DUKE UNIVERSITY
Durham, North Carolina

Wide and Deep

Marina Chen

April 2024

Undergraduate Creative Writing Honors Thesis
Trinity College of Arts and Sciences
English Department

Acknowledgements

Thank you, Professor Donahue, the G.O.A.T. (greatest of all time), and Professor Mackey, who also is; thank you for myself, who you helped me find, and I mean it in a way I cannot fully word. Thank you to Professor Strandberg for the time and means to read some hearty and lifechanging poems for class credit, and to Amber Manning for the chance to write my longest ever poem, 20 pages, for her class on fractality. Thank you, Poetry Mafia (Lauren, Margot, and Tina). Thank you, Noelle, I couldn't do this suffering artist thing without you. Shout out, mom, brother, and dad <3. 好想你在中国,在西雅图的家人。

Thank *you* for reading – whether it's one word, or all 49 pages.

Table of Contents

“The Image…is a vortex or cluster of fused ideas and is endowed with energy.”

— Ezra Pound

“I have never seen an angel. Show me an angel, and I’ll paint one.”

— Gustave Courbet

“All day music!”

“Take no prisoners!”

— Nathaniel Mackey

Wide and Deep

I. Introduction

Poetry has never been a choice for me. In real life, I am quiet. Through discoveries like humor (which stabs a poem like acid does a piece of meat), new aesthetics of interest, and more challenging poetic forms, this project has confirmed that writing is my way to speak at full volume. I wanted to explain my thought process a bit, in hopes that it is helpful to you as a reader. In short, I plowed deep, and I pushed wide.

Sometimes, every poem I write feels like my first. In my personal life I vehemently disdain the stickiness of the past, which can be embarrassing and uncool. But as a writer I'm too entrenched in the past, the dusty Tupperware of childhood and everything that macerates inside – discovery, hope, loss, dying love, what is love, filial piety, and the little images that are my symbols of those things. Horses and food, for example, real deep cuts. In the epigraph, the Pound and Courbet quotes suggest my philosophy, that the image is energetic magic, but I can also never describe something I don't know. The images always flow. For my first few years at Duke that was the end of it: a page of image swimming in a blob of overwhelming emotion. With this thesis, I wanted to push into a longer form; I decided I liked it and would like to stay there. Longer poems indulge in their own cadence, allowing full excavation of emotion. Of course, my "long" pales in comparison to real long, which is where I'm walking towards, hopefully… "miles to go before I sleep", à la the Frost poem. In my long poems, I've been able to dig further into themes of beauty and the body, using wonder, sensuality, and even horror to bind the two.

I've tried to push wider too, which I hope is apparent in the progression of the works in this manuscript; I've tried to apply my favorite personal topics in a more universal way. In doing this, I looked to T.S. Eliot, Charles Wright, and Walt Whitman for advice to expand my scope. (America on the mind, and the past.) These poets also encouraged experimenting with tone and the shape words take on the page. I honed tools like landscape, musicality, slant rhymes, and casual onomatopoeia to do this. These helped separate my style, which leans abstract, into what I like to think of as theatrical scenes. In the spirit of pushing outwards, I was captivated by haiku and similar standalone, one-line forms like Yannis Ritsos's *Monochords*. I found that palm-sized units inspired by the Japanese aesthetic, of nature and intricate subtleties, were helpful building blocks for longer forms. There's the line, and then there's the role of the line in a larger work. In a long work, there's so much to find in the space in between concrete objects, so much that they morph into new scenes altogether. I've learned expansive poems can often keep absorbing, opening helpful creative channels to inspire or place new content.

Lastly: I begin the manuscript with "Fugue state". I don't think I ever leave it.

