

ALITSTOVEWITHSMOKE



MARIANNE DAGES

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SISTRUM 2020

FLEA OBJECTS
ALITSTOVEWITHSMOKE
BAIKAL
WELCOME TO THE EVENING
WATCH PILLS BURN
SNOUT FOR SNARE
HORSEBURN THE TROLL
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OPERATOR AND RECEIVER
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SEVEN IN THE WOODPILE
HOUND WITH NO WHIP

FLEA OBJECTS

Sweep the pit
with stick and hook
helminth crown
and animal hoof

of hoax machines
oily drawn
of rubber feet
to be carved and worn

the wolf appears
a bulb in winter
to light the face
of hungry wards

those tremblings loaves
of long white cloth
they wince and rub
the eye that spits

asleep upon
a breath of parchment
rubbed in embers
and marked with claws

ALITSTOVEWITHSMOKE

I will be deserving
spotless shoes
over time
clear as glass

typing my name
a l i t s t o v e w i t h s m o k e

back and forth
from field to sea

writing ' I cannot speak '

and take food
out of this
fish-white mouth

eat dirty gravy
joyfully
in the garden
eat playfully
tasselled shrubs

sleep upright
in bedsteads
gaunt and worn

kneel beseeching
in oilskin and wool

sitting
I need not

for sandwiches
warm persons
found daily
in our toilets

sometimes
morning comes

BAIKAL

A solitary witch
passed by the construction site
blasting whirling ghoulish music
from her plow.

Sold me an ox.
Left me cradling
its chopped skull.

Phew! Got tired.
I am going to bed.
How the day went so far.

WELCOME TO THE EVENING

Go to bed. Do not eat anything. Withdraw yourself from the crowd. Say, I do not wish to remain in the company of the old-time poets. Take your jug of wine and go to your bed. Pour your wine, onto your pillow. Then, fall asleep. Dream. In your dream, go to where there are people. Then, forget where you are. Get up. Keep watch. Keep awake as long as you can. Do not eat. Do not weep. This will be difficult. The body always is.

Have you any enemies? What can you say about them? Let's say, you didn't have the time to get to lodging. Would you lie down on a rug and sleep?

In the morning, look out your window. There they are. They will be watching you now. Do you know what they are watching you for? Repeat your dream and let the vines grow through your garden. Let the vines turn your shadows blue. The mausoleum of your parents is still and beautiful.

They just won't let you in.

WATCH PILLS BURN

Waiting in line,
they never come.

And there is Master...

Frostbitten
in red coat

And me
teary-eyed specimen
in my dark dayroom

Yes, me
the only person
that hears his voice

I ply my noose
from the tracks
in a Warehouse
two days drank

Master! Help me!
Have I been asleep?

With every present
a future storm
copious enough
to set alarm

So much self...
nice and dull

All day,
watch pills burn.

As I decay
hints drop
into a dead dog's
mouth

Shitposting
is irrelevant
to this thread
as it is cursed
all around.

SNOUT FOR SNARE

From 8am on
buying salt to feed on
What else is left
but bait and catastrophe
into snake and water
lens bitten
the scratches of
a hanging clock
in memory of the city system
uncertain
after receiving the words
'take my pic.'
impersonating the distant horizon
like blades of icy pinion
beyond that huge blue orb
is evening sleep
upon my own private bed.

HORSEBURN THE TROLL

Horseburn the troll
reels out the tide
and slits a ripe leaf

such a strong crop
we talk about our debts

the hole on my back
that I've been digging

same as a nail-head
not really alive

and not long before
the machines ceased
when grain remained

Horseburn the troll
the something
stumbled in.

LEARNING A NEW SKILL

Setting up all manner of traps
a snail sitting on a pink potted log
a bathtub with a mannequin in it
a literal mansion
of never-used bathtubs

almost looks real
all kinds of goose fin fun

smiling
in my personal bath tent
yay

Who stuffed this box in my window?
there's a man in the box
sounds like he's climbing out of the box
someone get rid of this box!

heavy machinery lifeforms
them Halogen Rollers
them heavy machinery lifeforms
on wheels

just a bushel full of strangers
in a rent controlled apartment
a cloud most foul
quivering underfoot

MILKWEAVE

Make hard shoes in a
square room
one was saying to
the other

"You have been good
for eight years and you
have made one shoe."

