

September 1
(Warmup)

The Ammonite

Fountain

Water Flows upward in several arcs; white dots of mist peel off the streams. Falling into a wide stone basin, the water pours over the sides, falls into a well, and shoots out in several streams from the corner stones. Hot, the day and a blue mist rise over the park to blanket late summer in wool: Buildings in a stone and glass ring encircle the park, their windows reflecting through patches in the leaves. Workers amble slowly through the park and to and from their offices, tourists sit in clusters, taking their photographs with the building behind them. The sigh of traffic, a perpetual stream, rings the park. A man waters the green, claspings a long black hose he rakes in by the loop, drawing it along the pavement.

Library Edge

The sun a crescent on the pearls of the library's lamps. Stone, glass towers lift behind their vertices, pale in the morning's sun and haze. Buildings reflected, trapped in inky movement, stains on the glass. The subways pulse beneath the street like hearts. Stripes of black rise between the wavy blue squares of windows, with the rectangles and dots of office lights like illuminated panels within.

People stride by on the sidewalks in the shadows of the colossi, their thoughts clattering off one another as they go. They take steps, bringing themselves across the pavement in lines eternal to motion. Wayfarers, New York's glow, hot summer careless and crude rising.

Intermission

We rode up together, our voices, hearts and hands tangling while each our eyes glowed like coals. Attuned to the rhythm of one another's voices, we walked through the city haze, hand in hand, hearts beating through the vestment of desire. How long has this passion in me lain subdued, crouching, that now leaps tigerlike at the touch of your voice on my ear? How long have my emotions rotted on me in tatters that your gaze burns and cleanses, flame as cool as water? All that's pent frees lovely girl, friend, kindred flame.

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Two Museum Goers

Cameras dangling from their necks like fruit weighing down a bough, taking photographs of portraits and fisheyed as they move from square of painting to square of painting, garrulous in dazed silence, floating, snapping. Pluck pluck pluck.

That Girl That Day

Weaving through the crowd together hand in hand, pulses joined and the sun rising over the building tops. Canals of blue sky; or the outline of a building rising from the gaps. Rhythm without, within.

—Look at the roads in the sky

—What did you call them?

—The spaces between the buildings are like roads in the sky.

We walked along, shards of sun pulled apart by the clouds, yellow and amber ripe in the sky.

The evening had deepened to lilac in the windows of the bookstore. The vendors, cried out mozzarella sandwiches and coffee. His friend had returned to the table to gather his belongings and review his notes, written on white squares of paper with a blue outline. He thought of the way she had moved, adding to each word a flick of the wrist or a sideways movement of the head, a physical speech that filtered into his eyes and engraved itself upon his ears. He caught himself restraining the smile breaking across his lips, a shadow of inner concord.

2

Watertower

Huge metal tubes suspend the polished egg of the tower, metal wires sweeping between. Amber streetlight reflects off of the lower egg. It is metal against a deep indigo sky.

Cloverpatch

Ants scurry over the shiny bright green pads of clover. Dark green trefoils rise above the green leaves and blades of grass. Thin, broad greenery pierce the islands of clover and goes towards the sky.

Intermission

How can it be that my emotions rise over me now, in the second bloom of my youth, when the first era has melted away? Why is it that now I fly to myself when as before I waded through muck and mire to a detached me? I feel now as if I move through a deep blue ocean, my heart a whale's heart, beating to the rhythm of the waves, alone in the ocean of space and time but crying out for unity. These dark waves bear me down; I have beat, deluded, fooled, and cheated myself for far too long. Go past, come world; let the ocean of this life pass over me: I no longer doubt myself, nor fear the disapproval and judgments of others, gravebound every second, not asked for three minutes after their deaths. And I do not fear failure. This blue world has opened up around me. I go through it. Come waves. I will join you in your flow. I no longer let my bones be of tide and silt and trench. I am in the bottom of the ocean, I am here, I see the swords of light dancing above. Come light, come world. Come cold blue ocean. Ocean ocean my home. Ocean my home!