Fugue state

I. Last Summer

I was obsessed a moonstone blood
stain blood rushing into adoration
a door a three piece suit

She is always happy
I've come home
We clean my ex out from the lilac bedroom
We awake, the closet that smells like summer, I'm digging for something
in the papers and spiral bounds and the crescent of my ear

ferns finger the exquisite sun

with my head in the bin
a squat is what my legs make

as my shovel hits rock in the garden

I never wrote down the things I learned:
about doubles and long hexes,
poems for scientists
To type *and to devein beans* and that trench coats aren't for me

I melt into the fugue state

Clear raindrops
in the eternal brightness like this

II. Eating While Cleaning

She is always happy
when I come home

The red scarf hangs in the
jeans exhibition

No hands warm the small
and the wing-joint on my back
by this cold window *but there's evidence*
in the flowered and watermarked glass that I've breathed
here before

What I've breathed in
before: white yarn
pork dust

my dear: I know
to weave rayon
hurts your hands,
come and let
me make you something
something meaty, with honey…

III. Calling Sally

Sally's
voice tinny there in
Austin I hate
Austin

Or maybe just its contents
and its values

She is calling and she's mad then (go to pg. 6)

The face of my fear
Glow off the phone
in the dark
Eyelashes
I hear her in a coke can,
in the buzz of the Whataburger
like in *Nighthawks*

She is beautiful but uncannily like me
It is suplexing

Affairs, affairs,

alarms, China, no hands, the bed
desolate and orphaned

Little dreams come in waves:
In April a boat from Brazil

Chunky heeled boots
slapping a puddle, and it is silver from
the sky and my ability to love, it tugs me through

my core on a thread of bent wire

As the sweet pumpkin was roasting
I'd try on all the big blazers
before bed

but I can do
nothing, I've
forgotten
it now

The song of frogs across the dark Carolinas

Can I grab your coffee for you I'm holding in my pee and it's
cold Texas is not too far from Paris shears are not too far
from the weight of your hand here I stand. In the heart of the
land by the thawing lake and between shallow-rooted trunks
of glass. The fronds of what you offered me are metal rays
of sun. Thin heat skipping across even heartbeat. Cig
powder shaken onto a little glass leaf. The round and even
cycle of my digestion pulses, is film thinly ticking the dreams
a failed ballerina. Lace browning from what I've done
with the glass vessel. What pours out from the holy orifice
water dust smoke wisdom. What always comes back is
holding the lamp for my English teacher as he dug for
bodies in the frozen earth. Pinch-me type of winter. This church
has no morals anyways. I'm sure it did before I came here licked
up the touch of this town. I'm wise enough now to say I do
regret saying no to yours. I retch and out come the shards.

Stanzas for regret

The moon smeared on the hair comb of
black bone.
The moon, I shoot my dishonesty
into its holes
as love arrows.
Her the collective muse what
a whore. You are
my thought experiment. I am alone
with a dark wool sweater
and the man in it.

Fire star, ocean star, queen star, star of kings.
Connect-the-dots.
The sun a vector to all things.
Whorl grain
wood puzzle, the pieces round and
weighty in your hands.
Time lapse (husks whisper) of growing corn.

Black bikini components
speeding down a
silver chute.
Nylon stretching over tan
skin in the
aquamarine. A drum trembling,
awe of the thrum of the
arm, thigh, foot, earth.
From the vector of the power of the sun,
her venomous plants,
and all things.

Christmas baubles, mohair skeins. Bluetooth
which we spun from thought
and air. I live to
make enemies and I walk
for the engine. What is it all
for, then, the tingly
spine and my fuck-
ups orbiting?

4: the death number, what comes in fours? A
double date. Cocktails in the tip of a spinning tower.
Condoms from university, her dark twisted braids
like satin like,

the stones in the creek, I was nine
the snow softening to me,
like ice ocean

Ode to 2023

Nights used to glitter like this the one you would love right
around
        the corner and the
winter
        spinning
        like a top

creamy glide the firelit pocket
knife in the sky

A January so bright, so bright on Earth
you wouldn't dare peer

at the stars—
goldfish eyes popped out
and bobbed up in the pond

in biting

cold there is something like
the way I used to put on my makeup and the steam
of synth on the floor

when life was only geometry,
opposition
                Summer roommates

        flitting in and out of the clearing vision

A milkshake sweet and worked for

And there'd be a slushie, to be had in the spring
                                Chimichurri

coating the back of the hand from the mouth,
a garlic sweat settling into the jacket,
the night would quiver,

and it would take so long to fall asleep
as I coughed spittle, it was then I
trained myself not to retch

I woke once in the early morning to catch the
blood moon

and couldn't find it
until I looked behind
me under the
arches with an amateur
astronomer I'd never see again

