

Only one word for every day of the new year
A whole year spent perfecting a single word you
understand the way in which two people have
misunderstood one another they've switched bodies
in the forest between jobs, a stage hung with lamps.
A mask hinged in two or a curtain parted down the middle, pulling her skirts
open to reveal a house, a gingerbread house in which children are dancing
A gingerbread house in which dogs are dancing together
CHORUS enters, looks around for the rising sun.

Meanwhile, Paul arranges bits. He's trying to pull a thought up out of his memory, that
she reminds him of a woman he saw singing when he was a child, in the subway, which
is to say that he was afraid of her. He remembers these small childhood fears, the ones
that stand out in high relief, as pleasurable, maybe because he knew even then that they
revealed glimpses of what his adult life would bring, or maybe because he can see now
that he gravitated toward them, took the horror they held as a sign that he needed them
without knowing it, but that's usually the question anyways: is there only one perfect
word that will complete the task you've set for yourself, or could it be anything, any
words that ask you to follow their pulls and calls?

Which is why, it was a good play, that man had a lot of experience.

What's repeated so many times but only now have I started to clock it
And clocked for the first time
Gets up, enters the room, clocks
The instances and the spaces carved out between them by gestures
The looping gestures, the gestures with discernable end, the unrepeatably ones
I settle into my choice and begin
By the snack table, joking

in order to reap your child process
shifts in conversation
abrupt turns away

See my hands they are covered
Bleached in sequence the tall grass
Bearing fruit of the look at this your cauterized gesture
Has been missed, as if another shining image
As if it deserved relief, absolution
That each time we're walking this block was the first
And that we could do it again, to return
As horses insisting, to do and undo, to eat and clean up,
To harrow a tract for the audience
In our stables it is Sunday and the actors insist
In the afternoon and evening

But sometimes I feel actually out of control of how much I'm exposing myself in even a small interaction, like my mouth is just sliding off the side of my face, jowls slipping away to climb around on the jungle gym, stagnant / made of sticks on which participants can climb, hang, sit, and then yes, I'll keep them on my sled, a receptacle nodding hysterically *I get that— Yea I totally do that too— It's like that! Yes, yes that's the way it feels!*— it's so hard ever— old statues, trees full of leaves— trees full of every vein!

Because it was on stage the rocks had little pieces of painted Velcro stuck to them so that they could be balanced strangely and impossibly
Because it was on stage each rock had an identical double
Because it was on stage you could see each step in the sequence discretely:

For and trembling
Hunting parties hanging on the wall
As a place where a painter has changed course, closing
An open hand into a fist or shifting the angle of a glance
Normally, one geological layer might represent thousands or millions of years
But here each layer in the deposit had been laid down in a single storm

To repent, as a painting behind glass
With the intimacy of morning television
Just a memo to Matt Lauer:
I will saw your jowls off.
to protect you from the sound of God's infinite sadness
with the oldest sword Rick has ever had in the shop.
It is full of diseases that will protect you
for only a little while.
For the first time you will understand you are wrong
but it will be too late,
the sword diseases have already taken hold of your jowls,
they've built hives in the fat of your face and your neck and their resource extraction has begun.
It is raining, Matt
It is rusting inside your body.

and does it delight
it does and it's blooming
strewn with rushes and watching
the ash dry across the surface

Like a magic cake
Blood, oysters
A magic cake once cut spills forth
Pink sprinkles, rhinestones, oysters, blood
The blood-frosting crystallized in petal formation
Shot through with splintered planks, a smashed windshield

Caught on 11 surveillance cameras in the area
And am I the subject of their protection, or is it their equipment, their chambers, their
administrative offices

[It is both, and I am it: the excuse, metonymic and without consent
I am the chamber; I am the office, the furniture, the wires and the information, jewels
utterly permeable, just becoming every pink plastic—

To figure out what I want and repeat it:
The children are standing outside of themselves
The mothers are standing outside of themselves
The guests are standing outside of themselves
Because they knew their lives were grievable, worth grieving,
And they thought they might partake in the satisfaction.

[PLAUDIT!]

