



From her notebooks

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From her notebooks Mike Kalish / Marthe Reed
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Cover image: *Elegy (1)* Mike Kalish. Vitreous enamel on copper; encaustic & soot on canvas.

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(from) what I remember by Mike Kalish

All other poems by Marthe Reed

I remember the inevitability of ashes appeared in
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All collages (paper), by Marthe Reed





Mirror (2017)

*you came and I was crazy for you
and you cooled my mind that burned with longing -- Sappho*

Tanka

(2000/2004 Perth/Lafayette)

for Mike

The crickets call and call
for one who does not come.
Their song was mine
until today:
you've returned like spring's
long-awaited blossoms.

(from) what I remember

(MK; 2019, Syracuse)

1

Parrots come to strip the rose stems
Scrape the quince
Lick the grevillea that smells of honey
Burnt or starting to spoil

2

Her back turned for sleep. Her back
a scar, downy hair, smooth curve of pelvis.
At the border of dreams she
Kicks, nails hard and sharp.

a natural history: drumlin garden cemetery

(Dec 28, 2017: Syracuse)

MAMMALS (yard, cemetery, trees)

whitetail deer

raccoon

from Powhatan

or a Proto-Algonquian root *ahrah- koon-em, meaning

“[the] one who

rub, scrubs and scratches with its hands”

eastern cottontail rabbit

meadow vole

taken by cat

eastern gray tree squirrel

eastern black tree squirrel

a mutation

racing shadow on the gray barked oak

eastern chipmunk

from the Ottawa word ajidamoonh

or the Ojibwe word ajidamoo, “one who descends trees
headlong”

headlong in-and-over the slates

whistlepig

aka woodchuck, groundhog, marmot, monax “the digger”

across the way running to its burrow

across the way a clutch of kits scurrying into cover

across the way fierce on its hind legs hissing

BIRDS (yard, cemetery, sky)

house sparrow

tree sparrow

dark-eyed junco

goldfinch

housefinch

“rosefinch”

eastern migrant

“Hollywood finches” of the 1940’s

cardinal

rose-breasted grosbeak
white-breasted nuthatch
american robin
 hunting earthworms red
 annelid hermaphrodites
 cheerup cheerup cheerup -tuk
carolina wren
red-winged blackbird
mourning dove
 sipping water run-off flowing down the drive
 walking over neighbor's flat roof
 head-in head-out, parallax
gray catbird
 small thornbush bird singing while hidden
 slate colored mockingbird
 "of the carolinas"
cowbird
american crow
 iridescent
 mobbing at sunset over the trees
 susceptible to west-nile
european starling
yellow-throated vireo (?)
red-tailed hawk (flying)
herring gull (flying)
northern flicker (across the way)
 knocking from the high trees
downy woodpecker (across the way)
 knocking from the high trees
wild turkey (across the way)
 rushing rushing
turkey vulture (across the way)
 sunning wings spread among the graves
 two days running

TREES (yard cemetery street)

Acer acer acer maple | |
hedge black amur
Japanese
Norwegian
paperbark

red

sugar

tamarack, hamatack

“wood for snowshoes”

Algonquin eastern

larch

copper beech

American beech

cucumbertree

northern magnolia

blue magnolia

through southern Ontario

shining tree

rowan tree (orange

berries

red berries)

yellowwood

basswood

red mulberry

white mulberry

shagbark hickory

bitternut hickory

black walnut

butternut

northern catalpa (whorled leaf

cigar tree

white oak

willow oak

black oak

red oak

scarlet oak

silver oak

burr oak

chestnut oak

pin oak shumard oak

shingle oak

horse chestnut
conker tree
beergarden tree
pink
horse chestnut fringed
petals with red or

yellow spots
red and yellow
buckeye
bush buckeye
Ohio buckeye

coffeetree Kentucky
coffeetree
toxic
cabinetmakers
carpenters
hemlock pruche du Canada

waxyfruit hawthorn
white ash and
white fir white
birch and red cedar

Osage orange
flowering
dogwood (spring white
blossoms russet
leaves in autumn
crab apple sweet crabapple

Norwegian spruce (tonewood) spruce
-beer for scurvy
Dawn Redwood
meta
sequoia
deciduous bright
pale green
foxy-red in fall

amid the eastern urban woodlands

Time as dissociable from space

(March, 2011: Lafayette)

Time dissociable from space. Disordered. Almond trees, dolls, irrigation channels. Rows of trees planted in lines. A girl. Blond hair struck behind her ears. Nothing stays in place. Memory performs the work of elision, erosion. Recollection. A rubric of performance: a girl in gold pumps, a girl in red and pink. A girl *dancing to the music*, and a row of dolls for dressing up. Dolls, dolly, dolled up. An obsessive sense of (appearances). Lack. The logic of identification renders rupture explicit.

