

sonoluminescence



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William Allegrezza



D U S I E

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insert quotation here
(and then
feed the poor
and have
a glass of wine)

ospedale/hospital

i've always thought i'm italian.

1.

to stop with a hand on a
gurney
before neat seams left for
dark earth

beneath the white tightness of fluorescence, a heart
perched in a black bath, still pumping.

“i see the mourners gathering.”

In the waiting room, we place bets
on who dies first.

 ivs sterile grips
needles tubing

in some things a beginning
or a loss
 but here only
 television voices as
women slip into powder blue gowns
decorated with red squares
a slide of cells

and wait for the radiation
technician to collect them

mujeres the bathroom door translates

2.

though we would breathe
we are warned: necrosis,
fibrosis, perforation,
alopecia—words
more difficult to grasp
than dead flesh, baldness

on the wall
a diagram displays
the way hair grows
slow over a
pale fading color.

3.

unwrapping hands
slowly

steadily
blood filling bandage after bandage

in
green halls

porticos
interns

in each room a doctor and a
nurse
exploring

“i place the electrodes on my arm and turn the dial”

in so many directions

*by the water's edge
by the water's edge*

*i took off my clothes and
stepped into the frigid waters.*

tomorrow, your only lung will be black
and irreparable; you will whisper, *it's difficult*

to be near the sick.

the doctor in turn whispers to the intern,

this is called a pneumonectomy.

while the river will move
in darkness beneath Saturn and her seven rings,
it will move beyond this sickness, beyond this sorrow
and all of its ordinariness.

4.

some died wanting to die
some died with tubes in their mouths
some died early in the year
some died from mitomycin shock
some died having seen the ghost of Sergio Leone
some died with socks on
some died mad
some died loud
some died eating gelato
some died because they didn't read the expiration date
some died Penny Marshall style
some died Kenji Fukasaku style
some died actual size

5.

next month I present a program from my wheelchair in Plant Propagation

but still in early afternoon
turning a body on cold metal

the x-rays to determine

which bones are cracked

we take the narrow

light and throw ourselves
through it
but that is not enough

6.

behind doors
muscles are ground down like beef
in bowls,

refrigerators swing open with parts waiting for examination—

lab techs with food chuckle

and then go out to fuck.

“she liked to sing about rabbits over her grave.”

i tried not to listen
as the doctor
drew an X on my hand
as the gas covered me
as the talk of dinner ceased.

7.

i
am taking
you
with my hand under your skin
with a scalpel shimmering

with you broken from conscious life
under me.

8.

next to the white bed that wears you,
a lizard-skin bag
black and bubbled as a smoker's lung

11.

as the ambulance sped you to the hospital
you trailed fur and glass apples as far as Han River
behind you—black rain black riders

12.

this
crumpled joint,
he says assuredly,
will not work ever again—
 and i
 the words searching
 a cause
 found though
 not explained.

13.

*you've never seen death? look in the mirror every day and
you will see it like bees working in a glass hive.*

14.

these stories only
keep us from
drifting into silence.
 caught in a doorway
 between winter
 & will not

we're here to celebrate your vivisection.

Pushing Between

1.

his post on the border is over
still he sees
collapsed pictures of mesquites in wet light

listening to heartbeats brand commercials
motors running laundry machines working

*the gods were dead when i arrived,
but the corporations had already taken over.*

yet he is scheduled to live
blown up by red geraniums
thrown on a desolate landscape

he is scheduled to become
the weather
where certain fields escape

where sugarpods of mesquites
fill light with women's laundered lingerie
smelling of sex and chemicals

he sees, he says
 which gods are dead

as their wet pictures
 run rainstatic through the wringer washer

maytag edition in mesquite, TX
a boy's hand
 flattened
 coming out the other side like sky

We can never overcome the
inflections of seven languages
which declares:

find new ways to move beneath your clothes

(under us them)

(sashaying)

*this button undone
another falling away
he gives up hope of
surviving her*

the lines of arms
curving distances

desire is not a season. which wrist is leading?

3.

“morning glories for the map-maker who visits my
thighs”

map-maker

make me into a geographical certainty.

a location to visit

in terrible weather. ice-light. sea spit and drizzle.

*i have located you in desire
thrown aside the quadrant
and started feeling with fingers.*

you sketch my skin

with seaports and parishes

*not to eliminate erosion
but to complicate place*

lips salt-tipped, lit by spumante,
sea-spume. your hand
under my voice

so many ways to kiss a boy who's drowning

so many ways to

4.

she listens to wind over
clear water

she listens to deer
gather in the blue
electricity of the drying laundry

the cold
wind makes her
shiver

to undo herself
she must have warmth
the steady gaze
of an eye (the ocular erotic in what distant deeps or
skies)

5.

i crawled into your face
and slept there
sphinx-eyed and tired of the ongoing wars

and you
played with porcelain angels
on a mantle

pretending not to see

i'll have another brandy, please.

here is my eye
a finger a nail
they protect me
from desire
but fail so often
that i am giving them
to you

the maker laughs to herself
as she pours another drink

6.