Joyous Reunion

Three weekend beach goers, waiting on the east platform, in white and blues, collared shirts and shorts, watch their friends approach from the parking lot.

—Oh look who it is!

—What're ya guys trying to steal my girl?

The group on the platform laughs, her locks of brown hair, gold at the tip, tremble.

—Come on up here, guy, you come on up.

He bawls back:

—Yep, keep walking further away from the steps, keep going further away.

Behind the green rails, blue and gray, the two approach, tying back the joy on their faces. When they stand toe to toes with one another, each looks down at the cement. They laugh.

Sparrow in the woods
Searching for something to eat
Its beak a fast fork.

3.

A bus growls up to the ledge of the train platform, swings open its hissing doors, and passengers trudge up the clunking steps. A group of gay guys, swishy short shorts, earrings pendulous, fall onto the platform and turn their sunglasses up platform. The train crossing begins to clang and flash red.

(A whiny chatty family two seats behind)
—When we get up someone watch the phones
—*(Mother echoing)*: someone watch the phones

Videogamers

Waddle onto the train. Big puffy faces; silky beards wrapping under their necks, greasy bobs of hair. They sidle into the seat. One's black tshirt shows a graphic of a climber ascending the ice of a blue mountain: Simon's Quest.

—Make sure you get that phone!

The parking Lot

Gum drops of lightbulbs drop from the curved arms of the lights. Below, orange diagonal lines notch out the parking spots. Like acupuncture needles parking meters stick out of the concrete.

Ahhhhh

I rode the train into New York City, in to see a date. I waited on the platform for what seemed like hours, sketching fragments of conversations, aesthetic scenes. The train passed in the opposite direction, its squares of windows floated by.

Within the windows I saw the weekenders. Behind the black glass, I saw their bonnets or tired eyes resting on the world slipping by. I let my eyes pass over each of the passengers. I tried to hold their gaze but gently.

The train rumbled by. Blue smoke issued out of the top bar, shimmering and rippling in the air. I made a note of this, then looked at once over the world beneath me. From the parking lots passengers walked up to the platform. The doors of the cars swung shut, thumping.

—Goodbye, cya later honey.

A bus deposits a group of gay men. They walk up the platform in a crowd. Like a gaggle of geese they look around aimlessly then proceed down the platform in one direction.

Ahh, the clouds this morning look like layers of velvet and cotton. Blue grey washes streak the sky. Forever the loops of traffic run underneath the clouds; the strip mall *signage*

reaches up. I hear a dog baying. I looked up at the flagpole: in whole tatters the banner furred, unfurled in the wind. Frankly.

Pimp Saturday morning and he sits in the long island railroad seats. His black carshoes, an outer layer of black velvet, shows a silver tassle atop. His pants cut well above the ankle opened to the cuffs of his herring bone, pin-striped. Music runs downs his legs to his tapping foot. A gold watch ticks its black luck.

Two Punks Swagger by the train stooped in Jamaica afternoon. Side by side, black in all black they lurch along, one scratches his scalp. The other walks along, his pantleg's gap showing a sockless ankle.

Their eyes show courageous idleness, heading nowhere.

Canal – Leight – Six Ave.

Steady – Streams – of Traffic alternate lanes; a pall has set on day. Bicycle cards tatter between the spokes, the panes of green-gray glass jut out of a square sided buildings. Upflapping from the pavement, pigeons rise to low branches of the mottled trees; the sound of cars buses taxis grind by in the lane. I wait for her in hope and expectation, two vectors mingling; my desire and prayer. A yellow beam has cut open the intersection. Now shadows warp the pavement.

What is this emotion in me, hot as a kettle yet the inside all filled with ice? She walks off into the night; and we are fly-blown souls, ripping across the surface of the earth, joined in loneliness clattering from block to block; no more finding what we seek in the mazes of the night then in the pursuits of day. I walk the earth young and focused: what do I seek? What shards are there to pull from this nightworld? Can beauty be sought in the squares of the windows, lamplike, that glow on all the building sides? I stand now in the womb of a luminous night, peering above the building tops.