The next night there was a party
the cadence
(the darkness
with which I measured time)
I drank
and swayed with brothers
and trampled scholars, grew
happy, large
like a seed
with its bursting
oils and growth potential

The door auto-locked Cried then, which derived into rum,

thick and column-like inside my stomach Full
and empty Sweet nothing
The nights were plasmatic
like this

Horse poem

And so the horses ran till they were blue
and numb on the frogs, that
sensitive heart on the hoof

Long Beach, January, 1983
The wearer of the pink taffeta
returns to the lyric and sucking
on rock candy now go
to sleep there will be horses still tomorrow

And to curl oneself at the foot
of someone else what a pleasure

And the rumbling of the earth strong
thighs bareback books about horses when 7
always hit a little different back then

When's the last time you saw a horse
these days it's more about the two
legged things

Or about cryptids (your cat who died)

And the way humans cough each cough
unique we caught colds less often
back then the cold was within us
the cold was
outside, we couldn't wait
for it to be cold to be honest

Molten lamplight pressing against the
inside of each cookie window

Mischief was a stocking
stuffer (naughty you)
Not good enough to be the real gift

Orange slices and torn turf, frosted

and warty gourds repelling the

fingertips, cranberries bouncing across the countertop

And on Saturday we rode horses

Horse poem

My male roommates
take apron shopping

in stride. Why do we need
one, et cetera

while my eyes are marbles
down the aisle of

Whole Foods. Looking to
the future I will

put transistors together
at high noon.

Life is ruinous and hed-
onistic and all that:

a sopping bundle of
copper wires. Head

sky
Warm n wet
Carolina

Hear
the gallop of the hours on
Sunday and it is night.

The train whistles, reminds
me of white

lace bustles, parasol,
glittering white

horse. Round starless eyes
stare back from

the shadow of my
darkened bedroom,

lustrous mane, and black pelt
and books, Poe

and Hawthorne and the Shining
and about computers.

My first trip
to this state was

for college. And now I have
gripped it by the

reins and I run.

Horse poem

The city, who, I don't know who constitutes
the city, would pave over the hoof
tracks with frosting. A cook tossed the dishwater
and the frozen spear cleft
a frog cleanly in half. Our first ex, gasoline
our most toxic one, Teslas.

"Pretend to read my poems,
fine, when each skyscraper
lies down to sleep at night
it is a line of mine. Infertile
towers find a surrogate
in a tree.
The glass sweats but can't
scream though it may want to."

^ This is why I'm never going back on dating apps again for real

You and me we got bodies
We eternal commas congealing
to bossa nova and funk,
the fire extinguisher caged in red glass, the cage
cramps into red shards,
shards pointing to a vape and the sun diffusing,
stunting on the tennis girls.

Effervescent fruit flavors a flash flood
retribution

the shape of an eye
in the window

in the dark and east
side: ever am I

cinnamon paste bubbling in the vein

I'm lighting up your blood channels

unlovingly soldered
bus wires: I am

"Why you gotta do everything in dark mode? It doesn't
bother you that your *sick ride* has no
blood?
My car, its pulse
bumps even and
true, the looseness of the stick shift, where its
hair matts and where, rubbed raw, the
hair isn't. I thought it would be warm
forever. The sun now chasing the faded
cloud: No, I was never in love with him,
I was in love with you. Tongue emoji."

Horse poem

the sushi is almost
obscene the way it
salivates for itself
glows pink under white light
which corkscrew shines

white light
which glares not exactly beautifully
off many things tuna
and a patent camel briefcase
chestnut and cigs same color
and the shoes the desolate
sushi eating
business man

light
like cake sweat
burnt light
black sugar
green light
the intern hoard crosses

red light
things
embarrass you compulsions in the quiet
library or train train rushes and blurs blush
touching a stranger after a few glasses
of grapey white light

new car sing bravado green leaf
in my eyes
martyr scallions float at the surface of
broth

new red umbrella
almost obscene the horse shape
of humans

marrow souls
taken easy like bitter whiskey
pure chestnut
whiskey
I've only seen that color a few other
times in my life: the holiday fire

and the autumn fair in carolina, the hair of the American
girl who sat in front of me and the wild, coarse mane
of Lacy as I rode her through the dripping forest, chilled to silence.

minor glissade

Pt. I

off the

solid
lake

powder
blue robe, frosted
mink

the resplendent spiral of the head of the whale
bone & horn

corn flake decay
in
milk

in an underwater
haunted
house
a floating hot
core of sin

What was ugly in Narnia is ugly here, those few years

between 2017 and 2020: never full but never hungry, our bodies
chopped into relish,
the parties, the fish-scale sequins, coughing up
the brine that rained in a vinegar swirl soaking
the asphalt – tempest, do you know what I mean?