Interrogating its absence. Dust flies about her ankles and calves, the rake scratching at fallen almonds, heaping them into rows. Windrows. Wind. An exacerbated distrust. Neither the past nor the present entirely visible. Whipping the wind. Her body. (Body). Bent to its task. An imaginary construction, her hips and thighs, lines in red. Her back. A sacrificial contract. Subverts its— The explosive return of the imaginary zone. A chimera. Lash in hand bent to his work.

If born, if. A line. Cut. Lies on a table. We cannot guarantee your safety or that of. *If*. Another welt, an exquisite band. Anguished. Par-tu-rition, laparotomy: a moving point, a scar, and a certain line of attack. A pointed argument. Of the past, the present distress: a single frequency aimed at demonstrating a truth, a methodical process: also disordered. Gowned and lashed to the table, no doll, though dressed for the occasion. Knives, arguments. Bodies. Two (bodies). From gut. Plucked.

which is

(October 24, 2003; Lafayette)

a pause which is
which waiting, a breath

roses dampen the earth petals
sweetening the air

sun petals
a perfume or

rhythm pauses
falls

petals beading
a texture established by opposition

(he) falls an opening
a line a crushed flower

petals dampen
her skin

sweetening (she
falls and does not

pause on petals crushed
memory scores a line

in opposition petalled memory
opening or establishing a

line (the play of a scent
under her

tongue a fine beading
a pause or breath

which is not
waiting over her skin

petals, he a
scored breath

there is no opposition in this
waiting defers an established rhythm

(he
inhales a scent of crushed petals

flesh which is
memory

(his tongue cannot alliterate these pleasures)
a pause or flower which

opens memory
which is

hers a taste for
heat the sun a fine beading over her skin

a pause (petalled
which is which

 falls
is a petalled rhythm

 alliterates desire

Two Sisters

(May, 17 2000; Perth)

1

dugong and the moon (sisters), two. lily roots and wild lotus, sisters. dugong and moon digging. fruit. lily and wild sisters. two moons, digging. lotus, lotus fruit and dugong. wild sisters and the moon. knee-deep in green, green stems. water. lily sisters, two dugongs adrift in the moon (water)

two women (sisters). gather lily roots and lotus (wild lotus), a game. lilies and lotus. where a game (she) looses them, lotus. abandoning day. tossed into the sky (sky). sister game: lily and lotus fruit. a game – evening star, evening rises (copper body). moon's. gold and fat. moon follow lotus into night

2

thin, thin moon. one (sister) thins, grows thin. in the sky like lotus, a game. lotus sister (night) sister. moon wanes, looses herself becomes. (moon) mere bones. moon. wild lotus moon looses her bones (lotus bones) into the sea. green sea and lotus stems. she (one). two sisters: dugong and the moon

dugong, knee-deep in green, and the moon. dugong digs (lily sister) wild lilies. lily roots and wild lotus. (two) wild moons and lotus. eat. moon eats. dugong and moon. listless sea moon. grows fat (moon) and wide. lily root sea, sisters. wild moon and dugong, wide in a listless sea. sisters

3

red planet's twin (moon), but two sisters. dugong and moon. two (red and the moon) sisters. moon rises, looses herself. anew. red planet (abandoning day) abandon. grown round and gold moon floats, one floats in (air).

inexorably drawn (pull of the other). floats. in evening (sky). one.

one. dugong, wild lily sister (one) calls. a rhythm. lotus sister, adrift in green, green lotus stems and the sea. abandoned to green, gone wild. wild lotus calls flung from the sea. (wild lily calls and lotus), sky lotus. dug from the sea (wild lily sister) and flung (dugong's). mantras to the season of rain

October

(1992, Encinitas)

autumn seeps into my skin
light increasingly slant:
a poultice

sucking ache out of bone
and blood,
leaves

scatter into
corners of the garden
initiating their secret

mouldy deaths
thought too whispers away
into the early light

shaking down the bared
boughs of trees
no more than this:

silence of black loam
crumbling into itself
a gathering of seeds deep underneath

Two Fragments

from **Invocation of the Space**

(April 1985: Providence)

prayer incantation dream
garlands of hibiscus
around the ocean cradles, bouys
blue water surround and rain on us
--there is little to drink

Here drink this
fermented blood fermented milk
it tastes of this place
we are the land we inhabit:
kangaroo eucalypt desert

...

