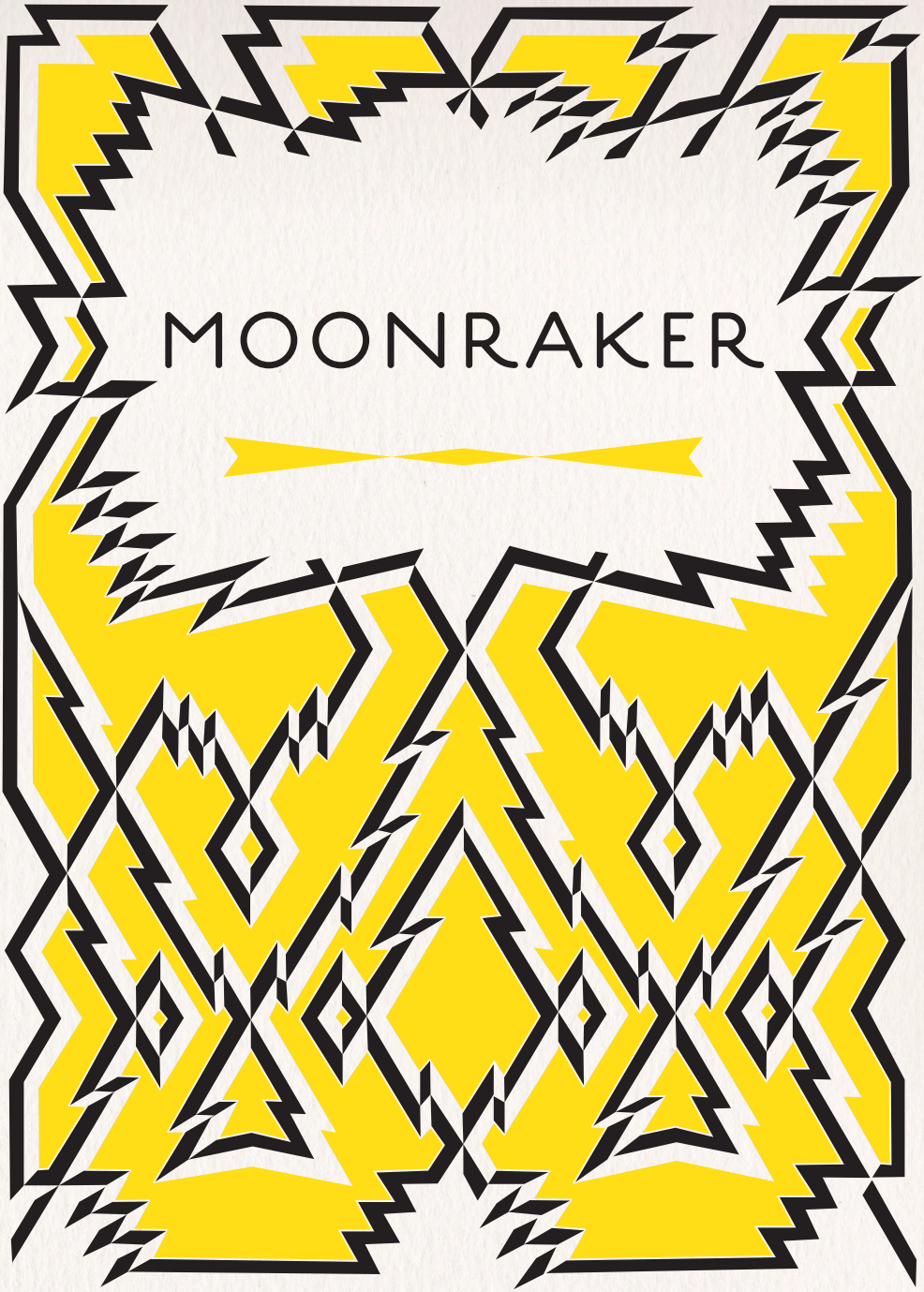
MOONRAKER



VINCENT ZOMPA

Moonraker

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DUSIE KOLLEKTIV
September 2011
Brooklyn

: MOONRAKER

There's a leap of knowledge in that cist,
a wink of tampering in the seven granules.