Did you hear about the beautiful singer dappled with crime
(pink peppercorns bathing in wine)?

And of beautiful actors cast as custard,
bloating the crispness of the cone?

Or of the pope dragging the burden of sharp drapes
(a cat swinging, drunkenly, on its ninth fence)?

Multicolored velvets whirl apart at *the birth*
of the exhibition:

Playbill green
Oxygen dapples onto a faucet
which squeaks to an eternal close – her gelled
waves
swing over the basin – in the mirror
set in a cloudy jade
the eyes are ready

and her sculptor is ugly in honesty:
beard not cleanly cleft from the
dough face, fading into tangles
like the forest between the thighs
of the wife of Adam

And his daughter is the type to
scour deals at Target, besides
And his son, a player, besides

Reckon with it, and rock
on your plastic horse, wet dollar bills

As in the books, in the Hollywood Hills, so below, the unoptimized code
of lechery, pickling like lemons in a bath of salt, picking
and tingling at the surface of our skin, jerking the hands of clocks and such

But the sculptor, his work's to die for,
He frees time from marble, sees
sheets of gauze, wet from the sulfur
baths, the rosy blush that comes along with it,
sees all this in stone:

Persephone valued
the way Hades
looked at her
his aril eyes
and indigo
spilt across
the sky –
your greatest
sin, it
whispers, a lie,
to your mother,
young goddess,
firelit in the darkness

and the tinge of sage
in his steam
salt stay and
sea foam so sweet
rumbling to the grind
of the continents,
the bath rose
violet, to drown her

Pt. II

There are always problems, per Wall Street
There is hummus and radish, and
there is not really good art anymore, pickled are our lives,
you and He and I
bumping softly together in brine
within the tin

AS ABOVE, SO BELOW
(AS ABOVE, SO BELOW)

Austen's countryside immortalized
in a scullery apron carved from
taupe stone

The young hands barely bearing the girth of the new Bible

Newton shakes, heaven cries
(He trembles and shivers, it's exquisite, the holy skies a virtuoso
over a sphere of pity)
The jungle's felled, broccoli rots in the crisper
(The tempestuous scrape of dollars on fresh organs)
Thrown shell, spins the universe
(Manipulating the elements can reveal hidden truths)

A city under the rock which I overturned
with a stick, bodies on bodies. I saw
myself dancing in the middle of this, small
and bringing religion to the insects
and I was twirling
in the

Temperamental swirl that is the decision
of when to whip out your wallet –

Baseness fuels
modern ambiguous choice –
Will appetite disclose its
direction, when it does, will it be left,
right, up into heaven, or down?

What is down?

Traffic skitters across

Manhattan:

In my phone there's a picture of a lemon tree
(It's my last day in the
city)
And a picture of my mom with a coconut cake
And Murilo with Bolognese
In Paris

Ripe bunches of luck
falling with their own weight fragrant and sweet

Napoleon's lovers

4' o clock
pours
through the sliding
door again

bashfully
through leaves

and staining the couch

a little bit
of lipstick left on
my skin
after it slides off

the day…

curled up here
I remake
the life
of Bonaparte

golden-time-axis
haunted mist
of Napoleon
Napoleon
floating in parallel to me

sauced up lovers
sorrow
sea of silk

(did Napoleon miss

the embalmed gold
blueberry beach

of Corsica)

you're taking your meetings from
the bedroom

you're hitting escape
on the keys now

(gauze fall
now tight
to bind the thigh)

