

CAN CAN

JEN HOFER & SAWAKO NAKAYASU

Necessity-Luxury Continuum

Jen: I keep wondering lately – and trying to find ways to write through this wondering – and then failing – and then wondering – how much of our lives or practice is fear-based? Is the way to spin fear into something useful to write from risk? What is “risk” for a person with the level of privilege we have, as compared, for example, to women living in much of the rest of the world?

Sawako: The risk of speaking, writing, opening any small orifice or enclosure of the self – be it ear or mouth or tightly clenched fist, asshole – vulnerability in every kind of open, or in sports: to be open (as in ready, ready to receive) or the open space, ready to be conquered, overtaken, used. My students remind me of the bravery it takes to expose one’s words to strangers. My family reminds me that it would take a different kind of bravery to expose my words to them. Risks in writing, writing into the unknown, any kind of venture which involves movement, travel, displacement, blindness, unfamiliar textures and sounds and deeply engrained habits, customs, traditions – of living, being, writing. The traditions and hierarchies and patternings we inherit, and a consciousness about those which should be kept and those which should be tossed out the back window of a speeding pickup truck driven by a small Asian woman, those which should be taken around the corner and encouraged not to come back until they know to treat people with more respect and equality. Implied in risk: audience, interaction, response. Safer to stay home on all counts, at the risk of loneliness and further alienation, risk of badness, rejection. Lacking the standard units and apparatus for measuring goodness, unconventional work runs a large risk of badness. Rewarded in risk: membership in a different club, perhaps one more friendly or coveted or kindred, and is this membership for life or is it contingent on how much risk one continues to take? Risk, and its ante. Having had my wallet stolen, having lost my membership card, I no longer have proof of my belonging. Will the avant-gardists throw me out, away, overboard, if I write too many ant poems that too many people can understand easily? Will it no longer be special?

Risk in writing and living: both of my first two books were written under, around, about, through, some “risky” or otherwise unstable condition of life. Also, sometimes it occurs to me that it is a marvelous gift that my parents (and most of my family) are unable to comprehend English-language poetry, since it frees me from their scrutiny. I’m not sure if this is a problem for other people at all, but all the work I write in English, I wouldn’t possibly be able to say in Japanese – it’d be physically (technically) and emotionally impossible.

Jen: I think there is risk in the familiar and there is risk in the unfamiliar. As translators,

nomads, foreigners (in a certain sense and in a variety of senses – and that is not to imply that in certain contexts we are not also “at home” or even actually homebodies, which you know I am!), and as adventurers generally – in our aesthetic tastes, our culinary tastes, our intellectual expeditions, our geographic and peripatetic and affective and sexual and literary and filmic and sonic and conversational and transit (and lots of other kinds of) desires – we might tend toward the unfamiliar. Or rather, we might tend toward a desire to inhabit the space where the familiar meets the foreign, where what is known is interrupted and energized and challenged and electrified by what is unknown or unfamiliar. I certainly see that impulse manifesting in your writing and your translating (not to mention your way of living), as well as in my own.

And I also see clearly in your writing – particularly in *nothing fictional* – a desire to find the unfamiliar in the familiar, where “travel” or “exploration” or even “expedition” are incorporated into the weird familiarity of the everyday. As mentioned above in a different context, the world is so weird, and all we have to do to illuminate that weirdness is contemplate the world for a moment – and poetry is perhaps the light of that contemplation? I mean “light” literally, not metaphorically or transcendently – I’m thinking of the way a magnifying glass casts a flared cone of light when held between the sun and an object (not an ant! not an ant!), and see poetry as that sort of light – a light with parameters, edges, which demarcates a space of attention within which things are seen for what they are, and thus seen differently. And the act of seeing is made different as well. That attention literally reverberates, ricochets, and thus creates molecular change.

(A question: are all the changes poetry can incite on the molecular level? And is that why it is on the one hand so difficult to see the politics in a poetics? – or to put it more bluntly, is that why it’s so easy to feel like poetry doesn’t fucking matter at all? And is that also why I wholeheartedly believe that poetry *is* political, when enacted in a way that suspends both belief and disbelief about the ways language can function?)

