

NOON: journal of the short poem

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THREE WHITE DOORS, EARLY MORNING

two closed

one open

through which I see one

of the closed doors

THINKING ABOUT OUR LAST CONVERSATION

'since there is pity in the details'

- Wislawa Szymborska

I walk around

I pick things up

I put things down

I walk around

I pick things up

I set them down

I sit down

I get back up

I walk about

I pick things up

I put things down

I walk around

MEANWHILE IN PURGATORY

A litany for the weary:
'Send me your bullet-point pitch asap.'

This poem begins with the image of a red apple, one bite taken, the apple left on a kitchen counter to create mystery that might be resolved in the last line. It has an introspective speculation that existential nihilism is creeping into suburban bourgeois consumerism and an unexpected turn to global warming at the mention of melting glaciers and polar icecaps. Might as well decry assault rifles and mass shootings, gender and racial inequality too, and every injustice it can think of. Throw everything into the pot, with dashes of angsty seasoning as if the poem could boil its way to a society reformed, legislating the world in its unacknowledged way, as if apples could keep the doctor away and save the fucking universe.

record high –
I can't think
of the author's name

the book that
almost killed him
it's still raining

the chaos I have become a river's mouth

inner ear dreaming up a shell

Caroline Skanne

wave after wave
a lifetime
collapsing

from a forest lies folded into envelopes

Rich Schilling

the grass
persisted
to treat me
as if I was

clusters of
facts
depicting
the jelly
fish
season
ended
yesterday

all
we
have
done

is to
slacken
the
tempo

of
this
brief
pause

among

some

short

islands

nor
earth
nor
the last
nor

at once the snowflake failure eyes

all my plurals singularized this moon

a
crack
in
the
stain
ed
gl
ass
con
viction

DUOPOLY

Rabid dogs surround
the foundry. Did the

monks escape in their

Model T? Will the sound
bites ever fall silent?

OFF-RAMPED

A speedboat from the
rich & famous, tied
to the tray of a
trailer truck, pre-
cedes me across
the bridge. Out
of the water, but
not a bit like a fish.

Mark Young

flotsam the entropy of bikini ties

Jennifer Hambrick

cold soup
a Boltzmann brain
thinks I am

expanding
universe

taste
this

Tinder dates wrapped in bacon

Lee Gurga

gist and all but like edited body

the window by the computer raining ephemera

Paul Pfleuger, Jr.

aurora borealis her body his moodboard

superstring the synth-pop of the spheres

Helen Buckingham

SPHERES OF HEAVEN

stratos-
phere

treeline

tropos-

Asu just has to ask about every Hemshin local we meet for a bear anecdote. And a man comes down from the cloud up on the Sal Plateau. From one of its tin-roofed houses. And he tells us he'd rather meet his demise by being mauled by the wild. Better that than being run down by some absentminded driver.

the hills go dark with passing cloud
with the dark passing the dark of passing cloud

TESS JOHNSON'S MOON CHILDREN

the children running

in single file along the rim of
a lunar crater

never mind how
they got there

but will they

skip lunch?

AFTER PAUL KLEE

Clarification

The fields are transparent because they are made of sound

the roads between them

are the instruments of our animal selves

the green moon decides

we will begin again

all our colors are conducted

into the harmony

Vast Harbor of Roses

We can make a musical notation
of ships on the waves.

We can put our names between the notes.

We can decide the sun's tones
on all the sails.

We can make the ships go as far as the music.

We can let them return to a harbor of roses.

Secret Letters

the walls are painted white

the cities, the bridges

the faces

are all painted white

we dip our fingers in ash

and on the walls of the future

begin to write

WORDS

Unlike paint on a canvas that
the painter intends to allow

to run and

drip, words

on a page
stand still

dripping.

whittling childhood memories into the point

death poem a selfie

BARNACLES

Barnacles can survive
changes in

salinity

and sanity. One barnacle re-

minds me

of how I

see

my face

when I'm not

looking

in

a mirror.

John Levy

fire-ravaged forest
after leaving
its shadows
mine
never the same

sea wall
the spray
from waves
with news
from abroad

as the coffin lowers
the future
under a tree
out of the rain

traf
fic cir
cle the
stor ies
of fam
ily still
bre ath
ing

water mirage

behind
the sand dune

reflecting
the self I own
after you disown me

luna piena
a refugee eyes you
from a kelp bed

Chuck Brickley

relocating my solitude unpacked again

Maya Daneva

evening the odds of dying alone

sibilant fields
our lips slip into
wordlessness

semantic change—
the quick syntax
of octopus ink

Proxima Centauri light hiding tuatara's third eye

Richard Thomas

FUSHIMI INARI

Under a log
pale salamander

eyes topaz
moons

guts shining through
translucent skin

a sliver
of breathing

STAIRWELL

In the stair-
well where

I work,
pressed tight

two years
now: shield-

bug's chit-
inous hut

still hanging
on for

dear
death.

