

Lightning'd Press | Issue Five

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Issue Five

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The reason for this is that knowledge which
is not in accordance with being cannot be large
enough for, or sufficiently suited to, man's real needs. It will always be
a knowledge of *one thing* together with ignorance of *another thing*;
a knowledge of the *detail* without a knowledge of the *whole*;
a knowledge of the *form* without a knowledge of the *essence*.

— G from *In Search of the Miraculous* by P.D. Ouspensky

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Short Piece

"amid the whirlwinds"

Yeats

Per Amica Silentia Lunae

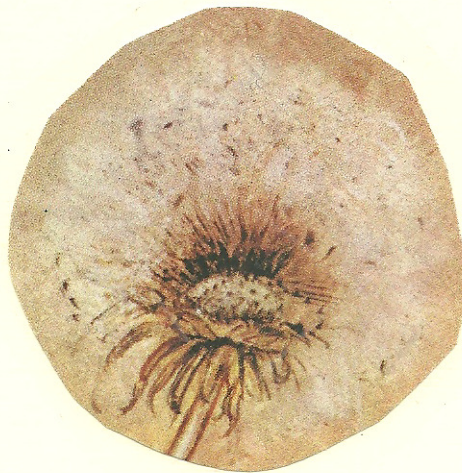
From Steven Manuel

1/

Little torn cards for ~~you~~you--scripts.

3:48 A.M., Miles Runs Down the Voodoo;
HOCUS POCUS Sun Ra.

omnia sanans



I saw a video, footage of Conrad as Daniel
Boone--'I'm not the kind of faggot who puts
a Rain-Bow on a Machine-Gun.'

2/

AULAEUM

'I. A curtain, canopy:...--In partic., the curtain of a theatre; which, among the ancients, contrary to modern usage, was lowered from the ceiling to the floor at the beginning of a piece or act, and at the conclusion was drawn up;...Usually such curtains were wrought with the figures of gods or men, esp. of heroes, and in drawing up the curtain, the upper part of the figures would first become visible, then the lower parts in succession, appearing, as it were, themselves to draw up the curtain'

'Edenize...to make like Eden; to admit into Eden or Paradise..1877 Wraxall tr. V. Hugo's Miserables N.V.4 The Edenization of the world.'

'The air suffused / with light'

3/

Kallimakhos,

ta d' uieos ostea matēr / lexeitai drumwc
• panta~~sc~~ eperchomena

'collect the fragments of
the splintered glass..'

'to strip the soul
into its wild
admissions...the air alone
is what I sit in'

'Poetry falls on ~~the~~ an
age like nothing known before,
& rite measure & metric flow from the
crystal of the Moment, Memento & talisman
are dimensional of the Influx.'

(Lansing,

SET 1__

cheira Aidēc
Time

on my Hands

4/

natantia lumina, the bride

approaches

////

hex pericope
or fact
of all ayres?

///

EDAX:

"The Dentist! The Dentist!"

hex pericope ///
The Storm:

edax

um-

braculum

OED: A tailor is both
cutter &
sewer.

5/

Monk's
Kansas-Oz
er

Kirke's
got his toes

Elusion
camur

--
pure

Vertigo

aulaia, Plu.Alex.40, also, 'hunting-net'

Jeff Jamie
'The Sons of Liberty
the Committee of Correspondence'
I read in Olson. I hope you are Well. *Steven*

Note on the Text

Sincerity is a struggle. It does not come easily, especially to those who have become jaded to it. You have to earn it, to coax it back into your body tediously with minute shifts in perception and intention. It is an opening and revealing of truth, whatever that might be, without a label. It cannot, by nature, be false or a facade. It cannot be a wall. Walls, by nature, conceal and protect and decorate. To conceal, to protect, to decorate is to be false. How can language be sincere when one word always means something different depending on who is using it or hearing it? Isn't language, by nature, insincere? Doesn't it shift and alter depending on the wind of your inner struggle? Don't we use it to build one another up along with ourselves into towering gods or conversely to decimate those we'd like to bring down to the murkiness of own misery?

While Jeff and I were putting this issue together, we were arguing. Not about anything important. We were both cranky and frustrated. We wanted this issue to be good because we had missed two months of issues so we felt this pressure to get it done on time and for it to be magnificent. I was pushing us to just work in a very functional, systematic way, delegating tasks, speaking brusquely and focusing on multitasking so that everything was running very efficiently. He stopped me, and he asked me why we were are doing this project. He explained that there's no reason to do it if we're not doing it for the right reasons. The "right reasons" being because we are striving towards a sincerity in poetry and trying to provide a venue for others who feel the same way. He asked how we could possibly succeed if during the creation of the press we were behaving so disconnected and detached, so insincerely?

