

fossil

DO YOU EVEN KNOW YOU DID SOMETHING
WRONG YOU DUMB ANIMAL?

I just can't get a read on you
& this magnifying glass

is opaque but still I see a fossil
of a dinosaur with a peg leg

& a name that is unmistakably
yours, even when read this way

look, all I want is to hug your
biggest tooth, to feel your scaly

breath against my too human
humdrum face, fog my unfocused

lens, drive a claw into my pillow
cheek, a nail of a kiss piercing

deeper than the usual affection
& through all this blood I

will know that we are two monsters
totally comfortable with sex in beds.

CRETACEOUS MEDITATION

Imagine you are a Tyrannosaurus Rex.
Imagine you are a Dromiceiomimus.
Imagine you are an Ankylosaurus.
Imagine you are a Bambiraptor.

At some point there was a dinosaur
exactly your height & weight
except it wasn't lazy or ugly.

LAVA! LAVA! LAVA!

Today we are fierce like a pack of dinosaurs,
except instead of dinosaurs, milk shakes.

I wanted to make a list of all the ways
I've attributed ugliness to you, but now

I bury myself in a tar pit of molten cheese
& dig my way out with saltines.

I still haven't apologized, & still never
intend too. I have eight million legs & eyes

& they are all terrible, fearsome even.
This had to be the worst kind of trampling,

what with our reputations & all, I mean,
these lips don't coat themselves, you know?

Let us set something in stone: Apology is
an invention that is still a few years off

& that is why I can never be sorry, but
what I can tell you now is that, when your

fossil is found, I hope everyone will love it
just like I do & though I can never promise

anything this sweet, or even milkshake sweet,
what I can promise is to hate every evolution

that removes you further & further from me.
Now, where are those saltines, there's work to do.

THE THING ABOUT DINOSAURS IS THAT
THEY ONLY GET FAMOUS AFTER THEY DIE.

You keep telling me it's only a photocopy
of a dinosaur, that his teeth aren't scary
rather, they're duplicates, & duplicates
of duplicates at that, that that is no more
scary than any great waste of ink, that
the fear of dinosaurs is based on the price
of toner alone, but you can't make those
cavities any less real, I think, nor the fact
that every hole in his collated head is
an exact, though concaved, reproduction
of my arms, my legs, my purple lungs
& as I've always said, if I'm going to be
digested, I prefer it come with the dignity
that a stomach offers & not the slow
disgrace of being worn away by tongue
& spit, which isn't digestion at all, no,
it's more like recycling, that is, if recycling
was just tubs stuffed with nightmares &
breaking up, bags teeming with rats, or
maybe the neighbor boy who screams
like rats, & this death is horrible, & this
death is scary, & this death has already
been scanned into the imaging unit, &
if you leave, this dinosaur will surely eat me,
& then he'll put on my glasses, & wear
all my t-shirts, & kiss you in that one place
that only I get to kiss you, & he'll become
an excellent copy of me, & you will never
be the wiser, that is, until he gargles, &
rather than gargling what you will hear is me,
the actual me, complaining about the cramped
& damp conditions, about the loss of skin,
about how I miss you most of the time, but
especially at night when I can still hear you
snore, yeah, that's when I'd miss you the most.

RECENT SIGHTINGS AT THE MOUND

Lung sand, what are filling me with?
Evolution, I hope, I feel I have so much
growing to do if I am ever to become
the kind of mater I believe myself to be.

Triclops triceratops on tricycle. In Biblical terms,
this is often thought of as, "the first circus," &
actually where the holy trinity has been derived.

What we fail to discuss, again & again & again
is any kind of holiday that might be possible.

Pyramid of blood & spit, the result of hard
toothbrushing & rotting hair, show me
every star you've ever wanted to point at &
I will look with great interest & better hygiene.

BRUSH YOUR SCALES LITTLE DINO

Has a dinosaur ever licked itself clean
with its tongue like a cat? Discuss.

There are, I must say, so many ways
to be clean, why this one? I mean,

I am sure that dinosaurs often found
themselves buried deep in the crotches

of many things, but, I believe, & think
research would agree, this was much more
of an "eating the ass-end of a horse" move
than anything even resembling cleanliness.

This is defined as your prudish sense
of clean, your sterilized nipples & plastic
coverlet over the king of lizards sized
mattress. What cannot be dismissed is how
clean a pit of ash can make you if you
kill enough fatty reptiles in it.
& if I am to cover myself in a layer
of blood I am covered in blood. Not dirt.

IT WAS A DISCOVERY!

