

Much Like You SHARK

Logan Ryan Smith



A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

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Much like you shark
I meet the world harmlessly
but in bad weather and murky waters,
shark,
in the noise of the blue open
skyscraper
tree-lined city street chatter
chatter
chatter-box teething
little gums ringed with blood

like you,
tiger shark,
kicking shins
working my way into others
by accident
by mis-
direction
not choosing my way
or how the blood pools
upward
toward the surface

and how my teeth
tiger
shark
bend backward in the grief of this

and how
I continue to move

all 5 senses served up on the gutter
mouth each tooth
a burnt out little nub of a sometimes
inhabited building
sometimes flooded
with mannequins and fish
out of water
traumatized as lightning satisfied
with gravity as is
and laughter in and out rattling
each black nub
rotting the mouth

at certain times of the year young albatross
I am again smooth and blue
with white underbelly
and heightened senses sensing
you somewhere near the surface shadow
play
shadows play shadows swim and shimmer
irresistibly off the coast of South Africa

and from the depths of sinking light
I manage my magnificent body
more manageable
than previously realized
toward your scant shadow tiny profile
small webbed feet stammering

and knock you for a loop
because I can't help myself

I find myself larger than I am and floating in oxygen and light

I
a drinker
and lover of the dark

We've all stood at the shore and ruined
our lives from time to time crunching
sand dollars for the sound and
poking at the dead glassy jellyfish
with the ends of our shoe

have watched the line out there broken

have seen ourselves as bait amongst bait

and how the line breaks
it breaks
and will break

then there's still time for others

bus lines
airlines
train tracks
and old age

the thorny scratch\
and metal cut

some way back
and some way to end it

in the crowded parking lot
the chicken hawk
corralled a blackbird
with beak and claw
caused cars to stop
and watch
the medium-size bird
stop and struggle
with the littler bird
take off and land
dig deeper for
foreign screams
and take off again in gravity
nearly bumping off of windshields
before stopping
later
on the highway

Like a heist
I keep my belly full

I exist on the existence of others

and the ceaseless ceaselessness of ceasing

a town, a city
a few buildings

a grid
in an
element

that works against movement and forms
muscle tissue around the skeleton

but somehow talking doesn't strengthen the vocabulary
breaking the horizon

a dark and purple line and haze
a green and blue and grey and blur

a need to continue in movement
and break the line
from time to time in a split second

the separation
and splash

the fleshy mess

Either neon blue or pitch black will do
with constant movement
some kind of never-ending

magic, in the way things go up

from down here

as bubbles go up from the veins
to the heart
to the brain

and make all fall down

and down

the rose in the throat

the floating seabird feathers

it's dock time
or the Super Bowl

excuses
for gluttony

come here my babies my
little water-winged teathed things

my phantasmagoric etymology
my mystical unbalanced heavy-

headed things my glorified
doppelgangers, foolish

slap-stick comedy characters my
saddle-weary city walker bloody

mary shit talker dangerous deep
blue-eyed water fountain steep-

le chapel houred sands from
the Atlantic and Missouri

the ample acts of falling over
but never floating

needs a recoil
in reaction

a call to the polls for in
action

pieces of people lost
on the planet

is possible
little bird, little shark

little faces
looking

accordingly

inorganically things sprout
up
with organically manufactured material

the consistent circling
signs signaling
no left turns
and lights
going
on
and
off

a leap

from the dirt on the ocean's bottom

a little spank

in the water garden
of our bodies
the red sometimes
takes over the blue
and the vessels
still move

big bottoms
hovering above

sometimes
fluster us

cause
headbutts

migraines
overcrowded

dizziness
what

with these
huge shadows

moving
slowly

over us
as clouds

keep pace
with the glass-

sided buildings
a looking-glass

reached only
by other looking-

glasses across
the way

with blue and white
shifting their shades

along the bottom
the curvy floor ripe
with bottom feeders
scurrying side to side
beneath my belly
outside the window
crisscrossing the
intersection
avoiding the
sway of traffic
and the pedestrian
gaze
I keep my eyes moving over
the tops of heads
beneath the shadow of clouds
tumbling above
tumbling down
from the lighting working
over
the blue
I keep my eyes moving
over the scuttling bodies
eyeing their limbs
they take for granted
I swerve
over them
unnoticed
and only for a sniff

sometimes the panic reins in

sometimes the dying form a line

sometimes I think myself hideous
and find myself
luxuriously swift
and gifted
amongst the hammerheads

how quickly I bend
and turn

a complete 180
at the snap of your neck

and how this brings me closer to others
like me
who like me
touching them
whenever
I decide to bend
and whichever
way I move

distant disgust
I can travel thousands of miles in a day
just to get to you

like you shark
I find my desires
overcome my will

I will
be consumed
by my needs

trolling
across the globe
to get you

from the shores of Japan
I may roll up dead
on the sands of the Hawaiian Islands

what if
I were grabbed and held on my back
till I drowned?