It was a good point.

Jeff always reminds me that every step of the way is important. Not just the final result. To live sincerely, to work towards this chivalric opened up life where things are "as above so below", to be honest with myself constantly about why I am doing things the way that I do things, will allow me to be the kind of poet who writes work that has the potential to slip into a reader's unconscious and unfurl into something that will open them up too.

yellow yellow
river
for days the path could easily be found in sleep

the haze
a lake speaks
each moment a flower in an undiscovered field

somehow an afternoon god shattered in sunshine
whose handsome fate
from time to time we grow wary of

then too what is it like or unlike
where we are abandoned
and wet

the path blocked
by scattered moonlight
trees prick the snow with shadow

Galileo's Ship (or What Arjuna Saw)

The world ends where? Somewhere else, perhaps.
At a cliff's edge. Or beach at dusk. In a desert or city.

Into a hallway. Somewhere in an envelope
are some numbers written on a folded piece of paper.
Of course there are doors. Wasn't it near here
the old woman stopped me? One of these doors is...
What? Maybe a river. Then the sea it runs into.
With stuff sinking slowing onto its sandy floor.
Settled. Yet all that still going on above.
An old man sitting on a beach. He'll never
wade in again. Wishing he could remember
whatever it was that made the water cloudy.
What was it? A room number?

Stirred with coffee spoons or squeezed from lemons
their lives are slept away behind doors with numbers on them
which in turn are sealed in envelopes forever unopened.
Down these halls eventually you come to the ocean
whose waves wash beaches where kids are building
sand castles. Their scooped out moats
for a minute or so
hold the tide.

The numbers, are they anything more
than what a coke costs? Or hotdog?
Who sits there? In front of us?
Down the hall into the sea. Eventually.
Washed ashore. China or Japan.
White fish, dark fish. The street light comes on.
A river of integers runs
into one. Or none.

Hot and damp. But dusk.
Which has to push its way through the haze
above the concrete, the glass, and brick
then like a cat come back down the allies
with noisy kitchen doors ajar. Out front
ceiling fans move the bluing air.

The tide curls. A fat cat naps.
Waves lap the shore. Pool of warm still water
and in it maybe archaic life floats
above sand clean and fine enough
for an hour glass. Bare feet.

Whatever I wanted to ask
slips away and winds up where
they sit and drink coffee and talk. The young.
No remains no. Yes yes.
Put in some money. Pull the crank.

It's pretty dark here, and on the streets now.
In hallways. Hard to read the numbers
on the doors.

If I stop looking for whatever, whatever is gone.
The old, the kids, the not yet old, they all
bear me and my eyes are opened
and see me swimming where they aren't.
Where there is nothing but the waves
and the moonlight reflected on these.

The hallways are hours.
The stairs minutes.
The doors a second glance.
As for up and down I go now
looking for those who live by the shore
and breathe away night, who know
the moment a light comes on
and how to lie in river beds.

A smile. Cracked. No, wrinkled.
In a room all laced up in antimacassars.
There every dream has a question mark. Time
wedged above the glass and the concrete
will -- and it's inevitable --
picks its way through the allies
past cats.

A thousand hallways. A million doors.
Sleeping women,
although their breath sounds nothing like
a ticking clock
that's the thought that comes to mind.
Plip plop into an ocean.
Little waves lick sand from shells.
Or stairways. Numbers. Think of numbers.
The old. For them time is what they wish
might happen again. Something they know.
Though the young wish anything would happen.
Something they don't know.
Cups of coffee. Cafés. They talk.
Sleep a topic of irritated conversation.
The slow loss of whatever time is. Was.
Imagine a still place. At the bottom of the sea.
An upturned tide. But then it's time
to get up
and go.
It's late.
You can hear a toilet flush.
And another.
Almost dawn. Pretty soon
birds. Then the kids
wanting breakfast.

Just a face. Could be any.
Coming toward me, passing by. Gone.
One after another.
Or a beach, think of it. Shaded under the boardwalk.
The play of shadows, slanting light, a flash of absolute dark.
That dance very like the mind.
A shade pulled down. The window
overlooks this.

Chalkboard or sidewalk? Rain washed and darkening.
Lines and patterns wear away. A tossed chain. A marker. Kids sing.
They count and skip and climb squat fire hydrants
with consonants that click and vowels that woo
rhyme. A riddle. Its answer never walks along a beach
without a watch. Never picks up a shell, never listens to
the sea.