When I discover my dinosaur I will name it after you
as my way of saying that I'm sorry for the avalanche
& for allowing you to roll away with it, & so he won't
feel bad using your toothbrush, or taking your calls,
& in your honor, he will eat things both horrible
& awesome, the moon being one & cats being
the other, & when I clean his teeth I will think of you
then too, & tell him that his namesake was allergic
to moon rock, but how that didn't stop him from leading
a large, unruly pack of cats to a kind of revolution absent
of meows or bloodshed, & I will miss you, but be tired
already, of your name.

A TRIP TO THE DENTIST MEANS NOTHING

Bathtub full of reincarnation.
Serrated tooth. Dance of specters
saving the last dance for last.
Dangerous bloods. Floor model
of bones available for test-drive.

What there is to pick has been picked
clean, & what phrases we had
to turn are out of steering fluid &
I see myself, bulwarked; tomorrow
is coming & our intentions are signaled.

Of all the dinosaurs we continue to talk
about, which would you ask when you
needed help moving? I can think of a ton
I wouldn't, but most of them are all dead
anyway. This is a serious question, I think.

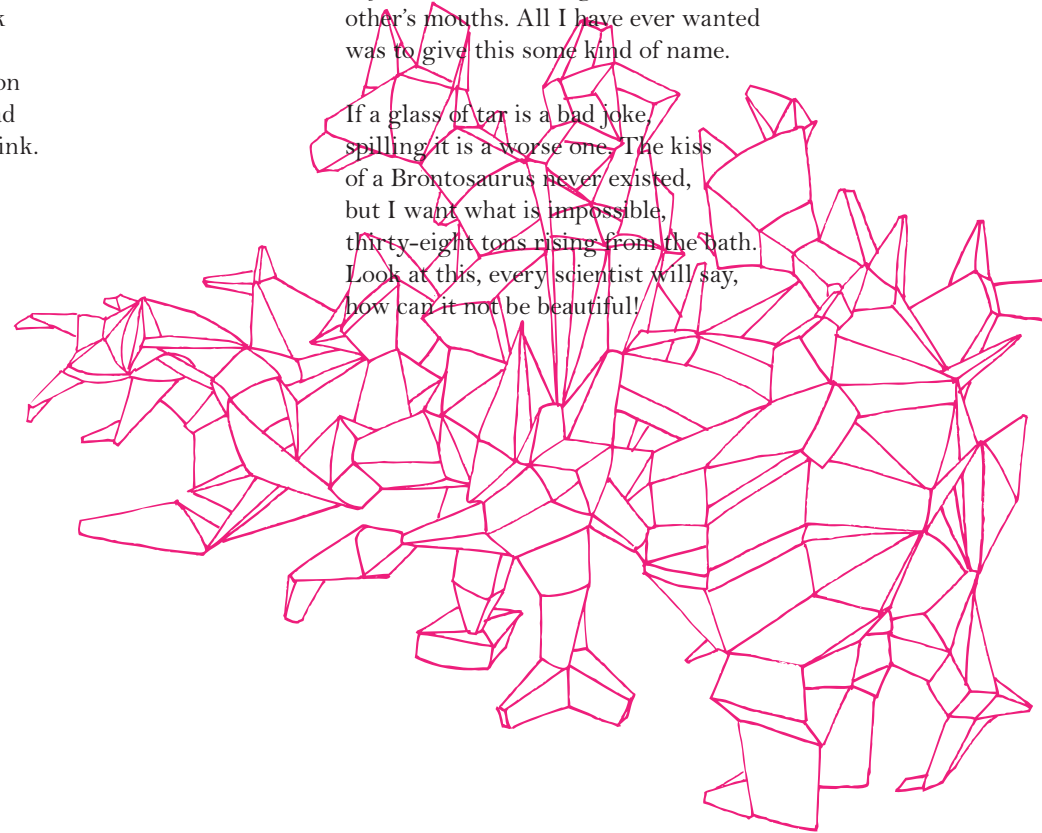
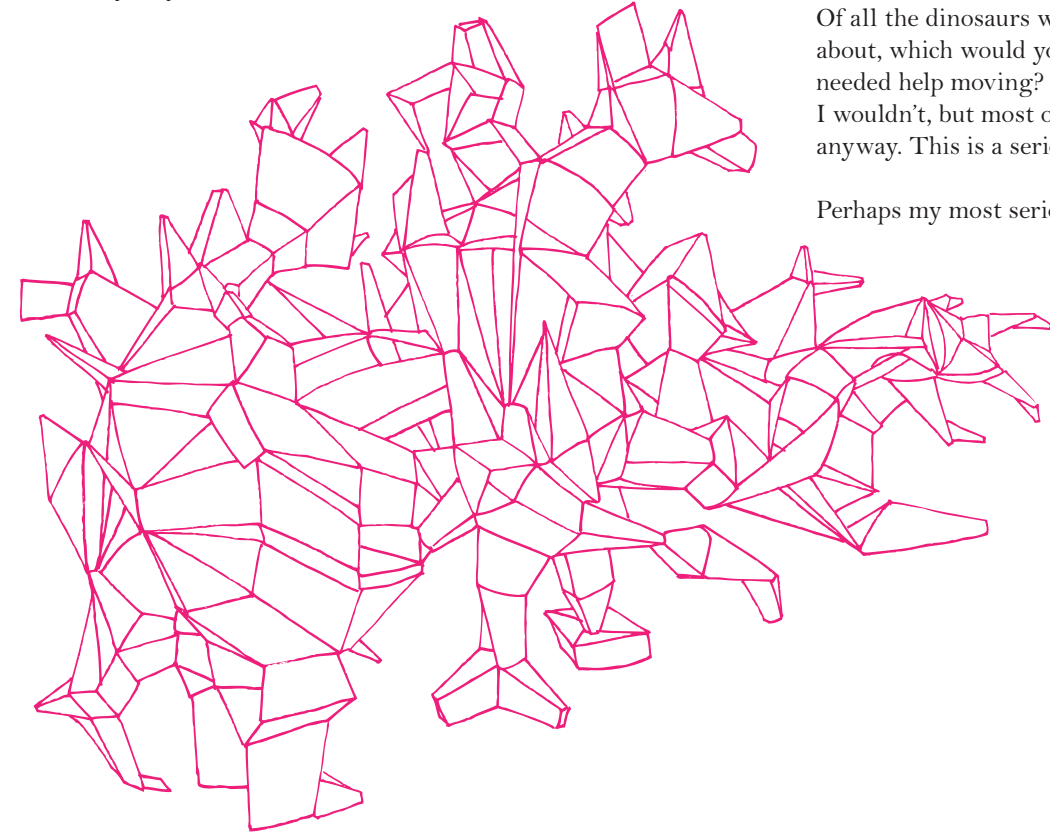
Perhaps my most serious one ever.

