

Should You Expect a Reply

Infinity is overcrowded with the owl's resinous knife.
Hear it whoosh, slice open limb upon limp upon lisp.

Should you care to send a query, ask about my many incarnations as moths.
I will be as indirect as possible.

Sometimes the lamp can be too intensely sparse.
I might require invigorated shade.

The goldfish came down from the tree like mystical good luck.
There was a pressing silence in the parked Buick, as if inhabited by lyrebirds and rare
Bornean peacocks.

When I was a kid I loved Flash Gordon, Charlie Chan, even the phrases, *Okay, Pop—how
'bout it?* and *Now, that's cool.*
Do you still remember the actual name of *Vulva Street*? In what alley did we leave our
tongue?

I used to snicker at the mere mention of a *penal* colony.
I couldn't imagine the Australian settlers and how they'd propagate moon-bruises among
the flora of Botany Bay.

Should you expect a reply, ask yourself whether you have my correct address.
The breeding ground of three goldfish is actually two incarnations, sometimes one.

The Naked Length

Thus, one of us reminisced the distant Gandhi years.
Another, the demise of *Wani*, Japan's Crocodile School of post-war poetry.

A third said nothing but went to a field, revolving his body beneath a surplice of stars.
There was no fourth, except the heretics of pantheist grass.

That night, like all others, was dark.
From the alphabet tripod, the upstream grasp of a deadly fish.

All I ever wanted was love, is how I'd recorded it in my diary a decade before.
It suddenly reappeared as bosk rills in the messy hair-matted sink.

A piece of a thirty-six hour glacier was undertaken for study.
Men with pipes listened to radio accounts of Calcutta floods.

They spent their days aboard a Swedish steamer searching for the Northwest Passage to
Yokahama.
They spent nine months of ice bartering with the Chukchi locals for a bride.

The sea froze. Meerschaum became a manner of breathing, a way of sexual release.
Mendelssohn remained in their beards the way reptile eggs might hide a sigh.

Across the radio waves, a Bengali mapmaker experiences the drainage of all his
cardamom tea.
A dog in a sand bed near the Ganges might suddenly sneeze.

We scratch our ear, lick ourselves silly, pocket-lint our hands as a sign of fate.
Celestial harmonics present many openings, thrash this tail or that, say Japanese Dada
meant something.

What does winter have to do with the naked length of my beloved's body?
What waited for us, a radio-breath away, at the end of the world?

Retracted Order

The occultists sought to organize the Bulgarian working class.
Though proletariat, I was totally singed to the letters of their middle names.

I could never exact their stance.
I wanted meditation. I wanted Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras*, the laboratory of the spine.

Still, what comes to a basic secret tried to regret itself.
I know the fork of lifetimes, of ideological facts located in meanderings in the palm.

After not mentioning death, a biography of the Czar was the worst kind of river flower.
I kept smelling for my nose, helping myself to lungfuls of dead, pre-established air.

If you are confused, insert some transient brilliance in retracted order.
Witness for yourself the old patterns and necessities of events.

Circumambulate the cold cobra eggs. Hitch their unhatched tongues to the moist of the
spine.
Any nest will do, as long as it faces east.

I tried to delimit the extent of my elbow, which pretended to be smoke tree slosh and its
magnificent branch.
The certainty of this description captured a scritch of music, inner-most and moist, with
great alarm.