a grappa-wide smile
an ear paused in the salted air of the Adriatic
you whisper

maestral, my arm is on fire

etymology is a sexy way
to get a girl to lift her skirt
or peel an orange in one spiraled
piece with fever-white teeth

beneath insinuations of a solar system
you taste of limeade as you dream of green hospital gowns

to undo her
buttons you must rewind
your life,
you must become yourself
in front of yourself.

and the fine fins poured forth

crack of mouth and you are harboring
wings fluttering
an ocean
current full

clouds dissolve
the image of fingers in rain-bowed water
dilate
to distract

into a lake of saline. Saturn's
frozen rings
flicker orange
as pain brief in full light

you sing
swallowing codes & cosmos glaciers

sideswipe glaciers
carve initials on time & signal trails

dovetailing between ellipses
between

any fricative which is

why you breathe why you turn towards home

you ran through water
sleepdrowning

buried in
red coral
between a mirror's uncanniness & the body's
wet lithography
at rocked bottom.

Incantations

1.

In my rocked cradle
a woman's naked body burns
 through shimmering retinas
 into petals,
 as blood lines into waving fins,
but here
below smooth surfaces
the last of our spaces
incandescent
fans, single instances
can only be found
as voices fail to sing
in the inscrutable green.

2.

Pocket watches tick in sandy bottoms
where many men are sinking
 names netted with shadows.
Sounds
 bounce from piece to piece
 the wreckage
 bodies wooden
 statues
 smiling
 chests bared.
The museums in their silences
speak of storms, of high water,
but among us only the stillness
and cross-hatch of light from above.

3.

Drowning fingers grab for a line,
I remembered not
to believe in space,
to trust the water.

I began to panic but
broke my words
with water,
simple incantations:

*i will not remember you
for your double is the present eternalized.*

I turned to you, but
in your face a wound
does not heal
and in the wound
a word
only one
unraveling
undraping who you are
spell spill
topple as lips onto collarbones.

4.

You went under
falling through
the sea's selectivity
coral and bone
your face a screen
without static
without image

beneath the water you shone
a projector in a darkroom
the scene, limestone and light

the war had started
the world was limited
and you went under
falling through
like a voice without inflection

After you
she went under
tracing your water path
in a dance hall dress
a wunderkammer filled with shark teeth,
phosphorescent minerals, a narwhal tusk

escaping centuries and auditors
as voices shift into silences
and water shifts from frill to mirror

*though I loved you when you went under
I loved you more when you were no longer.*

Elide

poet 1)

Sidled up to rain-dazed
 windows, imprint of a hand
ghost film on the glass
 like a movie about directing
oneself into one's own life
 breathless with iridescence, dolly zoom.
 I am witnessing your disappearance.
 The wet dream of a bad idea.

poet 1.2, instance 1)

Saddled instead, not sidled, and really, rain-dazed?
My hands leave no prints—burned clean, without traces
I cannot be human, and thus when I leave, only fragments remain,
“Slide . . . flotsam . . . longing but gracious . . . deemed
the conquering force.” Breathing, yes, and bad ideas, but
we can both meander among blue isles fidgeting with
candles, lace, or just sweet wrapped goods.

1.2, instance 2)

oneachwindowiampressing-
fingershopingthatyouwillfollo
winsilencearguingwithyourself
aboutdistanceandvoiceandwhet
herornotfatewouldintervenelike
sadfortunaspinninginyouonyou
likeatopwithmyleftoverbitsthro
wnoutasinthisdreambecominge
vermorereal.

oneachwindowiampressingfinger-
shopingthatyouwillfollowprints
oneachwindowiampressingfinger-
shopingthatyouwillfollowprints
oneachwindowiampressingfinger-
shopingthatyouwillfollowprints
oneachwindowiampressingfinger-
shopingthatyouwillfollowprints

poet 1)

I fell was feeling
your black borders
held me inside the screen
punctuated me with venetian blinds
I was an anklet, a perfume
from Ensenada. Your baby cake
and bittersweet blonde.
I was meant to bury you
so I do
with cream cheese frosting
and a military flag on top.
Don't say a dame ain't good
for nothing but a good _____.
Don't say I never gave you
a falcon, or a felt job, or a fedora
with my number penned inside.

I open my trenchcoat and pump
you full of sunglasses.

poet 1.2, instance 1)

Borders or no, a pushing at the seams
with

knives or just wood.

No coats open or glass
shards spill on a floor where
feet play.

