



Without Goggles

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*Cover photos by the author*

## **WITHOUT GOGGLES**

Seeing beauty, seeing  
the grotesque—

the light on a leaf  
insects eating the same leaf

a smartly-dressed woman  
parading her charms

creases in her skirt  
plaque on her teeth

she touches her mane  
with a manicured hand

there's excrement  
on the hair in her crack

a lingering smile  
raises my heartbeat

and the tumor

## **MARILYN MANSON ON THE RAG**

*for Tamara*

Billy Blake wanders in the chartered streets  
crying *weep weep weep*

Sylvia Plath lies in a basement  
her cunt full of worms  
Williams Carlos Williams crawls  
to his Asphodel

Dylan slashes his eye  
Villon thrashes on the scaffold  
and The Old Gray Poet  
mad blind gay  
SEES  
all the stars and all the grains of sand  
all the bacteria in the shit pile  
are children born trembling

## **FLYING WHITE**

Rising with sun,  
arguing with darkness,

I set my hand to move  
willynilly through a repertory  
of cyclic gestures, assembling  
lines which wittily approximate  
a sea a tree a hill a face.

This is the best day to be alive  
because if I'm dead, I'm dead,  
and even if I'm dying while I'm alive,  
Creation is receding to it's center  
to make room for me.

Glory! Glory! Glory!

## **THE GULF IN US**

We're on a longitude  
on our way to a latitude

on our way to a kill box  
flying around with hot ammo  
intending to kill anything that moves

or

we're rowing across a lake  
getting nowhere fast

talking about the causes of happiness.

My brain stalls—

## **PEBBLE**

too much—  
not enough

## **SONG AT MIDNIGHT**

hard white—infernal yellows—  
sulfur and yellowgreen—

## **UNCERTAIN, CHAINED**

rocked—laughing in the rafters—starburst—  
splendid—rage mixed with joy—unsubdued

## **STRESS IN THE FIELD**

I'm waiting.  
I am exploring non-thought  
on Occidental Road  
as I hunt in litter.

(Silence.)

I am the world.  
The world is me.

(Sounds.)

I think to say something.  
I try to say something.

Music  
    prayer  
        death all around me  
of which  
    I know nothing.

## **CLOUDS**

clouds  
like smoke  
like mist  
like smoke

feathers  
smoke  
fur  
smoke

perhaps  
each

## POIPU BLUES

I'm sitting on the beach at Poipu, daydreaming about the 15<sup>th</sup> century

Joan of Arc is cast out for, among other abominations, wearing men's clothing, her judges are determined to get her to change, condemned in much the same way the Elder Bush condemned John Walker Lind for wearing his hair long, saying, I can think of no worse punishment than to bring him home and make him keep his hair like that

Dubya argues Axis of Evil and scraps six-hundred years of humanistic philosophy, says he will go the last mile, although going the extra mile is what we need—overheard waiting in the checkout line, They don't believe in God; they believe in Allah—John Ascroft holding onto his face, doesn't let his face slip, God has many faces, can his be one?

*O ke ola no'ia o kia' a loko Look for the life within*

*Kiei ka'ula nano i ka makau*

*Peer towards Ka'ala, look at the wind*

*Ho'olono i ka halulu oka Maluakele (pa)*

*Heard is the roaring wind Maluakele*

I watch an old man sweeping the sand with a metal detector, I'm wondering if he's found

anything good, when he stops and stoops to sift for a quarter, a boy in red trunks faces him,

fascinated with this mysterious operation, trickle-down economics

*Maui e ka pua, uwe i ke' auu*

*Bruised is the flower, wailing in the wind*

*Maui e ka pua uwe i ke'am*

*Bruised is the flower, wailing in the cold*

My reading, this morning, included Borge's "Zafir" where a man finds a coin that is one of the faces of God, or he might himself be

one of the faces of God, or the static which whirs in his earphone  
while he searches the beach might be the face of God, or the face of