cherry
wood shavings
a bitter trail

from the bedroom

o I cannot see the bedroom

o say can you see

premaritally by
the dawn's
early light

chime chime
dishes

memory
of the banquets
Napoleon
had

I am lucky
I have kept my head
because feel
how warm
my hand

o the capital
-ization
of my breath
sharp and close

you're done
and it's
eight and

my spit is fresh

yes I think I will stay for dinner

because

bedroom emails
and CCs

meat smoking
pits

I have

my ancestors'
nose

yeah
I'll stay

Eliot on first date w/ millenial

almond, almost
let me use you as a place

to hold my cynicism
it is the dark of the alley

versus my high heel
manifestations

of the pits rising
from the split

peaches, my open gut is refuse
to a vulture

I want to begin by saying it's
ok that you are a banker

I just saw myself with
someone more serious

regret is a big feeling that
humps its way across the sky

(those who have
none should have
all of it)

regret is a dog, then
screwing couches or nursing
puppies

there is a thrill in hurting love
her royal blondness and pink
frills like the
endoplasmic reticulum

or maybe she is not love but
childhood

or she, too, is regret

as the salad finally comes
the fork

jabs its antlers

into a soft root
with dressed sheen

the lovely are choosers, see the
little black dresses stroking the
shining wooden length of
the bar

behind the resto
they are wheeling
out white
tablecloths, red
stained

I saw it yesterday, so
they must be doing
it today, as they will
tomorrow

spills happen,
so there will always
be stains

protein is good
the galactic soup
is also good

my brother is really into protein
as a concept

what was
an animal
is now shreds,
or powder

the cow beats
in my heart, now

the server brings out
bumpy
pustuled chocolate

covered almond
butter strawberries

Cruel Summer

when it
springs, warmth replaces
god

the cashmere wind felt
every body, the man
in wrinkled red

feels it creeping
up his pants. but it braids
only well-shapen legs

gingham
religion, hiding eggs
in the rose garden

gold
hips on your hilt
sword

jilted
lover jolting the murder
canoe

summer is cruel
more than spring cause she's
pretty

sweeping
love, off with the lofty
chore list

I am just
having fun with holy
music

the holly
and the ivy patiently
in their box

the car
overheats while we cool off
at the movie

your arm
serpentine around the softest
part of me

the winter, I loved
you and you showed me your
guns

the humid, the heavy
cold (police brights snapping
like a Rockette)

queen
of new york
city

the
newest, newest
of yorks

white light
arabesque up the fire
escape

surface
tension between our
dry hands

with ev'ry
breath closer so young untender
and true

the pink
flesh inside glowing to a fluorescent
fuschia

and at a peak my pearls
that were eyes sink softly back
into the slow sea

my summer
my tempest, s-s-s-summertime, été
(misfortune en four)

sugar crust
that I wipe off your wasted
nostrils

who could
I be without a spatula in my
hand, can I

escape
the haiku to the quatrain?
coming, Aphrodite?

(I wave it like a
wand, now, and it even begins
to vibrate)

> *just like I used*
> *to thrill to be near you, the*
> *popsicle*
>
> *melts, an*
> *iceberg in the colors of*
> *America*

sleep creeps
like gas as the soft murmur
from the TV…

when you play
the game of thrones you either
win or die…

and the
frequency becomes a
tide

> *the ocean I drift*
> *upon, not real, the beach,*

not real

the price
is unreal, as sharp
as your razor

3 poems from "Documents"

something

Abridged letter
Nantucket, 1982

...your voice sounded different when you slept
I crept in after work The day was dying Saw you passed out there faded couch
The heat had chased the dust on the blinds into the golden air You let out a half-moan
the sweat on the soda glass
a bead of light...

...you might have been sick might have been bile that bubbled and rattled in your ruined throat or the overindulgence, scattered
Styrofoam across the floor Wasted day hung its reminder in the blackened sky You slept
but I felt something dark watch me
I passed from room to room

two steps behind You spoke The voice of Pastor John
the force and awfulness of Asmodeus and all of them behind it kill me I'll kill you
Pastor John...

...my years as a girl
wine in my hands my primrose taffeta stiff and gangly my growing body a dying bee in a newborn rose my first high heels
ripping my beautiful white socks...