what if the big fat hook
rips my face in two from the inside
of my soft pink cheek?

a red cloud to engulf me

I don't hear a sound

I just *feel* things

and what if my limbs
were twisted in
a plastic net?

and what if my guts
were splayed and spilled out for them
onto a metal table?

only then could they keep me from you

you for whom I move so quickly thru the blue

little shark,
little shark,
with your fin
piercing
the surface of the water

with such form
such smooth and perfect skin
you fit
perfectly
in the water

with what grace comes what power

unlike you
we are plenty
available
to be taken
against our will
in our own environment

these weak and awkward bodies
these stunted teeth and painful jaws

how sickly we all seem
crowded in the street
at a party
or in the bar

with our sick glances
and sidarm touches

how stupid we are
not owning what we hold

such feigned control, unlike you shark

but I'll prowl
just the same
and boast about
the size
of my brain

I
only
want a taste

I'll move quickly upward
when you want me

but I'll go down
for a taste

before
I pierce
the surface

before the water splits for me
and I fly
for a few seconds

I want to take your body with me
while I go down

away from endings
until you
or I
drown from it

and we leave the surface
tension waking

much like you shark
when they find my
bloated body
crumpled up
in the gutter
and they roll me over
to cut open my gut
they'll find
a bunch of rot
and junk
a lot of things
I had no business putting in me

but I'll speak now
I'll speak for you and me
since it'll one day be our innards
they'll be judging:

I cannot claim that I didn't know better
and I never meant to hurt a thing
but I cannot explain
desire
anymore
than you can cause time to stop

Time to stop.

oh how I just wanted things to slow down

a pound of flesh
a lopped off head
a counsel in the water

the dead die dead
the health of fish
the parable of disaster

what cracking of bones
does to my mobility

what the cracking of yours does for you for me

I wish I had none in me

the guilt I get

the way I have to fight

how quick I am despite my heavy conscience

the sun goes up
the sun goes down
the sun comes up again in the morning

I sometimes don't know how to love in a world
where things don't float I turn into a shark and move
amongst the grey and blue atmosphere and never
wish for the reign I'm in a constraint of tin and flesh
of blood that keeps moving keeps me moving I'm
breathing in breathing and I wonder about those on
the line between the fish and birds the big shadows
falling over and staying in place arms splayed
religiously religiously adhering to the vocabulary of
up and down and distance

it's the blood that keeps on moving up

not us

it's the atmosphere

not us

it's bubbles

all bubbles

all bubbles bubbling up

first in the lungs

then the mouth

then the blood which boils

out

Much like you bull
shark
I can move from fresh to salt
waters
can challenge myself
from time to time
can bring relief to my children
in the shallows
that are clean and safe

but
from which building do I house myself
is hard to say

in movement that distorts
the movement of automatic
breath

but like you bull
I'll run at anything
red or green
and never wonder
what's the game

but always sure
I never intended
to hurt you

or pull you
apart
from limb
to limb

in an
unease

of asso
-ciation

from flesh
to air

the blood
flies

with bits
of muscle

torn
from

the moving
skeleton

and when I rip your face from your face from your nose
and your skull
and your skin from your arms your forearms and biceps
your triceps and wrists
and when I rip the muscle from your legs the calves
your thighs and ankles
when I tear into your stomach your liver your intestines
when I test your iron
when I manage irony
when I strangle your memory
when I finally
watch the blood move up
from my sorrowful
backward teeth
and take you down
into the heavy light losing
into the blue giving way
will know how
it happened
the construction
mapped out
in milky red floating
soaring slowly upward
we'll see blueprints
in the red
ascending

when standing again
we'll watch the terns
turn and scurry

as we stupid birds
get pulled under



* a dum/fo-thing
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