God might be the boy, or the whales flipping their flippers right  
offshore

*Ua Hana' ia ai pono a pololei*

*That which is done is true and correct*

*Ua haina'ia a kuno 'ia 'oe*

*That which is spoke stands before you*

I'll make a cup of tea, put on sunscreen, and walk across town on  
my broken legs

## **INSTALLATION**

*for Gay*

Turning off Fulton onto 12  
maneuvering to the left  
no, right

Different scripts reverberate  
in the inclined box with masking  
tape, paint, brushes, pan  
& roller tumbling to the floor

The doors to my senses  
open—I envision my room in the gallery—  
eyes, ears, nose, mouth

Black rectangles the size of doors  
painted on the interior walls  
thin strips of black running parallel  
to the black kick board

Using stick pins, black yarn, wire  
neither nest nor web, a handful of fog  
mirrors & masks

wrapped thoughts

Boxed images

Revealing the true phantom  
speaks the truth

## **HISTORY TEACHES**

I'm expanding my dominions  
with might and right  
    living on the pulse

expanding with axe, rifle and plow  
I'm expanding with mini nukes

I'm drowning in life's flow  
    laughing at inertia

All for the stars of empire—

Throwing myself out there  
according to the logic of history  
    letting come what may

## **NOT REAL DEEP OR ANYTHING**

In your face—  
backing off

Look at this—  
and worse

The glory, the ruin  
the laughter and the tears

What goes wrong  
goes and goes

What goes right  
just goes—

Walking through shit in  
nice shoes

## **DUAL IN THE SUN**

rise/fall  
short/tall

high/low  
fast/slow

good/bad  
happy/sad

yellow/blue  
false/true

matter/mind  
loose/find

heaven/hell  
buy/sell

O, pockmarked moon, I don't  
    have anything to sell,  
either

## **FULL MOON**

Which switch?  
The witch switch?  
You turn on  
the witch switch,  
and what happens?

Archaic  
Old  
Provincial  
Yes, and  
Yes, closed—Yoga  
Concise  
Long Poems

in Latin it means,  
that's strange, DNA  
Enzymes

I'm transported to a place of clarity  
and movement.  
She smiles, and I'm transfigured.

## **DEJA VOODOO**

*for Ashlee*

o, never always  
would the mind  
let go

even the grass  
will attain  
liberation

## **WARM LIGHT**

*for Brent*

spring soon  
still winter

still winter stillness  
the brown ground moves

bees have no attainment  
bees have no non-attainment

## **AUTOMORPH**

Being in the body  
being in the world  
curves in space  
I love it all.

A tree and a rock  
a sacred spot  
because it is  
it just is.

I look  
I think it through  
I do or I don't—  
two fish meet midstream.

## **JUXT POSE**

*for Meg*

Here, rock stillness.  
Here, a falcon's freefall.  
Here, dangling tassels of wisteria.  
Here, a Tibetan mudra mystery.

## **RISING FROM THE RIVER, FALLING FROM THE SKY**

Nymph, sylph, gopi, elf, seraphim, wild  
and silent, outrageous and innocent,  
you say my poems are notes for poems.

A blind shadow looms  
on the door of my tongue  
erecting a shrine to nothing

while ripples of snow and wind  
hang by their thumbs  
for astonishing rewards.

Hang on, baby, wait a sec,  
let me...

## **SEEING ANGELS WITH THE INNER I**

the river runs both ways  
innocent, pristine, untroubled  
in a clean environment  
I'm always making the same mistake

looking closer I see sludge at my door  
and the road detour through acid rain  
as the bills of regret mount higher  
I'm always making the same mistake

the river hugs the bank like a friend  
I read love poems on the leaves  
blessed by the air's deep prayer  
I'm always making the same mistake

the stones simmer on the lake  
and night feels like a rotten tooth  
and to move I have to roll snake eyes  
a million times in a row

I'm always making the same mistake

## **YES, REPEAT, NO**

What constitutes outer avant-garde?  
inner avant-garde, secret avant-garde?  
innermost secret avant-garde?