Hair in notebook,
cotton balls, the tombs behind nests.

I walk out of the sound of the cure horn
through fuzz at radio boundaries
where rules and local animals change.

I haven't seen your head by mine in weeks,
withdrawn into Etruscan.

Sign of the cuttlefish handshake, I belong

to the tiny filaments in your arms and legs,
the sweat cord flotilla of your neck.

I never know how to cure you,
kept outside the insects' hum.

They drain your face, they even out your dreams.

Someone brought them to us and said,
The human ear is water, its shouts still frozen in ice.

That human is shown an unending pasture to buy.
He says No, I can't buy it.

There is business being done here.

A MOTHERFAST CLOUD

Let us make everything right. Did you know
Slippery Easel or Marked Man?

Did your life vest cross a little sea
without you, nibbling on sharks?

The underwater misses his grandmother.
A wood floor, a mud house; there are tinder

sticks in the their lines. My brother
rolled up in a ball around honey.

Crying is the heart's way of stabbing: Please,
let everything be a little wet.

The hands are for covering.
Eight blooms wait inside the finger lakes.

You can't wrap a lake in a finger
or wedding band, I tell my wife, the Scythian.

Let us simply thirst, like starlings
with open mouths

unmoving on the dull cathedral lawn.
Put a sock in it birds.

I found a noise under them.
I put my fingers in their mouths.

: MOONRAKER

Where I wake, blue and ungainly,
a hair pulled long in the wrong places.
The roof sings, a child in ice.

Where the bell spire prays.
Growing with a plant's dim grace,
an entire life a series of slurred moments.
Where we tire on the rope swing, catch

a Japanese couple's eyes, get burned
by other expectations. I think of other places
to go to the day before, when you waited

among those quiet Irish lakes at twilight,
and Mercury pulsed in the underglow,
hidden between two shadow moons.

I bought you the buzzing slippers.
I was the one leaving notes around the house:

Bird petulant, bird acrobat,
upon the toilet paper's last sheet,
a script written in prison.
On the whale you watched decompose

I wrote, Da coisa impenetrável –
thank you for the blue shirt.
It glowed like a skin in the gloaming.

: MOONRAKER

And then the skin phone rang

and then the skin phone coaxed
to me or through me

Of wafting of solitude of sorrow

of saying

I pick up a stick and turn
it into a telephone

In long creaking pastures
late night smoke is the next day's clouds

Then tiny yellow flowers
glint in the cigarette grass

By the time we all surfaced the situation had changed

storms of amber through
the corner of your stare

And then the skin phone rang
and then the skin phone coaxed

My dazed goat and his orb
the white lights on the hill dissipate

Of wafting of solitude

of sorrow
of saying

(The desert has eaten so many bones)

: MOONRAKER

I kept walking and two pelicans in the dark tree
cleaned themselves,

waited over the filthy waters.
I saw a canopy with blue and yellow flags
like a circus.

There soccer players in the dust, a chestnut horse.

No one knew my new name, third vowel a target.
I kept walking.

I thought of her sleep on that other continent,
a cat wintering silently, her white

nightgown, her miniature bridges.
I met the pickpocket in Plaza Botero.

He said Once you have entered my life
I can never forget you. I will destroy you

in memorizing you. In green camouflage
he touched me

with open sores, with scars across Plaza Botero.
I said Every time I get on a plane I never return.

The pigeons all rose as I tried to flee, but
he shadowed my every step.

He said There is nowhere you sleep,
you sleep everywhere.

SOLARIS

How do things drift away?
Dribbling pearls from the other corridor,
receptors hold up the tonic sunset,

calling down worlds off the palisades.
Who ever heard what she was trying to say
interpreted it wrong,

slapping birds against the vessel.
Sniffling on the fire escape, sliding
with a walking stick over ice.

She brings the beautiful bloodshot
out in this picture. One child
hunting with a knife and fork,

one child brazenly eating our leg.
For five minutes there will be no gravity
while the station adjusts.

Describe the ocean.
It gathers like molasses,
letter caught in my teeth.

Psychology regards the body,
sex regards the brain.
Keep this door close.