Skycrapers:

The obsidian tomb of a rectangle juts with its top edge on the belly of the clouds. The lights, red lights, chase vice on the building's base. Where vermin of the city scuttle. Its black panes, some which harbor gashes of green light—offices inside—bear gray scars of the lives etched into their surface. Tall, cold, lonely the building ascends into the cloud. The city drifts within its lower windows a warp of changing lights. Eye meets eye like the sluggish glance of lizards. The black and yellow scarabs of taxis flow up the street.

My face hovers in front of the pizza man standing near the oven, twirling dough. The bowtie of a red neon sign crowns my head. The blue grey lenses of my contacts, floating against the whites of my eyes, encircle the light brown rings around the pupil. A white line frames and descends from my cheek bone, curving into the jawline, flecked with white hair, squaring off at the chin. The blonde-brown hairs of my upper lip flare out, and my lower lip bears particles of lipstick. A shadow droops under the chin to the neck like a beard, covering the adam's apple and the veins of my neck. A black collar opens on either side of my neck, curled windblown shingles.

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I

Stepped off of one train and onto another, the heat droops out of August and into September. The silver tombstones of the train doors close behind me, clicking shut together.

I

Hold the rail while tumbles and tremors shake up from the wheels into my body. Afternoon outside slowly droops to evening.

The train lets open its doors on Canal Street. Ahhh, I step out, and walk along the drab exit halls, and up the stairs to a square of blue light.

The slow rhythms of the weekend have taken possession all of the city. In a square off the side I wait.

I

Cross the little street to a bench. When the French couple approaches me I tell them no, I don't know where Houston Street is and the woman shakes her head despondently.

Ahhhh.

My date appears ten minutes late in a pink and black samurai jacket. She wears red lip stick, her black shorts rolled up at the cuff and tan sandals. We walk off into the afternoon hand in hand. Often she breaks her grasp and floats behind me and to the side, orbiting, calling.

Ahh we stepped into the restaurant with money taped to its walls. I pointed out Indonesia's Shark Dollar and the man in the Hawaiian shirts approached the table.

—What is good here to eat? Anything really famous?

He crinkles his brow up in amusement.

—You know, anything on the menu...

She deliberated until she found the dumplings. We ate, chatted: she pointed out the flowers on the wall and the red lights, movie we were off to see.

Latched, her arm for a minute wraps me.

Tall girls in glasses and sweaters wait in the lobby of the Metrograph. With pale blue eyes fixed on my approach I ask for two tickets name? Zhou Xuan Ahhhh.

(some of the things I say)

We two hold hands all during the movie, about a woman in a sea-blue dress being sliced open by the monster. When she wants to tell me something she grabs my entire head and draws it to her. Damn. Our hands, palm in palm, play liquid stone. Damn. I run my fingers along the soft channel of her wrist as far back as the Damn. Possessed.

—He is very tired. (Monster listlessly flails bedtentacle). He made lové to me all night.

The sun is slowly sinking when we step out of the theatre. Our hands locked we walk down to the water. The water swirled in green and white vortexes at the base of the Williams Burg bridge. Mostly we flirted. Her favorite flower the rose. Ahhh. The spirals of petal curl closer in red, black. Zeckendorf. I, the sunflower, greeneyed and eager.

She thinks of me as a friend, though she wants to guard me as a lover. She has me on a step-program to nowhere, I'm sure of it. Ah. Frequent looks in the eye, squeezes on the palm, come on Anthony. We hold one another going down the streets.

Ahhh.

The night cools, and tiles of lilac and orange run over one another in the west. We dip into the subway again together, split.

Epilogue:

The train lurched to platform. I slid my book into my pocket and couldn't make it to the door two trains up in time. I walked like an arrow.