from **Singers of Jenny Lind**

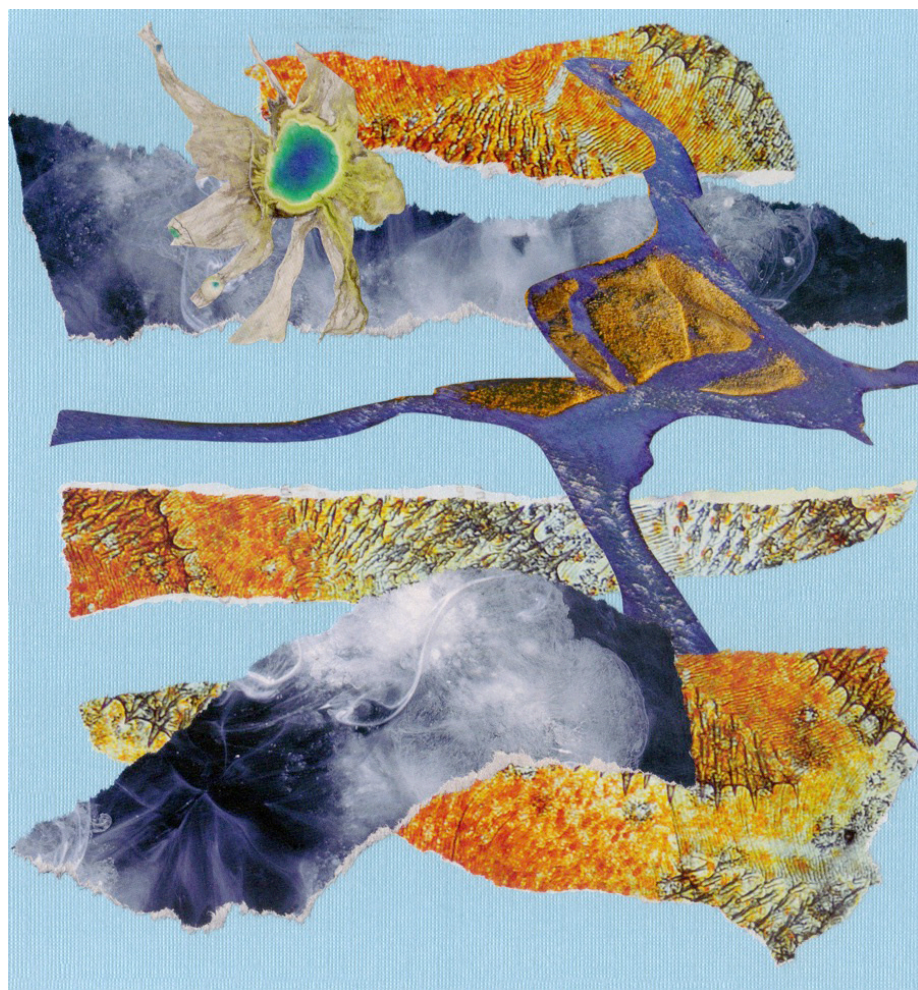
(1983; San Diego)

...

whispers of men
scratch out of their sleep like dogs
panting in the shade women
tend roasts pare apples
pacify children singers of Jenny Lind



Humming sea (2015)



Rivers (2013)



Bride price (2012)



Subterfuge (2011)



Geometries of fire (2010)

I remember the inevitability of ashes

(August 10, 2014: Syracuse)

I remember the clemencies and clotting heat of summer,
her impossibly long hair sheared away, secure in an ivory
box.

I remember blood eschews paradise.

I remember drowning amid the labyrinth and the secret
potency of drawers.

I remember flowers venture everything, nothing.

I remember ricefields and lakefish, chilis afloat like sullen
gems.

I remember acacias' fierce refusal of shade abjures solace,
how night resides in Gaudi's profligate geometry.

I remember the inevitability of ashes.

I remember the seas, the milk and choler of the southern
coast.

I remember an island requites its single alleyway, night
jasmine exceeding the tolling of bells.

I remember his laughter, fountain waking the air of our
rooms.

I remember the audacity of daylilies and the cat's tongue.

I remember cicada-song is also the swain's.

I remember the rupture of woody red husks and white
flesh, of rojak and counterfeits.

I remember the beach-break and the break further out.

I remember how the sea burns like a winter lamp.

I remember gardenias, the porch heavy with scent, their
furled petals, dark leaves.

I remember you and forget nearly everything else.

I remember the failure of recognition, its blue silence
drowning us.

I remember your mouth.

I remember its heat, the sun burning away grief.

I remember these sentences, how they will stop, queer
caskets split open and fled like shooting stars.

I remember and refuse to stop.