: MOONRAKER

Here I am, mitosis:
the dirty hill and the white river.

Blue sanitarium flames fall out the bottom,
and I'm smiling: dust, butter dish,

drain sludge that won't stop gurgling.
I gurgle back at it.
A hand in a circle is a tourniquet.

There is no more time for solvents, you say,
The coast is salt.

Stepped out of the wall
but couldn't drop yourself.

A hand in a circle is a spyglass.
A hand in a circle is a trumpet.

The dogs lather up the vest.
That day's sun in afterglow by Hell Gate Bridge.

That glare, I say, riven and rayless.
An Other Man was actually the title before this.

A Dog's Lung was the real title.
No More Kindness was actually the title.

: MOONRAKER

Hey, lay the burden down together, they said,
so we told each other versions of the story

where each had to go to prison for life,
and it was our last day together.

I bought three white roses,
three red roses.

I hoped you'd finally understand,
and we'd reverse the obscenity
we were taking part in,

sullen and golden,

floating in the spray of each other's vitriol.
The poem about your hair beside me

on the new white,

like strings I wanted to play
but hadn't been trained on that.

I trained only in dreams,
the blind currency of plant life,

finding weird blooms by the roadside,

the temptations of amanita
and the slow black minute hand.

I trained only in the skin's folds,
sometimes living only at night,

or lying in bed in the morning,
watching the blue sky

as the airplanes float by far away
every few minutes.

HIMALAYAN MUSK DEER

Where the network hunts, protect,
limitless air-plunged products halt in a cedary dusk.

This coterie of love objects,
their fecund stares,

their acrobatics forgotten
into the love-molecular imposter of dignity.

We show the house our tough frames and talk hurly-burly.

It is slow walking around the sun's hurled head,
our voices licking rooftops off,

piquant and kicking an invisible border:

that thirst of mind at you, that booty-shake
walking around the noonday with crossed eyes.

: MOONRAKER

Cannibalism is return to sender,
scorched and screeching at the holiday edge.

It graphs lies, refuses maps,
tries to eat all your words.

Cannibalism is the heart's way of saying
Sorry we're not hungry.

It does not touch the quivering beside you
and think this is skin.

Cannibalism is nihilism's crazy older brother.

It graphs lies, drinks poems,
tries to eat worlds.

It says go see the cathedrals, speaks
of wind in the foothills of the Andes.

Cannibalism slept on our eye,
crawled into a child's hand.

It washes your feet,
cannibalism bathes the graying face with sweat.

It lists our robotics on the soft back
of a calf's ear.

Cannibalism eats your laugh.
It is no more emotional alchemy.

It stretches drums overnight
on the wounds of the washerwomen,

leaves wolves in your lover's hair.

: MOONRAKER

Every time Não Identificado plays

I write the poem to your voice
and our legs and our songs

Every time the slow yellow train slips by
I say I don't need to be anywhere

and I place two little ferns
on your eyelid

I know each of your plants is a temple
to other lives

The epiphytes hang by the mirror

Upstairs the pianist rehearses
his suffering green dirge

I love to play you strange songs I hear
because I know you love strange songs

the dueling computer birds of Tayrona

the mules who bite the earth
and chew all night around me

And the sea's whipped weeds
write in our language of knots

about another place
where deer tread the beach silence

at dawn and they swing their wet eyes
toward you and you dream

: MOONRAKER

Sometimes it takes portent behind the voice,
one he should have recognized,

but fell in love with that otherworldly light
green and pulsing in the night.

Fell in thrall of stories
of the sea, its albatross stench,

a black moon in black ice.

And trapped within the arms outstretched,
her round, excited voice and hangover eyes,

toes puzzled in moss and vapor,
the canyon whose mouth stretched out the vowels:

Terminus. Crosses were ladders,
chairs pummeled in doorways.

The lesser-known skills rub off into this dark,
no eyes or ears left to flag a car,

to position a rhyme in the moonbeam
or wear a magic man's shirt through his shirt.

Today is light for the first time in weeks,
brown water, glimpses of signs.

Someone says Psychology of the selves,
walking down Broadway.