Get up
take off my clothes
weep for my clothes
and feel for my clothes

the over-groomed
the nighted and sleeping
with blanket and soft pillows
when mercy allows

wet my chin in the sink
mumbling
make jokes and end up
begging

campfire turns out
to be my bed
but require a bed
all the same

support groups in stalls
most of them
for me

in occasional symmetry
with Alex
catch a glimpse
of the creature, Alex
watching me
from behind the fence.

LITTLE WISH

Surely
the best job in the world
would be
to be a bed
made of mattresses
housed
cared for
every night

OPERATOR AND RECEIVER

The operator is able to navigate the environment unseen due to the work of the receiver. The receiver employs a lense-like object called the flash, pointing it in the direction of the operator to obscure their identity and position. Each time a moving object passes through the path of the flash, a burst is emitted to disrupt the observer's path of vision. In this way, a vehicle or person may travel unnoticed, as long as a receiver is in position and waiting. For example, an unknowing observer will not notice a vehicle passing or a pedestrian walking if the operator follows the path set by the receiver. If interaction is required, the receiver may employ overlays to change the identity of the operator. If an observer in the vicinity sees a receiver, the receiver may wait in place and turn the flash inward to avoid identification. The image will be transferred and the receiver may continue to use their voice while remaining unidentifiable. The behavior of the flash is unpredictable and requires skill in the receiver. If the receiver fails to trigger the flash, the veil will thin, and the image will fail. The operator's field will grow transparent, or the operator will trigger a shadow in the observer's field of view. The operator's shadow will grow darker over time. The shadow will enlarge, shrink, and even morph depending on the speed of the operator and the intensity of the receiver's flash. If the observer loses sight of the shadow, the image may be reestablished. Therefore, constant motion and ample cover are required if the operator is to move unnoticed and unharassed.

SERPENTINE

Piece of luggage
found while scouting
found in bramble
near the bench

Read the rules
for BEAUTIFUL BOX
now ghost under boot
wants to be my friend

wish I could remember more
wish it didn't change

running out of food now (too gloomy)
so people are cleaning the pit

I found a crushed ham sausage
I found a photograph of what looked like food
I found a change of clothing

A pair of hands came to me
It was a pair of hands
And inside of them
was a picture of me
All covered in bandages
looking up

Fields full of broken glass and teeth
Watermarks imprinted on trees
these are all just part of living in
a self-contained community

one night
the angry took to their beds
shapeshifted
and headed out to the sea

and mist fell
and there was something
serpentine.

WRITTEN ON THE SIDE OF A SORROWFUL HORSE

"Two large banknotes, please."

SPIRIT WALKED THE SPIRIT

For years I worked a service job
every day my body lost

and spirit walked the spirit
as half the watchmen slept

by day we walked the fields
felt their edges blindly

I had a copy machine
and a small electric stove

had some furniture
and a large, clean mop

I had a coffin full of snapshots
and good drugs made of chalk

I had toothache

Another dim memory
of opening bulbs
to gather red crabs in silence

a tape recorder ran all day
but sometimes played the noise of
someone picking through the soil

when an old man in ribbons
from a land of flax and pollen
came off the boat

I had a dream that night
of pine cones
and bone-like paper
sickly white

GOOSEBELLS

High meadow quite by itself,
the geese like sleeping bells.
A tintype of the all grey boy
chipped beneath my trowel...

The boy may be having a good dream.
The bells may be code for a "busy day."
The mouthed cloud is a sign of yearning.
The cornstalk a big x-ray of sadness that his heart always saw.
But why don't the geese sleep?
They like to carry on singing and be heard.
Like when two women work at lunch,
and live by the edge of their insanity.