Recognition's a word bouncing
on small screens with undone clasps,
and though shocking, it does not lead
to vision.

poet 1.2, instance 2)

toheadintothevoidwherewatersre-
mainthatpointtofatescratchingatthe
edgeofyoutryingtolistenthroughda
rkairtomyvoicecomingrealasthoug
hdistanceliesandwearenotjustscrib
blingoutortimetoavoidtheringingo
nthecoffinofquarterstossedinamon
gtheorangesoil.

toheadintothevoidwherewatersre-
mainthatpointtofatescratchingatth
eedgeofyoutryingtolistenthroughd
arkairtomyvoicecomingrealasthou
ghdistanceliesandwearenotjustscri
bblingoutortimetoavoidtheringing
onthecoffinofquarterstossedinamo
ngtheorangesoil.

poet 1, instance 1)

I am falling into fruit
baskets filled with plastic
oranges. You are an ex-
plosion
of quarters. Trigger lips
on my gartered thigh. You underwrite
me with Italian subtitles.
Unwrap my blue isles.

poet 1, instance 2)

kiss me, call me sunshine, send me reeling into Technicolor

poet 1, instance 3)

lemon sours and bb guns make your eyes smaller

poet 1.2, instance 1)

Never to unwrap and still know the need—
the triggers as images bent over counters,
scars tracing deep into this my distance.
No signals wait for action to begin.
Still through air we tread

tracing with idle ink visionary unknowing.
I have no baskets overflowing to offer
just words in parting.

poet 1.2, instance 2)

instoppingtounderstandwhatibe-
lieveaboutyourealizethatiknowso
littleaboutmyselfthatimustsbacktr
ackto dealwiththatquestionsfirstot
herwiseiwillnevercometoanyconc
lusionaboutyousinceiwillstillbeco
nsfusedbywhoiamandwhatiwanta
ndwhyisthatsohard?

instoppingtounderstandwhatibe-
lieveaboutyourealizethatiknowso
littleaboutmyselfthatimustsbacktr
ackto dealwiththatquestionsfirstot
herwiseiwillnevercometoanyconcl
usionaboutyousinceiwillstillbeco
sfusedbywhoiamandwhatiwantan
dwhyisthatsohard?

poet 1)

Untracing an anklet's herringbone
tread into the thinnest of skin,
a scar's gentle spill
into keloid and the counter
so viciously bright with morning's
orange oil, mouse prints
across the floured tile. *Wake up*
you say. But I am unoffering
parting. No visionaries in this home.
No backtrack or laughtracks. No lemon
sours or girls in pinafores. Just the post
man knocking at the door.

poet 1, instance 2)

or the meat man, milk man, ice man, bread man, fish man, fruit man

poet 1.2, instance 1)

The knocking ceased just above
the ankle, as though
whispers in a cave of false partings
in a place of unoffered
friendships presented as
songs neon signs hands cracked.
If invited to the offering,
bring nothing
become yourself the space of giving.

poet 1.2, instance 2)

wevebeentryingtogrowvisionary
withouttheessenceofthevisioncl
oudingoutvoiceswithoutthedark
nesstakingoverorthedrugsfromo
utofdarpitsburiedbecomingour
guidesintothecreativespaceunder
thehillsideunderthetreeswherein
onearmthewatersarecollected.

wevebeentryingtogrowvisionary
withouttheessenceofthevisioncl
oudingoutvoiceswithoutthedark
nesstakingoverorthedrugsfromo
utofdarpitsburiedbecomingour
guidesintothecreativespaceunder
thehillsideunderthetreeswherein
onearmthewatersarecollected.

poet 1)

I filled you with orange neon,
tried to strip the green
gown away. The sheets too perfect,
pillow too square. The walls
smelled of lubricant and cherry
suckers. In the corner of the room
a woman in a trench coat sells peignoirs
and Swedish pastries. Why this room?
Why these drugs sounding
spells? Why the tiger
at the window?

poet 1, instance 2)

Your letters capsize the page. Feel
the filature of one stray vision against your knee.

poet 1.2, instance 1)

Stripped away the green
with corners slanted—
a mechanized hand waving as
the tiger of this dream
crawls over a forbidden
window sill. These squares
have been tried, and their
strengths are assured.

poet 1.2, instance 2)

thepagestumblealongwithlan-
guageunbalancedbutstillthesingi
ngseemsclearandthemessagethe
connectionbetweentwovoicesina
roomcollapsingthroughitsownstr
angedynamicisapparentthoughm
omentary.

thepagestumblealongwithlan-
guageunbalancedbutstillthesingi
ngseemsclearandthemessagethe
onnectionbetweentwovoicesinar
oomcollapsingthroughitsownstra
ngedynamicisapparentthoughmo
mentary.

poet 1)

Apparition or disappearance? Vertigo or too much bordeaux?

The window still rain-dazed; the page still waving
its mechanized hand.

where did you go? what did you see?



William Allegrezza has published many collections, including *Fragile Replacements*, *In the Weaver's Valley*, *Ladders in July*, *Covering Over*, and *The Vicious Bunny Translations*. His reviews, translations, poetry, and articles have been published internationally. He is the editor of Cracked Slab Books and *Moria*.

Simone Muench is the author of *The Air Lost in Breathing* (Marianne Moore Prize, Helicon Nine, 2000) and *Lampblack & Ash* (Kathryn A. Morton Prize, Sarabande Books, 2005). A chapbook titled *Orange Girl* is forthcoming from dancing girl press. She directs the Writing Program at Lewis University and is a contributing editor to Sharkforum.