And the lights drain.
And the rope evaporates from the flexing neighborhood.
Blind child, monocle, face.

: MOONRAKER

Without love, we renounced.

We enunciated. We left, were bereft,
ever-solving kings of dyspeptic dilations.

It takes scouts to believe their counterparts,
gilded women, virgins on high poles and snow,

glimmers of love, catapults, roses that vow
and slather themselves. Bold hands, old hands,

the cultivation of the morning line.

The killing of one self just brings another self,
though that place wasn't that place either.

One can only do the best job one can do.
Come and take me please.

I need to be shaken and put away
in a night's wind. Say
Get out of here, skeleton.

To prevent madness from setting,
the cold is beginning, my friend,
where light over the old cigar man's corner blinks.

HECTOR HYPPOLITE

Running into town for a buzz
they call me The Spectrum.

I wear no wire
under any of my orbs.

How grass turns into moonlight and then
shreds of sun fluffing down to greet us.

Hello, new season. Hello to you, sermon.
I awoke with a wilderness bite, the first warm morning.

Toiling in Sagittarius light, Mathania gazed
like a freighter to the rooftop.

I leaned back in the steamer chair until the roof
gave way. Then I was on the phone in the sedan.

Then I was whistling under Toussaint Bridge
listening for love echoes. Jean told me

about one world under the sea and one world
beneath the land. Only one is hell, he said,

and his eyes split into laughter like charcuterie.

In the center of Port-au-Prince is a park.
It is hard to extract yourself from me.

: MOONRAKER

I tell you of the days we lived
in a forest and ate moss from the trees,

the days we slept in a volcano
under the tied tongue of a giant.

Don't smile when I say this: it is assumed
that the cataleptic catalyst whispered
to you through that morning's fogged ultrasound.

There were flames in the outer corridor
heard through a child's megaphone
spoken into a telephone.

Don't know for sure, but it's love
that steps out of the pellet gun wound
into the apothecary of the world.

I pardon every hand
with a dash of cigarette smoke.

But science is just now fondling the heart,
that thing made up mostly of space.

We fill it up with wine.
We stomp each other's white shoes and say Baptism.

Then we're dancing,
thrilled by a stirring cadaver.

I tell you of the wandering eye in my bloodline.

You can sometimes see it in pictures,
drifting from its mooring.

I tell you of the days we lived
barefoot on the island

and built steam towers
to collect the high lava fruit.

: MOONRAKER

The late afternoon fades in blue light,
a white line of plane.
Where is the poem, you ask.

Why it's right here, my dear,
behind your ear.
We dig the hard dust.

We play games with each other's mouths.
The radiator sings bees, and the mirrors
of this apartment connect with each other.

If you look in the Mexican one by the bed
you can follow the others all the way
out the front door.

The light traveling that path
you don't pay attention to.
I watch you on it from the bedroom

like an animal hidden in a bush.
You tell me your uncles carried
small broken mirrors in their back pockets.

They said they were used
to connect to those on other stars.
One star was named Dust.

I HEARD THE ONE ARMED WOMAN SING

Drummed in through the green hill,
the birds click in the blooming ends

of May trees. My heaving has wanted
this life, its storm-tousled face,

its roiling gestures charging blue-green
through pusillanimous amoeba lights

and shoved-away hands.
I haven't soared into table crumbs, poked wildly

at the fire's packed morsels. I was,
and I was myself thundering across Loch Death.

The sound pouring out of morning
had that lemon sting. For every forgotten song

the labels pounce. There is fog
on the promontory,

a chance the stab wound holds a kiss
to milk and drag out of a lamp's circle.

The corks linger and sway. The corpses
follow their own scent, say it's something new,

can you smell that: garlic knots,
roundabout, tussle of cat hair flung.

I am positioned on a wind. I position a wind.

: MOONRAKER

I say This is my companion
when introducing you to the leaves.
Lay down and test your chest.

Dear snowbank, dear pebbles laughing
in the sun, coughing up the son-of-a-bitch

education has been difficult. Tracing water
through the heart's literature, I make
the mind hurt so it slowly breaks my heart.

And to clean up this mess?
There among the leopards, a gritty flung leotard.