A PISH DEATH

7

beginning to drear
a way to dryness
must come

8

to drear
tens of days ago
far away then

9

to keep
warm
days
never can stop them

10

falling
fall, fall
the drive of fall

11

to fall by an empty chair
to admit oneself

12

in the end
in the end

13

nine sleepers, nine sleepless ones
nine dark rides on it like three

14

to run
to see something
soon to be

MEALWORMS

A pastiche of muddy dollspeak.
Thimbles packed.
The rope that bends water
laid out
at the edge of the bed.
Poor emotional self: selling oxy
and a "modern translucent bread."
Lurking in corrugated garages
about waxen plants and pastes
in the morning's slush.
'Tween a potholder
and a neighborhood drinker
with a fork in his hand
who says, "I got something
(here comes the laughter)

HERE IS DAINTY CLOWN

He's over there
painting breadcrumbs
into the minds of little boys.

Trying to entertain his,
friends.

Trying to pass a single day.

Frankly
frightened to death
of beggars.

A STRANGE AUGMENTATION

The torso was not yet visible but the lower limbs showed vaguely under the cowling mass that covered them and lay upon the floor. The trunk was then replaced by a metallic head, half embedded in the floor. The figure fell forwards and the curious spectators were elated to see it pass through a door and into another room. It remained there for one day in this new and miscellaneous state.

By the same door then came objects, each one in a clay jar. The jars were broken open and fragments of the objects scattered about the floor. They were made of very hard brass, almost straight, and perfectly round. The jar bore a figure of a woman with bandaged hands. Near the woman was a crumpled piece of paper. There was also one small disk of rubber and a piece of very clean wax. Once the spectators withdrew from the room, the objects went away.

At this time, the figure reappeared with a distinctly green glow. As if by enchantment, it began walking rapidly backwards, and disappeared through an aperture at the farthest end of the floor. The spectators, alarmed but in perfect health, could suddenly neither hear nor see a thing. However, the preceding sights and sounds were still present. Then they heard a sound. The figure had drawn a starling, that flit towards the crowd.

The figure, now a moving bulk, was driven to the corner of a room. It became a heap of bones, crumpled and disfigured. A doctor was left alone with the figure. The doctor lay beside the figure and attempted to raise it up. The figure tumbled and lurched forward. It stopped in its tracks upon reaching another door. Within the figure grew a mass of felled trees and from the head a single bough. One leg began to protrude from the figure and nearly reached the threshold of the door.

"Where do you think you're going?" asked the doctor.

"This way, doctor, to where the fiercest light will burn."

WAKING IN A LION'S SKIN

Waking in a lion's skin
gathered while weeping
the walls of a house
searched
but no house, ever owned
found
only sorrow and cloth
and a tooth-marked body
set against the wall
that cried,
"Haven't you wondered,
why you were left behind?"

SEVEN IN THE WOODPILE

I wanted to see my meema.

It's falling apart at the seams.
They're just saying the words
"tin sail" over and over
quiet and bleak

Ma
is holding a lantern
and possibly the words "tin sale"

Pa
is wearing a man's hat
decorated with a
coconut on a pillar
and a white handkerchief
stitched with tiny goose bells

Pa smells sweet
like a penny loafer

Tom with the clay pipe
sits by the stairs

In a filthy gray suit
snuffling sibilant howl

That is Tom
with frizzy locks
a dry-ice horror
with the face of a child.

HOUND WITH NO WHIP

Away from the cold
hair combed neatly
hate hath returned me
to my bed

"For once," they clicked
as I cranked
kept looking

and so
the gravity worsened

Visitor came then

Thick in furs
twinking silver
held
in a sac of fat

-

Away from the cold
and promised porridge

Bread
or death
by stone

But more stubborn stumps
- more stubborn stumps
from pelicans teemed forth

and so
formed a wheel

they screamed like assholes
they talked of vengeance
they pitched their legs
to feed

Away from the cold
I saved some porridge

Hound
with no whip
for me

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SISTRUM

Who is the third that walks beside you?

This is copy of .

