilgrims, dilettantes that whine with friendly wind,
welled mariners too swell with spring's maroon,
preparing tomorrow and the remaining mental
cologne you spoke at me in vociferous grief.
Even then, the empty kidneys were also found
moving freely about the cabin as in so many procedures
of the patented body: limbs, restless artifacts,
taken on the chin in fractured fabrics that sleep
along an exchange of happy cancers
prone to winning. You imagine the zones
of transubstantiation, a calico sky in an earlobe's backdrop
that jumps in the window with a hardened din
of antagonists hidden, growling quite naturally low,
souffléed and applied lengthwise to your see-through mirror,
your spike in appetite for criminal trajectories—
You want wolves with beards? What about little lambs
that live to slaughter? My right to be lonely? Or self-
containment? Riding an agenda of static-free confetti,
tell them we said "Sayonara" with our tongues affixed
to the smallest god; there is no zero. I too will settle
for this material-sealed time, where knitting you was
the most regulatory fun, after our mutual pony rides, to date.

WHEN CATHOLIC GIRLS GO RIDING

My Mexican pony turned again and found
himself adrift amidst the Bambis of the Eastern shore.
North Carolina is just as lovely this time of year,
with soft brown eyes that look the same as air.
I ride along, forgetting my comb, so I need
to find a pattern for an A-line skirt.
Has your dad only got one eye? What's he left
to see the rest with? On the other side of other words,
you can't tie a person down with nylon pure.
You can break them out in corduroy patterns.
You can house them in with herringbone.
I don't usually take to women with leisure class
sports jackets. So if I was overheard in stating,
"I'm going to buy a massive ring with conflict
diamonds," would you still admit our liaisons?
Do you like my paisley-serged seams
with turquoise ribbon trimmings?
You could truly become my only glue,
with a touch of open destiny. Except, I don't
believe in disbelief, ever the hushed-out cop.
Whatever you do, don't be yourself instead.
Forego the silence and solitude. Pull on
this chocolate brown wool appliqué, fully lined.
With each attempt, she dropped his body
like an acorn's leaf, a loaf of sugar melted
into hardened human limbs.
Cancer hadn't taught us anything by then.
Now, the rictus spreads into my nasal areas.
But I'm wearing this bib of rib-stitched Gold Lamé
with self yoke and peekaboo creases that deplete
the injuries my keeper keeps crossing out.
I'm sure I've worn my welcome down,
but I kick his sides, driving across these frictions
on my dearest mule, sad to leave some beside
the ocean's curbside, along the road to hell,
one stop after heaven's gated chartreuse.
God nervously awaits on the other side
in her mocha acetate A-line with hand-dyed lace
and subtle snake bows tugging at the hemline.

I DISCOVERED THE KNIFE TODAY

Took the chicken out of the bag:
two legs, two wings, one thigh between us.
Living in the midst of pupils-up-the-sleeve,
I mean *real* rabbits, dirtier than before,
we became our water's main supply.
At the onset of corrected vision, I heard you
sigh in a voice decidedly low, so much so
that they gaze down the valley to see
the bull's eye of Sunday's thickness,
a victim's warm night, open heart on
thoroughfares for the nerve of useless things.
We were damaged with disrepair,
the body replacing itself with paper lanterns
of shadows of bones of a midnight light,
chased by prayer. I'd given myself sideburns
by then, where none had been collected,
rather than listen to an angel
with wings glued loosely to eyeball sight.
Who else will make the time capsule go by,
quick as silver, pools where wild horses roam?
We are in the wall of democracy a balm
to defend the mirror against—an ostrich never
buries her head or an egg without a fable
to tell the truth against:
When Russians used pencils,
we developed pens at great cost,
just as a secret nerve connects everything
in us too, but we hold out for stapled words
on syntax & grammar to draw these maps apart.
The prize-giving rowboat with flailing fingers
dips on puddles of vacinated cheer—
without the sun's right arm,
I become one less limb in the face of insight,
melting broken crimson thin enough
to flex the world against. Soon everyone
will behold themselves in serrated teeth
that bear us out in the folds of flesh and sky.

POSSESSING THE SUM OF OUR PARTS

Like a little princess leaves, we wonder
where the dying girl goes
without a replica of herself-in-pocket,
O Russian doll.

We can't say "new" anymore—
so where's my former hat, my older spouse
exactly before appliances were written
off the charts, hung apart from
old-time things. I'd like to fall
for your refreshing state of mind,
a half-meted snow or Annie Oakley
statuette hanging from my crystalline neck.
For the heel of her fingernail sway,
we will eat deer as a dry snack food,
or this lurking mass will block
the sun just to hear my favorite new
object typed apart:

"Beatrice Ford resembles a Virgin."
Forever after, feel the edge of elastic
creamy seas that cinch us in
by the water's edge—
she's the one who disappeared
from the previously mentioned
soon-to-be queen
foretelling the evils and myths of men:
every character
swims in the mix to be now and then.