At the same time, and especially lately, I’m thinking about the risks of familiarity. There are “given” familiarities – i.e. our families, our nationalities, our ethnicities, the contexts in which we were raised and educated. And then there are chosen (or desired) familiarities – that is, people to whom we open ourselves willingly and this opening involves immense risk, so more often than not the willingness to open – the desire to open, the desire to connect – is tempered or even truncated by resistance. Sometimes I think the impulse to travel the world (literarily or literally) stems from a desire to know. And sometimes I think it stems from a desire *not* to know – not to know the self. In the familiar – especially in intimacy – we are known by the other and we know the other in a way that can be radically unsettling. What is the relationship between the familiar and the unfamiliar in this context? Is an encounter with the unfamiliar at heart a challenge to the self? Which brings me back to my by now quite well-worn thoughts about the ways that translation effects changes on English, more than anything else – that it is a way to radically unsettle the hegemonies that crowd our use of English, as much as it is an impulse to know an “other” literature.

And how might such thinking manifest in writing? Or maybe writing is inherently a manifestation of such thinking? Are we not, at heart, repeatedly attempting to communicate – and to communicate in very specific, very sincere, very honest ways when we write poems, paragraphs, letters, essays?

Laura Moriarty posed the question of risk in writing to Patrick Durgin some time ago, and that question got transposed into one of Patrick’s letters to me and then taken up in our correspondence in *The Route*. I – we – were thinking of it then in more social/political terms – writing in conditions of risk not created by the writing itself – that is, in conditions of actual political or economic or life-threatening risk. In a sense, your questions about

writing (or specifically “experimental” writing?) as a bourgeois luxury (I think of Audre Lorde’s essay “Poetry Is Not A Luxury” here) are cousins to those questions Patrick and I were considering. It’s easy to feel that writing doesn’t matter, or doesn’t have political weight. But what does not have political weight, really? Or perhaps another way to frame the question: what makes Semezdin Mehmedinović able to write through the bombing of Sarajevo, or Mazen Kerbaj able to improvise trumpet through the bombing of Beirut? Or not just “able,” but what makes their writing/composing *crucial* in the contexts of those particular violences? It seems that indeed poetry can and does *do* something. But what? Or perhaps we do not need to know what, but just that it does, and so we do too.

Sawako: Audre Lorde says that writing is not a luxury – *for women*. Which implies that the necessity for writing is heightened for those with less privilege, freedom, resources, comfort, representation (which would then imply that on a necessity-luxury continuum, the more privilege one has, the more likely one is to engage in the arts, and the less of a “necessity” it becomes to be one who makes art. . .). So part of your question seems to be, if you’ll forgive my crass way of putting it, how does one write from a position of privilege (of whatever kind)? And my question – do we feel inclined or obligated, then, as people who fall somewhere in between on that spectrum, to write from our less privileged parts (as if these parts were separable!)? And then, again, translation seems to be one of the answers, if we manage to successfully navigate around its imperialist trappings . . .

Framelock

Sawako: I remember an earlier conversation we had about other poets who did the marriage thing – as a means of articulating that “marriage” could be done well, differently, independently, etc – that it doesn’t have to fall into the usual suspect conditions of power and gender roles and traditional attitudes. In that way (now I’m starting with the very last thing you say in “framelock”¹), you are a good model for being a “white American” – that you take the time to consider it for all it is and isn’t, that you work hard to question its privileges and assumptions and (false or undeserved or unquestioned) power.

Jen: I am trying to intersperse unpleasant tasks (writing my first-ever “real” academic job letter – ugh, what a gnarled form!! I know for sure I am not a talented hoop-jumper! Or maybe if it were a flaming hoop and I could wear an orange tutu?) with semi-pleasant tasks (sweeping and mopping the kitchen floor; hand-washing the lacy panties and fishnets; sweeping eight thousand tons of cat hair from under my bed) with totally-pleasant tasks (writing Renee a letter about her latest manuscript; responding – finally! – to this incredible missive from you).