Escaping foreword.  
Attacking backwards.  
Pushing the river.  
Drinking the clouds.

All oink in the ink.  
All in order on a plate of gas.  
Beuys buys a refrigerator.  
Rimbaud rides a skateboard.  
Tension in a vacuum.  
Hazard in a blank space.  
Sweet unbearable.

No eyes, no ears, no body.  
No ideas but in my underwear.

## **TRACE-TONES AND AFTER-DOTS**

Smells of fungus and fir  
rough bark and smooth rock  
remind me of a boy

escaping up a creek  
in search of Excaliber  
or ever elusive El Dorado.

Now, on the more traveled path,  
I rein in my passions and  
act on consequence.

Crisp though I am from compromise,  
a salty will o' the wisp  
turned into a vulture snack,

my mind still shifts and drifts.

## **WORSHIP DOG**

*for David*

some serious fucking parts of my brain  
missing

spastic

*streams of world sleepy mowing in harvest-time, sowing and  
reaping for growing field green watch the dreams of dreams in  
doubtful riot waves spent and wind dead—seems trouble where  
here quiet is the world*

worship Dog

I think I know what I'll do  
I think I will decide  
to be happy

sitting in my porcelain garden  
hollyhocks sculpting my sight  
I try to win this war waged in my brain  
and stop the war waged in my name

I'm a speck on the earth  
the earth  
in turn, a speck in space—

objects in my hundred-mile gaze  
pulling away from what I designate  
a gazebo, where two teenage girls  
eat sandwiches on the steps  
a pleasing visage of afternoon calm  
also, a slap in the face

war begins with a slap in the face  
a slap that has the precision of a jet fighter  
firing missiles into my room  
without disturbing the curtains

the slap begins with a broken promise  
followed by harsh words, then a curse, then a blow  
breaking my nose, blackening an eye, burning a car

as though I was a car

a car which would take you anywhere  
down Interstate 280 to 92 East  
getting off on 1st  
going down a long hill  
past the high school

I hear

"Republicans are good  
for nothing."

two men debate in anger  
the new candidates  
frustrating business, smells  
of winter, sound of cars  
a muffler blown, laughter of girls, three girls, now

as though I was a girl

talking with two other girls  
about taking a picture of ourselves  
pink, baby blue, white tank tops  
heads together, deciding to go  
for ice cream

a boy, fashion conscious  
pants halfway down his ass  
keeps tugging them up— ass and mid-drift  
adrift in the uncertainty

contour of wind making earth designs  
at my feet, this activity in clear sky  
haze around Mt. Saint Helens  
visible between the trees over the stop sign  
by the police station, lawn mowing going on  
the hollyhocks  
in the face of what I see

as though I was a Stalinist

Muriel Short is not short.  
She is not tall, and she is not short.  
She is about average height. A bit  
overweight, but not overweight  
in an unattractive sense.

as though I was true to form  
it is this that  
one means

it is this  
that one  
    does

it is  
this nose, dazzling in profile  
that one

knows

She's to die for.

as though I was dead

you can spread my ashes  
or leave me to be drug off by a mountain lion  
use my thigh bone for a trumpet  
and my skull for a cup

say, I was drugged off  
a poetry junky

Billy Collins says

poetry goes right to the point, he says to  
read a poem each day in school  
read it aloud without any obligation  
to study it, just listen and wonder  
"All it takes is one poem to get you hooked."

*I saw the best minds of my generation  
destroyed by madness, starving hysterical  
naked, looking for an angry poem*

old, beggared poets reading poems in bathrooms  
Anslinger's prophesy come true  
poets selling their nickel poems on street corners

THIS IS A POEM FREE ZONE

junk, that poem is junk

The Salvation Army condemns the vice of poetry  
Poets Anonymous meets in the church basement  
My name is Richard Denner  
I'm a poet

I have always wanted to write the perfect poem

Today I will write it

It begins with the sun rising, the morning  
Light creating the world

The morning light that I create  
By raising the sun with my perfect poem

as though I was a god