

## Selections from Crystal Radio Kit

Light cannot escape these slender confines  
(or it died long ago).

*The mind-forg'd manacles I hear*

clanking amid those manhandled  
elegiacs, a whale-  
bone bodice

designed to survive impact. A  
coralline model more pliable  
in close quarters, filling the lake  
of our heart with algal strands  
a sort of fatal lingerie  
that lingers

    upon the freaking verge  
of unventilated verse  
awakens, unable to breathe.

Late summer beside the same tracks.  
Clouded sulphurs try their luck in threes.  
Look at the evidence: the males locate  
their desired mate through visual cues  
the females through chemical lure.  
Really, what has this to do with the price of  
eggs, the puddling needed to make the salt?

The price of salt in that room of subdued  
light. *Necessary.*

Stray phrases in the gutter of nocturnal  
daybook. It's a riot what stays.  
A real shocker what betrays perpetrator.

[Did you mean *perpetuator*?] Fount of sod-  
turning work, purveyor of heirlooms  
treated like reclaimed lumber.

Scratching legs on "primitive" strains  
as sleep mask inkblots into Stradivarius.

Iron pyrite will serve as the perfect filter  
in lieu of geranium.  
Tighten the wire round.

Scrape, then  
solder into place.  
The soldier's trick  
in times of turmoil  
for foxholed ear.

*Magnetostriction*  
for every stolen utterance  
passing through entrance.

Listen to this whisper  
free of charge.

Furcate the murmurs heard on the  
other side of electrical ground. A  
fire blazes in its place. There was  
no other rendition for such a tongue.

Tweak the slider to tune out the rest.  
Tweak the slideshow to block images  
over and over, chockablock with the  
abrupt chokehold

(of love)

from frontal lobe to pleasure knob  
throbbing, all lit up  
that time the parabola of tan  
met teeth—associate it  
with the first thing  
that springs to mind  
(promise not to freak)  
fricatives that tear the air  
unfinished expletives  
for the curve of wanton ear.

Down the road, there was no better chance to look back, especially after the incident about the tines. Turn the fork for a quick stab at correctness, take the garbage out and let the screen door close of its own accord. Meanwhile, the former asylum for moral re-education has flourished like creeper around that first night together. Strangles blue dream of re-entry, or clownish consensuality, slamming the narrative shut.

Walking out into the air after the storm  
with each step guessing these are  
meditations on a life of leavings  
(maybe) a half-life—make a note to put  
all of this in the pluperfect. No  
one out except for a jumpy cottontail  
or two. Peering over rabbit ears  
it is hard not to look into windows  
lives that might have been, or  
might be some night in late summer  
“good evening” fired right back at mid-  
night-toker. Psychical leftovers of each  
brave escape, reheated for 4 min. The  
air unusually sweet for being unshared.

A lovely head in morning light. “Aguish” trips upon tongue, cannot quite describe the effect the roiling argument with self. *Shut up* is sage advice given and taken at face value to preserve stillness from another century any except for the last one. Scratch that—look to line and form, every movement sweet decision, manufactured pheromone chosen or gifted, stoking presentiment of distressed embrace. Must be a hundred thousand years ago, this (also) happened or something very like. Without shrink-wrapping, the recycling goes on. A blue box of crumpled feelings, call it. Bless this sensation of early autumn, this crystal-line light to boot, showing the passing figure to greatest advantage. Faces peer inward, catch a hint of refractive action “premorsed” at the height of noon-glare leaving only heated whims. Sonata form dictates a return to the “home” key, or an absurdly merry rondo to round out impressions from a fetching silhouette—a heart’s pirouette at eighteen past eight.

*Daphnia*, sweet water flea, keystone species, principal grazer of algae bacteria, protozoa—so transparent in your dealings we took an eyedropper to your heart.

Utterly presumptuous  
this constant journey of everything  
must be jettisoned—the words on  
this page already too much for bare  
knees knocking together, stony  
face squished into tiny, trembling  
screen—the words a sexy assay  
of infinitely small ambition.

Dispense with that subterranean guide  
and try a humane fruit fly trap. Less  
vinegar than honey, daresay. A cone  
of paper from which nothing can  
escape. Think of a European skipper  
caught within the lip of a Showy Lady's-  
slipper. Think of orchids, period. The  
idea was never to become gravitational  
singularity—the idea itself subject to  
infinite tidal force. Attractive endgame  
suspecting those catastrophic secrets  
survive inside a small jar upon the sill  
a kind of relief from oblique corollary  
paring the (poetic) *glance* of cladding.