Torn plastic red upholstery. Waves
where the young sit and drink black coffee
to keep awake. An edginess. Yes. No.
In spite of which the same old days
come and go. Under the wall, out a window
it makes its way. Sleek asphalt.
Tired arms. Too many levers to pull,
pennies to put in slots.
Elbows lean on a lunch counter.
Holes in sweaters. Answer. Question.

Then I, unsure of who or why,
walking past the doors down the hall,
looking at the numbers, pass old people
on their way somewhere
and young ones just as indirect
but quicker. They've all seen my face
a thousand times on beaches
or in empty coffee cups. Nothing more
than faded flower wallpaper, an envelope,
in which a number is scribbled
on a scrap of paper. One of these doors
I've passed god knows how many times.
Behind which the water boils for coffee.
But I can't quite make out the writing
which is faded. Or written in lemon juice.
What now? Hold the paper over a lit
candle (or bare bulb)? Was that it?
The invisible made visible.
I put it back in my pocket and go
again down the stairs. Out
on the street where I've been
and haven't been while night
is dropped fraction by fraction into an ocean
upon whose shores lemon trees grow
or die because the soil is too sandy.

Old people. The ones who live upstairs.
Above cafés. and rattle around yes and no
and wish they could go to the beach
where there's sunshine and shade
under those canvas things. Their slippers
and rag rugs, patchwork quilts. Yesterday.
The day before. A year ago. The hours
turn and return under glass domes.
Anniversary clocks. Pink roses. Pink cheeks.
Nonetheless dusty. Best left alone.

They shell out another
dollar for ten tosses. Metal milk bottles
in a pyramid. Red Injun rag dolls.
Ten yes and no's to knock down
what seems like the question at hand
while it in fact heads back toward the ocean.
They try to upset whatever holds up
their targets to make it something they know.

There too those canvas riggings which afford
the dozing their shade. Below the boardwalk.
Ice cream. Root beer. And this, as well.
An almanac. An Arabian Nights. A list of answers.
Silk and damask, Below and beyond
the sea meows and curls around the ankles of kids in sun suits.
As the old drop into black holes of concentrated distraction,
the young throw softballs at floppy Injuns.
Ten for a dime.

The question slips past the young sleepers
leaving a slick shiny trail now and then not.
It goes without a whisper before a parade of faces
coming toward it. Missed by those who stare into
half-drunk cups of coffee and wonder what's up.
Down the back alleys behind cafés the question
makes its way not to a yes or no, but to places
just like this. Lemon rinds and oatmeal.

Asking why and forgetting the question. To double
the t or dot the i. A kind of search passes us by.
The young. Who pay no attention to the women upstairs.
Who does? And don't fear dust or the color orange.
Or is it that they hardly notice them.

What they throw is just as much a part of it
as what they hit. What holds them up?
Beanbags and milk bottles. What keeps the wave
above the sand below? It's like throwing
yes and no at a pile of yes and no.
Then there're the old guys
who tell the kids stuff they remember.
How it was. To bait the catch.

Somehow. Not what was, or yet. I can see
the room, the number, the door. Or can I?
Because of my distraction, somehow I get inside
all this. The look on the faces that saw me come here
and saw me go is finally mine.

Life and death here at the edges. Dance.
The way a cat does. Or a wave.

Then in quiet places,
their shades half drawn,
where there was life
and yellowed pulls,
a bed is made
and old women wait.
They rug scraps of cloth.
It grows dark. They talk to themselves.
Is it German? Yiddish?
Some warm water. Lemon. A glass.
The pipes rumble and the water is rusty at first.
Just washed, dried, but still damp
a head of colorless hair hits the pillow.

I definitely thought I'd seen a final form revealed
mostly because it took me so long to say anything
despite all I felt.

An oddly tidal desire. To trace the pattern in a braided rug.
The burnt orange rags wound
under and over the others
and finally lost in how they knot and separate
themselves from the blues and grays.
Is this something to follow up?