...I smelt your skin tightening you were sick something was in you it wasn't sickness it was the ripping of red leather ripping of your throat larynx pulling like
salt water taffy a gargling
it was something something...

anything

Summer diary, waterlogged
Bogue Banks, 1994

gold
yawn *salt emerald*

mom's hands loom
forth with sun cream I *reflected listlessly*
a smearèd clown. . .
pg.1

crumbs *the moist chasm of the denim purse. . .*
tomato seeds. . .
sand fanning on
our tumbling quest to get pasta-boiling *salt water. . .*

I on the *sun plain with my*
books that would pre-

-dict the future war
you popping up *in the surf*

a beautiful morsel, boiling *angel hair. . .*

blue-striped suit *my*
god
embroidering the rip-tides *you teased*
forget that! forget that!
it's not what could
but what will you be. . .

an unbodied
oyster thunks
onto the sand. . .
pg.34

silky paws
yank my rib *gardenia*
indigo

that waxing breast that poets love *a white petal* *drifting perhaps*

on
dark water *I breathed into* *that flower.* . .
pg.92

it could not be
that morning
you glistened, a
seasoned morsel
on the tide

as you spun a golden
circle in the
foam

we dreamt as always *of what*
we would be
but for

your cries
a flowering of crimson *infinities*

everything

Transcript w/ blackouts
Seattle, 1966

when the body goes cold the mind mourns
like a lover –

victory leaves and worms in the water

yes I was alone –

reeds in their clouded jade tease,
swarm

she always said Ophelia's dress became weeds
here

oh so lonely
Ophelia called out
to me I know

the nocturne of the lake
its placenta growing green things
those freckles injections

of dock pine as my forearms slipped down – sultry wet pulses
the lake I its fetus

weeds clerical
and lubricated holding my hands –

the third heartbeat swells – in organs –

the Devil proceeds –

from just behind the doorway
I watched my mother watch
cheap horrors

a man with scales a virile sinew a motored tongue
a mane like vines my breath in frames

I could not walk away
bathed in his light –

a chorus jerked
me down
the sienna fade
hoisted and washed
the surface of the lake yes the surface of the lake
became my sky

Silver stays

.

sherbet peals floating, foamy, across the lake

.

a beer bottle spurting its wetness down

.

across the city, seven friends meet for dinner recalibrating to college days

.

towers glitter like bombs

.

white stone grating

.

the downtown bars bump up against each other

.

new viruses, a puddle of cream

.

she, the librarian, prepares to close closes opens again

.

sinners in the palm of a golden buddha

.

move me you carnal psalms

.

camera flashes, vodka thunders

.

rock-

.

efeller! look how the wind combs back on youth

.

long fingers interlocked with leaves of grass

.

twirling thrills a thin lipped wasp

.

an ant, burly like Schwarzenegger, overhears

.

they allowed me an animal cracker today

.

with pink sugar and soda with dinner

.

and to play

.

popcorn on the asphalt that ate the rain and the corn dissolved

.

recall the first lipstick you owned

.

your first coffee the coffee has caramel and it smells good

.

at what age indoctrinated into purchasing power

.

you’ll learn to grip a man by the handles

.

then you’ll fly alone

.

only from above, understand the incessant secrecy of the waves

.

I have not yet mastered taxes

.

my grandparents have accepted their imminent death

.

conceptual error, age

.

careless error, aging

.

still dawn

.

the estuary sifts out all the evil before the sea

.

salt crinkles the bay

.

manatees at play

.

grey mammals corkscrew the aquamarine

.

silver dashes of soul out of the bottle

.

a teal seam rippling with eyelet lace, down

.

the tablecloth like her wedding dress was

.

afternoon panache ganache

.

mama’s iron steams and cleans

.

sweet tea sunlight filtered into the chapel

.

my hands sour from squeezing for lemonade

.

if a nun is lightning what is thunder

.

high round voices echoing *this*

.

He wanted us to use *this* for more than the taking

.

we invent immaculate soaps and sirens

.

so we salivate at the bell

.

so your sin is a punishment for itself

.

so the girl is dressed like a warning when you meet her

.

so she can try to fit in with the boys

.

newspaper featherbed eyes

.

so the sun sways behind, ordaining the cognac

.

so the cuffs are powdered with diamonds

.

hands on the ground

.

you realize you left the rice on

.

the skies unravel in smoky threads

.

a fuzzy *thneed* of eternal wrath

.

a fingernail scrapes tectonics

.

the seam of a cherry pit

.

mushrooms bloom aflame along the coast

.

ghosts languish in the playroom

.

ah fuck, your daughter steamed up the car?