Because this is how I taste, everybody:
I put my tongue in and the sensors honk.

And from among the carols, the loose tooth
is now chirping. The heart is simply homesick,
learning the word for window.

That winter's frost the only purified society.
The thirteen breezes come up, then
I walk out of the giant pose.

Reach down your pants.
That's the sound of the dogs
wanting to know what's behind
the door you're knocking at.

: MOONRAKER

Stretching his arm out the brothel, waving goodbye,

he swings out of the mirror, gilded by a whetstone.

Talks about parachutes steady descent
during the weeks spent on a deserted beach,

salt as a phrasebook.

Then the high hum of a plane,
then a cloth falling from the sky.

Disarmed by his own comfort with the intimate,
the viral wet intentions.

A small white fly, a leg growing,
an opal ring
ringing suddenly,
a lake's submerged church.

If outward spiral patterns, if seed necklaces hang
from the doorknob.

Level assumptions at his skin color,
his eyes the color of water.

At the cop's brothel
he can hear the silicone breathing
fragments of hell.

IN THE NUCLEAR ZONE

I travel mostly on foot
to leaven the names of the dead

where a cavalcade of clouds take umbrage.

They delegate authority to the promontory's map.
Dawn, ribbon, and coyotes are received through their hands.

Our thumbs are stuck with their moisture.

To catch gold they must travel
far past the island where such things were once caught.

After a long journey cross country
where trees puff and buttes sizzle,

their clothes take on the grain scent,
sit and hide in the cold eye of a lake.

They bury our names right here
in the starling's repetition—

A held door and thank you (dust).

RAINMAN

Didn't we learn nothing?
I see outline of my skull in your jacket.
I am alarmed, I suppose.

The thunder drove over us,
its cone making memory slide.

And when someone starts losing a past
what filth came over us.

The storm, the shooting, the rainman,
the lattice pattern of new eggs crashing down
like a lake where there was none.

Rainman, armhair forest that lightning lashes,
silence forced out of an evening.

Of an evening, and the snowglobe we live,
carry around with us.

What's it like being a kid,
your hooves just recently sheared away,
hovering in the wind like a djinn?

Its all rootbeer, dolls, and claymation.
The forcefield declines to comment,

so went across the grate, a body.
And so it freezes what we call our brother.
Naked man is the ice that covers.

: MOONRAKER

When Pius XII tried to exorcise Hitler from afar,
did their blood change shape?

The veins in our arms fill with
a soft alluvial light, the sand sound
of the clock,

and overhead planes warped as film on gelatin.
There waiting beneath our hands, the devouring,

the devouring cleanliness. It resounds,
it piles up around the candle.
And if the thing we loved most started up
in a new direction without us?

The wolverine was caught in the mirror.
We wish we could keep giving.

Pius XII tried to exorcise from afar.
There beneath our hands, the devouring.

It softens and hectors. Glibly pollutes
That lewd side of the dish we poured the reckoning from.

We just weren't going to anymore.
There are parts of our bodies we'll never.

We make a little exorcism against it.

: MOONRAKER

A selva está respirando, I thought,
and I knew it was your message
in my dream. Then the host fell

from the wine's mouth, and glittering
shoes reflected our destinies.
Weren't we in fine, dainty shape,

but for the hovering trick.
You said Meus pecados são proibidos
then resided in a wetland.

Inside you I knew that where
the stories disappear, here I die,
making masks out of a tree's skin

like a runaway. I guzzled several bottles
of ghost juice on the way for courage.
It was pointless and belittling,

planning an architecture for lightning.
I received several dream letters
from you. Dear future dead man,

they all began, and I reached
for your voice, a moon in Loch Gowna.
Ever had to murder a man with the eagle

in Jardim de Infância? Each man
must crack the air before him.

For Christopher Doyle & Wakana Ito.

This is a DUSIE chapbook. It's available in both electronic and limited print editions.

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The book cover and interior are by Andrew Bourne. Text is set in Chaparral, which was designed by Carol Twombly. Also, the cover layout owes much to Douglas Crawford McMurtrie's designs for Ludlow Typograph Company.

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