I can hardly remember them. There were these
little machines. Napkin holders. You put in a penny,
pulled a lever, and it gave you a fortune. Yes. No.
Any number of variations thereon.
When you're young you ask and ask
hoping the answer will blow "why" out
like a lit match. Until the food
seems cracked, and the plate flavorless.
Whipped potatoes. Don't bother with
the menu. Have the Special.

sopor

ification, the game

we play, we are playing

we must pla

cate the mighty
sword

in search of the miraculous
we marvel upon awakening

he has put dust
on the tail
of the bird
of the soul

if we just

keep

going

After hearing Bennet's 'All Creatures Now' & Wilbye's 'Adieu, Sweet Amaryllis'

chorion
suckle these
in waiting

Amaryllis

'sparkle' twit
eyes'

glance
(they give

'dazzle')

"fair nymphs"

: these madrigals

(the) zikr
a book in mind
& hand
but signifying what
opening

anamnesis along
a line
which all knowledge
circumvents
rational understanding

the physical
lifespans of electrons
means that
your body is entirely
created &
destroyed each
instant

& mountain side
as well
the
green prairies & its
bright blue flowers

the motion of the
wind
the breath
before its finished
breathing
resplendent
in radiance, then

fecund splendour
the pressing power of
& in the
light of rhapsody of
remembrance we are known
or unknown
to the extent
the existent
enfolds into what we
release . we were this
& by this
the hills green & over
the few
flowers bright dotting
landscape the waters
winding
thru the kerosene lantern
as the sun
sets the red mountains
& a forewarning respirant

Strip the bone
Eradicate repletion
Arrows of Time
Align magnetic terror
Depletion commonality
Fuck Machines
They tighten
They fold
Rugae
Temples
For Gehenna
Barren and listless
Arm raised
Arm folded
Fingers raised
And clenched
I birth reclamation
In soil and façade
In manner and disgust
For Judas weeps
And I clean
His eyes
In the East
The King Bael and his Beast
Reside within circles
Beneath the Fallout
Beneath the blood's fog
Beneath the hollow eyes
Beneath the river flow
Internment or stagnant
Within Unified breathe
Begins with hysteria
Begins with Infinite
Insatiable Goetia
A Divine Ear blackened
Conferment and desolation
I consume no prize
No promises
Of bird or futures
I
Bleed
Alone
A God
Of barbarous Fathers
And I regret
Nothing
That must End

The great happiness
of a lizard
assembling reality
one scale at a time
one pulse

rest on a railing
take up vision's
invitation
flick your tongue
on memory
send it
upward

sound is a
whatever waterfall
bringing a wealth
of zeroes

you borrow the
classiest weather
stormy grays

bones and blood
contemplate
motion's miracle

you are the hour's
favorite acolyte

electric even

Is a lizard nature?
Does she know
providence? Was
she ever stitched?
Do darlings claim
her? Does she
sweat? Dream?
Curl in? Levitate?

Not wanting a voice
girl on bike
kid with dress
Micah's memories
all the sky a haze
this insistence to write
just babbling away
water does it
brooks & creeks
waves cresting
river flow
oceans the world over
everybody's neighborhood
taking part
one of many
all the songs go
days turn to weeks
months give out years
constantly cranking away
stars in on it too
galaxies all
all of everything
goes

'Enough for now to be here'
- Robert Creeley

'this or this wherever it happens be'
- Clark Coolidge

All I need is one more chance
conscience as the call of care

being more the intimate than not
signal towards a kind of liminal thought

rather foolish as soon as kind if but quick
dynamic state in flux of two opposing

where wandering means making sense of limits
wood or wood-grain the particular holds

there's but the here taken to be fated
your beginnings solemnly called back to question

how one looks about both agency and the body
gives in gives way gives forth what is done

the two forms equal halves locating one
no dodging the habits choice asks

"who are you" repeated living room to kitchen
cornered insistence would have it be declared

to share known nothings the particulars challenge
what is has been arises from within else swallows all

A collection of stock resists

in varying forms
of conflicting grandeur

allowing for instances of seclusion

Demonstrative displays
as deterrents

act as barriers
withholders of the miniscule

(((((bright browns highlighted
with black))))

fostered for such a presentation

The empowered portion
guides the reserves
intensifying the delusion

A landing
stuck
leaves no room
for interpretation
Who
What
When
Where
Why
How
Square root
or squared
The inverse takes on a following
that follows
the followers
leading is another matter
An enclosed space
has its fourth wall broken
a gaze produces anxiety
Memorizing a memory
changes its definition

Correspondence

With Thomas Meyer

Queen Anne's Lace. It took a couple weeks to think of it. Umbelliferae, that I got. Sheltered from experience, the rain of memory, those "dim lands of peace."

Forever inviting. As much of it as there is of common loss.

"Mythology" the old Israeli novelist said. I heard "Metallurgy," though had "Allergy" in mind. The way stuff spreads out or scatters which must in turn be some coarse demonstration of more refined aspects of quantum physics, the life of dark matter. String Theory.