.

your son is counting his women

.

super bowl appetizers

.

pulling apart like guts into threads

.

is it a pumpkin carriage or a stairway of roses?

.

can you name all the plants that have thorns?

.

can you name all the planets?

.

rockefeller, kennedy, vanderbilt, and who else?

.

red marble thawcking into blue one

.

drums ripple into the nitrogenous loft

.

space god pirouette

.

is that *our* president with laser eyes?

.

who is our vice?

.

is that the game?

.

could you keep that poison?

.

could you keep poison sealed and locked in a room with your bed where you sleep?

.

the drunk man sleeps, why not go down that road?

.

ornamental carps swirl

.

soft serve ooze

.

your 20’s! the first or last chapter?

.

no, no, you’ll peeeel off the earth, on and on

.

in your godmother’s photo box, everglades unbroken

.

lens caps clink like jewels and prints like coins

.

of fat seals seized by streaming weeds

.

our bodies together electric

.

tanned crocodile belly is patent

.

is shopaholic origami

.

is red rubies closely sewn

.

the wear of the boots and the skin of the foot that it saved

.

is the cruise of the healthy placenta

.

speckled birthday cake

.

jell-o heels

.

divine art’s always made by an evil person

.

angel nova at the gas station

.

laughter that belongs in a busier city

.

a shirley temple that swelled as it drained it set the scene

.

sherry in beads from the gutters

.

the small of the back opens the heavens

.

apex skin constricting and leather squeaking

.

a man can be a wonderful or a horrific thing to happen to you

.

which takes you back to tennis skirts and slip-on tennis shoes

.

it is a classic American struggle

.

hot in an apron, he sears the grates into you

.

bloodless modern tattoos

.

ink in the seams of the eyes until it colors the tears

.

ink in the pores of the nose until it colors its tears

.

why worry? you can’t really lose time until you’re out of it

.

why are you sorry so goddamn much?

.

a late summer shimmers claim on the afternoon

.

a popsicle lasciviously down its pole

.

a sparkling pink cube of time

.

a wiggling knife (can I have a minute?)

.

a giant grey tongue under the lake waiting for you

.

a still fish asleep

.

a plagiarism propagates the depth

.

god’s neurons, red berries

.

mothers’ milks and superclusters

.

a stroke in the artificial brain

.

burst cherries in the coming rain

.

bamboo sighing and treading feather-wind

.

storm mountains

.

light up and marshmallow the mountains

.

green moonlight stalks listlessly

.

his new girlfriend weaves her hair into the cloth

.

“women look best blurry”

.

pretty hands gripping desperately onto the minute hand

.

silver sheets hang from taxis

.

pillowy traffic over the quiver of a dying bird

.

— can I crawl into your O-mouth?

.

he's the kind of man from which anna nicole smith would sip –

.

I hear them all chattering in the gothic hall –

.

are you 21? – like that’s relevant

.

as it is before age coolly flickers

.

the group, peering owls into whose sore throat?

.

a buffet of the masses for the masses

.

a sterling serving spoon quenelles the buttery brain

.

blue stained glass glorifies a brown eye

.

and velvets my guilt in the pew in the night

.

minnows and slivers from when you burst apart

.

weaving, a synonym for care

.

a purgatory near sagittarius where all handmade gifts go to heaven

.

the first love letter you wrote to a girl

.

and after all that apples in red gelatin suspends misery

.

do you have someone who would check under your bed at night?

.

how many parts of you can die before all of you has died?

.

let me take you to the night I died

.

it was crawling out of the static like a huntsman

.

spider

.

pipe children

.

warbling moans

.

do you have a plan for loneliness, do you, do you

.

hear the misery as the nightingale sings

.

silver rubbing silver

.

white thighs rubbing against each other in the silver

.

his fingers croaking through her gossamer gown

.

the forest’s shy crown

.

the lake disappointment

.

the smoke from the room and the houses on the hills silver

.