

MULTICENE

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New York

Planet, Earth, World

In a moment ≡ 1

I ask this landscape ≡ 9

Estranged as I am ≡ 12

Of the fog ≡ 13

Do you really believe ≡ 14

I am no longer surprised ≡ 16

Suddenly ≡ 17

I hold in my hands ≡ 19

I disobey ≡ 22

I forgot the time ≡ 24

I will not buy ≡ 27

Do you know when in despair ≡≡ 29

A question arises ≡≡ 30

Checking for rain ≡≡ 32

Erosion takes time ≡≡ 34

In search of migrations ≡≡ 35

The lake isn't a lyric ≡≡ 36

Is it the mania of owning ≡≡ 37

There is no perfection ≡≡ 38

All I want ≡≡ 40

It is very dangerous ≡≡ 41

The Weather ≡≡ 42

Planet, Earth, World

“...Then we go on, the world
always goes on, breaking us with its changes
until our form, exhausted, runs true.”

Joanne Kyger

“Beloved,
I have to adore the earth”

Henry Dumas

In a moment

I am dressed up
like a poet

And I am dreaming
of staying awake
for days to work
on memory—

making maps of forests—
performing brute labor
in the underbrush

Atmospheric

the flower fields
slant up
slightly coasting across
an evening sky
a fictitious wobbling

of tectonic plates and
granite boulders

It is uneasy, moving
underwater this way

I call out—Virgil—

can I plough
your fields?

Perform a poem

in perfect rhythm
behind a goat
or sheep
lounging in the afterglow
of my own selfish

creation—
I understand
his hesitancy
to reveal the secret
of pastoral laziness
Soon I will find
the time
 to really look
 at mirrors
 I think
 they call that
screaming concentrating
on the dying
ethereal the total
weight of
just what
so far
has been lost
 Now I am growing
 my capacity for
 transformation—
I feel the thrust
of importance
but here I am
with a computer
hoping
 it'll take me
 somewhere

farther than god
or Congress

Is mysticism
the belief in
our own capacity
for change—

how do we know
how much other
people think
about us or
each other?

Where is the middle
in the theory
of middle

the passageway
to getting into
the underground
of my
or your heart?

I read
about Enlightenment
and wanted
to flog the modernity

out of me—
lash every
gestic impulse out—
revert to a

little frog—
a little drop of water
feeding a plant
hiding in the desert
 Shouldn't we all
 want to halve
 everything—
call the world
our semi-globe?

When spring begins,
we bring in
Abundance—
we guide
the stream
 downhill in
 expectation
 of falling water
twice-washing
the spittle plains
I call out
to Hilda—
 find god
 is lush
 nourishment—
 the sooty soil
 springing
 forward

with crocus

We will pray now

Lay down

our bodies

heavy in

endless toil

Endless capacity

for the plastic world

My lungs heave

in and out

on the dance floor

and I'm

thinking about

calling in sick

to work

for the rest

of the week

Then I can

really get

to the pit

of it

The hapless feeling

of closing

your hands
and eyes
and looking
for light

The time to brave the sea—
The time to brave the unfaithful sea—
The time to brave the unfaithful sea and the setting stars

marking the lowest horizon,
the strap of shipping lanes
holding the Great Atlantic
sargassum belt—

When it rains
I will stay indoors
all day
conserving what
 little output I spew
 for the humble saints
 of quiet comforts—

linoleum—clean sheets—delivery food—a white
candle from the grocery store—e-tip gloves—high
capacity magazines—battery packs—etc

Being born
we were
coughed up into circulation

Beginning each day
all my language
comes crusading
 back into my throat—
 eyeing the eye between
 here and the never-wild—

a poultice of finely
mixed solace
of dry meadows
 blooming nowtopias
 spontaneously grafting
 free will onto
 the side of a highway
 cloverleaf

We must tell the truth that
not everything can grow in every place
Hold the very power
of the wooded seascape
 the dunes that curling up
 toward the houses
 perched closer
to the aluminum tide
lunar sparkling
ax-like over waves
crests pumping
toward shore—
 the memory of god is found in seaberries
 and I hear in the midnight wind a rustling

for the heavenly substance of moonlight

The whole world is becoming
like the bottom of the ocean
full and living
 in the satisfaction
of existing

Little worms borrowing down into the sand
—a whale carcass feast—a pitch-black serenade
of harmonious communion— The vision skews,
a volcanic vent erupts—the shrimp and mussels
laugh in the ripple-stillness consuming all sides
of our political alignments—the crabs don't care
about work so why do you?

I ask this landscape

for inspiration
 wanting to own
the monuments

of deep time

Not so much the past
but the abstracted present forming
 and reforming
sediment in
 arkose breccia
 like my body
bending always
 to pick up napkins
that have blown
 from the table
to the sidewalk

Or like the red-tailed
 hawks perched
across the street
 straining against
the wind
 to dive and hunt
the pigeons and sparrows kicking dirt
or picking up

small sticks carrying
them off somewhere
unseen to me now
though I look intently

I just want to know

where all this stuff goes at the end
of the day

But that is
my selfishness
again always
my daily habit
of confusing
the ocean floor
for poetry

Or toxic clouds
flared in the Gulf
as lightning or campfires

For now
I am captured
by the
enormous stillness of old trees

and all the places

that still need to be
set on fire too

Winter this year

will come on slowly
over months
and I will continue
to feed on peonies
and the incomplete
universe working constantly
to unfinish itself