SKIFF

Skiff: a word
my father gave me

for the first snow
in Cape Breton

drifts over
his face tonight

rain lit streets unspooling the dusk inside words

three years of silence all I could say *I don't know*

Robert MacLean

A BIT OF *ARS*

We've had trouble,
haven't we, saying
what a poem is. Let's
agree to differ or at
least say we can't say
but just know, is that ok?
We might need to count
the syllables or break free
from it all, purge the page
clean of syntax or indent
lines at apparent whim.
Poetry is the thing that
just won't give in.

skipping stones across a thought ellipsis

Kat Lehmann

REDACTION

An old hand
at grammaticide
Grammarly
buttresses him to bark
at whoever like
another cornered
in fume and flame
is energized to shriek
at the sight
of a fire-fighter.

third pass
the sound of bleating
nouns

my sunny disposition unmarked grave

Benedict Grant

2ème étage

September never smelt
so good: lavender pear
beeswax & nuts

GALLERY

Despite scents of rose
& iris this is not a garden
birdsong recording (robin)
mixes with real song (robin)
amongst a gentle hum

A solitary nightingale
a painted study of time
its appropriateness not
lost while on an angled
chair rests a dead bee

A church bell rings once

every moment a little death

place holder daymoon

AFTERIMAGE

So difficult to see as new
the made bed, broom-straw, egg.
A camera palters, spatch-cocks
light to speckle shade. The mind
makes decoupage: ballerina,
oilrig, trout. Moonlight
on these canyon walls broadcasts
spare artifacts the old ones left
behind. What stays? A girl's finger
tracing her mother's mouth.

AT A CONCERT IN THE PARK

the violinist plays
Romanza Andaluza – his bow fast,
then slow – as a man
feeds his lover artichoke hearts
from a jar.

JORDAN

The swell, drift,
eddy and circling back
of a river I know he never
wanted me to cross alone.
Yet here I am in the middle
feeding the fish with his ashes.

from UNSEASONED
(with apologies to Robert Hass)

Bashō

A morning—
by myself,
chewing on dried salmon.

Taking a nap,
feet planted
against a wall.

First
falling
on the half-finished bridge.

Buson

The end of
the poet is brooding
about editors.

The
it fell into the darkness
of the old well.

A tethered horse,

in both stirrups.

Issa

The man pulling
pointed my way
with a

Full
my ramshackle hut
is what it is.

Here,
I'm here—
the falling.

stairs' frailty the wolves sped shot
they, with Euclid, crumpled
exhausted still they go sleepless
a huddle of carpenterpencil-flat bodies
Euclid only looks like he's smiling when
they lick newsprint off their forepaws

Jeff Harrison

snow. Skin

peeled. From a

. Bar

. Code

night.

"Well, I guess

"Summer's

"Been

"A simple

song

"From a

broken

"Computer

after Buson

scare. Crow

's in.

vest.

ment.

port.

folio.

. Stick

ing through.

. Its

. Head

she can. Only
take. So, many
butter.
flies.
hitting.
The wind.
. Shield

a plastic. Bottle
of water. Gently
washed. With
. A plastic
bottle. Of
water.

wiping the drizzle
off the ocean
on my phone

ALL OF TIME

all of the time

for your birthday a billion hands arranging rain

the vision all spun up
it's plain to see
we're not playing we're running

Richard Mavis

stadium of shadows game over

Roberta Beach Jacobson

Taxonomy of Windows

Floor-to-ceiling glass overlooking
a beach you claim to own. Below-deck
portholes on your 100-foot yacht.
Boarded-up windows of a house
on a block in a city left to rot.
An interrogation room's one-way view.
Where were you? Where were you?

Taxonomy of Cell Phones

In 1990 BC – Before Cells – I chatted
with a stranger in a laundromat. We've been
friends ever since. Now a communication device
keeps people from talking to each other, our faces
half-aglow in a screen eclipse. We cradle
phones like baby birds who've slipped
from the nest, feed them from our fingertips.

Taxonomy of Passwords

An ex-lover's birthday, the number of feet in a mile, the number of miles to her house. *Senha*, Portuguese for password. The Czech word for hack: *zaseknout*. An hour's worth of blows to a punching bag. The middle name of the child you never had.

weltanschauung –
jagged ends of the self

with nowhere to go words collect in the tympanum

day moon faint from the worn wax voices

the point of an icicle
last summer's rain

Alan Peat

END OF FEBRUARY

From the Parapet
South Mountain Reservation, New Jersey

Bare trees sway
in small winds,
late day sun

across clouds,
afternoon
soon over.

Below us
a car moves,
houses still,

a bridge far
off, inlet,
the vague sea.

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