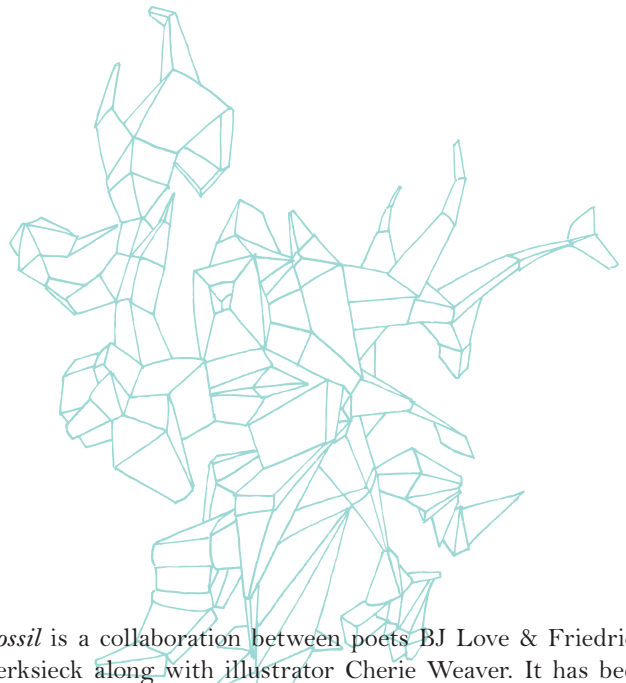
RAWR RAWR RAWR

When you leave a dinosaur
a glass of milk you leave the glass
forever. You spill an idea
& it looks stupid staining
the carpet. The things that are
wrong with you don't have names.

All history is according to
carbon, which is no more
the history of our own breath,
that time when we sat, face-to-face,
& just breathed through each
other's mouths. All I have ever wanted
was to give this some kind of name.

If a glass of tar is a bad joke,
spilling it is a worse one. The kiss
of a Brontosaurus never existed,
but I want what is impossible,
thirty-eight tons rising from the bath.
Look at this, every scientist will say,
how can it not be beautiful!





Fossil is a collaboration between poets BJ Love & Friedrich Kerksieck along with illustrator Cherie Weaver. It has been produced for the Dusie Kollektiv No. 5 (www.dusie.org).

The book is constructed from various handmade sheets pulled at the Lost Arch Paper Mill in Alabama for the front cover, Clearprint Vellum for the text, & Chipboard for the rear cover.

Images & Bell MT fonts have been reproduced with photopolymer on a Vandercook No. 4 Proof Press at the Small Fires Press Memphis studio (www.smallfirespress.com). Book design, letterpress printing, & binding done by Friedrich Kerksieck in the Fall of 2011.

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