But the curtain refuses to fall; they look on, still silent and knowing at the outline of her
body, suspended and slowly dissolving, dispersing, ticker tape unspooling all around her
as the hatred moves freely across the boundary of her skin

Decorated with lions and salamanders
Self-salvage or salvage
during manufacture that prevents its unraveling
Salvation like a Diane Keaton movie
Salvation like a Nancy Myers kitchen
I used to think that salvation would be like walking into a room full of people that had to
welcome you and listen to you and be nice to you because you've been validated by so
many praiseworthy institutions
But now I think that salvation is like leaving jail and there's a group of people doing jail
support outside and when you walk up to them they welcome you and listen to you and
are nice to you just because you're a person. And you're reminded again that we are
going to save each other and we are going to give each other everything we need: snacks,
water, cigarettes, praise, validation, exaltation—

And all of a sudden you're walking me back from the pageant
At Christmas, for instance, dolls, I believe
As content moderators flag down images and videos
Do not witness
Does not witness this
I told my one joke
Of milk and died staring straight
At the post-it notes hung above desks
Strewn with rushes and reeds that float on the lake

The sun
Microsoft
Et cetera
rabbit rabbit
a metal hot
tiny billboards and recitations looping
let me love you
let me love you in rushes

And all of a sudden you're walking me back from the pageant
At Christmas, there is a candle in every window
Of the plate glass skyscrapers all around us
But we've made these golden rooms too for hanging out in
Where you don't even need to explain anything if you don't want to
And you're worthy without praise structures hung all around like a garbage
Like a girding unwound I am plastic and swimming
In the pool that I stole and kept secret

And as we were walking I wanted you
To fold, to turn, to keep walking toward realms of fantastic valence and solidarity
In a way I think you knew but could not own.
So my desire was left to its own devices
And it was excited, what it could make
It was exciting to me, to be neither owned nor owned up to
Like what is going to happen to my life

And all of a sudden you're walking me back from the pageant,
When two little men in bear costumes reoccur:
Once on the curb, kneeling
Once frozen in the middle of a fight
Once almost bumping into us, smiling intransitively, one says to the other, "What do you
get when you cross a street with a poem?"
Replies the other, "Killed!"

And all of them burst into lacerate peel shapes. To begin with horses
Two, hurdling toward oiled wards, fingers made of wax
 that drip a golden bead on every lid
At the rest stop
At the porchlight fingers made of wax,
Each finger the length of a song or a night
Organs gesticulate silently
 to be in for or of the belief that each
Time you're walking this block was the first and that we could do it again
To return as horses, insisting
To harrow a tract for the audience
 in our stables it is Sunday and the actors insist

in the afternoon and evening

And as I am walking you are suddenly toward
or away from the former elementary school as in itself a silent guess,
Her only role as that of nurse
and mine as nature's patient hinging
out and turning in to stay up late and list each scabby groping breath,
to pick each gristle of the day out from the meat,
Just. To wander between rooms and wards
To dream of a fire in a tunnel
That I can love of course
Unto death, yea
Kenotic humiliation

Sitting in infra-thin thinking re: dunkin
donuts and sprinkles and microwaved egg whites
w beyond breakfast patties an unexpected guest
gets up, walks off his object and goes on an adventure
slapping up against an invisible pane
standing in a valley shaped like a circus and
changing his mind out loud, his calls return to him
as drawings. A corpus, some maintenance they
begin to reveal themselves to each other, they call out
among themselves and you try to practice being
in the right state to hear their call, what they want,
their insistence, their deference, their humiliation
in front of each other, and your own
you must defer to them, to their call even
if it's not the way you want to be seen they teach you
what may make you ugly insisting, deferring
to hold enthralled mannering vs faltering you love me
in flashes and pass through the players rehearsing,
walking off their objects where the ground never was
we've made small and repetitive fates,
lists of shuddered breathings I ate three pieces
of insolence / he beheld a valley shaped like a circus / a bag
/ dusk's infinite yawning insomnia glows
from within the rocks that turn toward each other saying yes,
yes that really is what it's like, there actually isn't an opposite
to being alive. As they open onto what, what is the texture of the what
has given in to the arc of the day,
the dusk opens onto hard boiled hands fretting
with gold and fire their gestures carve out the space
of an imageless act that the players rehearse turning toward and away:

If her brother is lying out in a field somewhere and he's not allowed to be buried, is that a problem for me or not?

Which world and how much a part both surveilled and ecstatic, 1 Please help quickly. Protect your drawings, for they are pictures of drenching waves

2 A gesture that knows its own archive's eventual contours a stage for itself, not a bag full of crumbled off patches of skin that just fall and land wherever, And watch the ash dry across the surface