I waited in front of the glass door. A conductor and one of the passengers, seated atop his suitcase, chatted:

—You've got to take tests, tests, tests.

—That right?

—Oh it's nonstop, said the conductor, it's never ending tests they're always making you take.

My man's getting fat off tests.

—Is that right?

—It's not the conductors they ought to be testing.

The conductor, the lines of his face, looked away from the man in polite silent agreement. For a moment his eyes aligned in the reflection of the train car with mine.

I shafted my gaze into the sky. I noticed the second button on my placket was unbuttoned. I held her ahhhhhhh hand. Taking out the book with its pages I wrote:

—The arrow's struck deeply.

I drew the shaft, the arrow tip off page and tipped in blood, in the air. I smiled at sunsets which had all transpired in memory, layered.

The clouds seemed to envelop the falling peach of the sun. I watched as the darkness passed me by in blurs. The amber strips of light on the track's yellow hobnails and pink lip, blow past me like banshees. What is that feeling. Night that filled the sky? Gradually unrolling in the darkness I recognized the shapes which I knew from my drives through the neighborhood. Bowling Alley: the pins knock a split. Clackloom.

The train rubbed to platform. My face hovered inches from the glass. I shuffled step backwards.

And what if these people are looking at me?

What kind of whatness does the whatness of my form give off?

Anthony Lemon.

I'm a great fool.

Ahhh.

The train car door slid open, permitting the sound of breathing to enter the cabins. I stepped off into the night. Walked left across the platform. Diminished, I hid in the night. My bag knocked off my hip, dangling from my shoulder, knocking against my hip, in my blazer pocket was a notebook full of poems and an unpeeled banana. The Eternal and Ape. Diner on the way back; icecream; bars; I can afford none. My mind went on with the different kinds of food.

From temple to temple in my body a joy rang out. We'd aligned. My thoughts rushed into the night, swarming.

Out. Cut a path through the parking lot of the train station I fished my phone out. From its square of light I typed in all of the correct numbers. A white screen of blue and grey balloons floated in front of my face:

—Yea I could see it

—Everyone is <3, color which he had used only for her.

Sent Josh a recording of the Lemon Man.

I walked the quiet alley running between the tract houses. An oasis of a green median hung between the center line of the street, cleaving the lanes into two distinct roads. Before I could put my phone away I called my grandma.

—Oh I can tell how angry you are.

—Oh, you. How ya doin'. Doin' a lot of walking then.

—Yep, I said, ok, cya soon.

I hung up the phone. As I walked along the houses faced my streets left and right, night-gemmed grass, plum shutters. The living rooms showed through undrawn windows. Others were completely drawn, and no light glowed behind purple with green rings, curtained. These the rooms of the dead and abandoned. Remember. Drunk and asleep in my boots, I smack a tiger out of the red weather.

The bag dug into the meat of my shoulder. I felt sore almost to the ones. It has silver clasps that hold the leather bucklers to a woodcolored brief. Brass buttoned. I wrote my name on either panel of her mumbling and felt a resonance.

Ahhhhh.

I walked onward. The neighborhood under its cast of bright light faded to dark as I approached the highway. I wonder does it run on. Cars zoomed by and men swaggered past the closed-down shops, all closed but the deli, in which a white lurid light showed the night dwellers. I kept on, mindful of swinging-bag-clothes impression to harm.

I went past lakes, down dark lanes covered in tangled dark weeds, past the stores closed for the night. I stopped once under a water tower to make a sketch. The huge metal tubes ascended into the darkened sky, indigo blue.

As I walked I thought about my life, its twists and burns—periods where I had succeeded in following my soul, others where I allowed myself to be led astray, letting vanity and self-sorrow take the place of action. Most of all I thought of you, and how improving myself for you could be the noblest thing. As I went along, the streetlights turning the pavement to liquid amber, I thought of your smile and gait. It all has the texture of a dream. Let it continue, let our lives mesh together for a time.