Acknowledgments

Thanks go to:

Tim and Joey and baby on the way, our wonderful new roommates.

Jeannie, Greg, and Nancy for their communal and inspiring support.

To everyone who helped make our wedding beautiful and the most special day.

Those who have been sending us real mail!

All of the poets in our community and to the new ones we are continually discovering while working on this project.

Toby Tenderfox and Seamus.

Our families.

Alhamdulillah.

Biographies | Credits

(pages 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15) THOMAS MEYER lives above a vineyard in Western North Carolina and near a river that runs through the upper Eden Valley not far from the Scottish boarder. His most recent books are *Kinstugi* (Flood Editions) and a translation of *Beowulf* (punctum).

(page 16) JAMIE FELTON is the other editor of Lightning'd Press and also has a proper bio written by Jeff Miller on the Lightning'd Press website. Her poems have been published in various places online. They can be viewed from her website: <http://jamiefelton.weebly.com>. A zine of her earlier work entitled *Blackbird Singing* is available by request via email.

(page 17) STEVEN MANUEL, editor of *from a Compos't*, mailing address: 11 Cedar Ridge Dr / Asheville, NC 28806.

(pages 18, 19) JEFF MILLER is co-editor of *Lightning'd Press* and has a proper bio written by Jamie Felton on the *Lightning'd Press* website. He's the author of *All of the Grace Poems* (Earth Books, 1996), *La Vie / The Polemics* (Earth Books, 2001), and a broadside of *The Ardor: Line 11* (Viatorium Press, 2009). Along with Ryan Barker he was the co-editor of the chapbook series *What Would We Do Without Us* (2001-2005). He's currently working on a long poem, *The Ardor*.

(page 20) R.N. HORNER is a writer/painter/musician who lives in Richmond, VA.

(pages 21, 22) Sarah Rosenthal is the author of the cross-genre book *Manhatten* (Spuyten Duyvil, 2009) and several chapbooks, the most recent of which is *The Animal* (Dusie, 2011). Her interview collection *A Community Writing Itself: Conversations with Vanguard Writers of the Bay Area* was published by Dalkey Archive in 2010. Her poetry has appeared in numerous journals including *ecopoetics*, *Bird Dog*, *textsound*, and *Fence*, and is anthologized in *Bay Poetics* (Faux, 2006), *The Other Side of the Postcard* (City Lights, 2004), *hinge* (Crack, 2002), and *Kindergarde: Avant-garde Poems, Plays, and Stories for Children* (a Small Press Traffic project, forthcoming 2013). Her essays and interviews have appeared in journals such as *Jacket*, *Denver Quarterly*, *Rain Taxi*, *Otoliths*, and *New American Writing*. She has received the Leo Litwak Fiction Award and grant-supported residencies at Vermont Studio Center, Soul Mountain, and Ragdale. From 2009-2011 she was an Affiliate Artist at Headlands Center for the Arts. She teaches in the MFA program at the University of San Francisco and writes curricula for the Developmental Studies Center in Oakland.

(pages 23, 24) PATRICK JAMES DUNAGAN lives in San Francisco and works in Gleeson library at the University of San Francisco. His most recent book is *"There Are People Who Think That Painters Shouldn't Talk": A GUSTONBOOK* (Post Apollo, 2011), his other writing includes a plethora of book reviews (see: *The Critical Flame*, *Galatea Resurrects*, *Jacket*, *New Pages*, *Rain Taxi*) and assisting Iranian poet Ava Koohbor with translating her poems from Farsi (see: *Sinusoidal Forms*

-Lew Gallery Editions-, Big Bell, and Aldus).

(pages 25, 26) CALVIN PENNIX holds an MFA in Creative Writing from Chapman University and lives with his wife and daughter in Mission Viejo, CA. He is currently an instructor at Everest College, where he teaches Composition, American Literature, Critical Thinking and Algebra. Calvin's first book of poetry, *Grounds*, was published by Argotist Books, his second collection, *Around/About*, was published by Differentia Press and his chapbook, *All Dried Up*, was published by quarter after press. Calvin has been a featured artist at Counterexample Poetics and has had his poetry recently appear in *Mad Hatters Review Blog*, *On Barcelona*, *Otoliths*, *Certain Circuits*, *experiential-experimental-literature*, *The Altered Scale*, and *Upstairs at Duroc*. He is also the founding editor of quarter after/quarter after press a place for poetry, poetics and art.