It’s very strange to be a “white American” who absolutely reads as white and USAmerican yet is not exactly “white” and not exactly “American” – or maybe the condition of being the child of an immigrant is exactly American? I suspect so. One question that seems crucial is whether people who truly benefit from the system-as-is (hegemony, to use one shorthand term) can be willing to truly give up privilege. I’d say I benefit from certain aspects of institutionalized racism and USAmericanism, certainly, and also from class privilege, but I wouldn’t say I’m a “true beneficiary” of the system in the same way that an upper-class white male is. But some part of me doesn’t even want to go down this road, thought-wise. Somehow the very reinscribing of categories – while maybe necessary in some ways, in terms of recognition of privilege – seems to exhibit the problem rather than challenge the problem.

¹ “Not What But Where: Some Provisional Thoughts on Translation as Social Practice,” by Jen Hofer, originally written for the unnamed idea-exchange project edited by David Brazil, Erika Staiti and Brian Whitener and here called “framelock” for short. The term “framelock” enters the essay via a letter from Patrick F. Durgin.

Sawako: Actually, at dinner tonight, some things Eugene was saying resonated a little: that being in China, we have this “opportunity” to live, right up against and next to, some very poor people. And coming from the wealthier countries, as we do, we have a tendency to criticize the wealthy and the privileged, and along those lines, ennoble the poor. And yet the truth of it is, once you come to observing it up close and on a daily basis, there can be quite a lack of civility, kindness, honesty in these people. Of course I am generalizing, but any ordinary day can involve pushing and shoving, scooting out of the way of flying phlegm, hyper-awareness of prices so that you don’t get overcharged, making sure your valuables are safe (I just had my wallet stolen). Poverty is not pretty. (Just read a *NY Times* article about “slum tours,” “poorism” – as a growing industry in India, and the controversies it has raised.)

Jen: I think it’s crucial to be able to critique anyone and everyone for unkind, disrespectful behavior. That’s not a refusal to acknowledge cultural difference (some cultures spit in the street, some don’t – fine) – and certainly ideas about personal space (shoving, cutting in line, etc) and ideas about “acceptable” public actions differ radically from one culture to another – but I think some basic sense of respect for other humans can be expected of absolutely everyone, regardless of their level of poverty or whatever. To excuse, for instance, hideously violent behavior (the results of which I see all the time in court) because a person had no education or economic opportunities is bullshit – a person who is able to think and has the smarts to survive the streets of L.A. ghettos and/or get their hands on weapons and/or etc is smart enough to think about the personhood of another being. That’s on the one hand. On the other hand, to critique “bad behavior” (to put it reductively) without taking into account socioeconomic and political factors seems to me completely suspect – as if there is a level playing field, which we both know there absolutely is not.

Sawako: . . . and this plays into laws (the word and concept) and *laws*– (your book manuscript) . . . and the laws (lawns) of excluded middle, (R. Waldrop), or other laws: law of the land (which, here in Shanghai, includes spitting, bargaining), laws of motion, point of no return (is that a law . . . ? Perhaps not). Your book makes me consider the continuum of laws within which we live – from the laws of logic and physics (Japanese word for physics: thing-reason), to personal, intuitive, or biological mechanisms, institutions and governments and society, laws of language and grammar and literature. . . and so then, within these systems and institutionalized structures within which we live, how does white privilege come into play? Should I believe that you would wish to not be white, and wish to relinquish all the privileges that come with it. . . ?

Jen: I know it’s terribly un-pc to say it, but I would in fact wish not to be white. It’s difficult to separate this from wishing not to be me – not that “me” is inherently white, but that my ethnicity is tied to my family is tied to the difficulty of being me. You know? Alternately, we might think of it this way: I lived as a lesbian for years, though I’ve probably always been bi and always will be bi. But recently I’ve been with more men than women. Knowing intimately what it feels like not to have heterosexual privilege, how do I respond to the fact that when I walk down the street with a man (even if we’re not overtly exhibiting affection of any sort but especially if we are) we get read as a hetero couple and afforded certain privileges? How do I refuse that privilege without depriving myself of the experience of being with someone I want to be with? And how do I refuse it honestly? That is, for me to be out as queer – because I am – in all that I do, that’s one thing. But for me to pretend somehow that I don’t receive heterosexual privilege in various manifestations in the times when I’m with a man, well, that’s simply dishonest. That would be like my calling myself “Latina” without acknowledging that I’m also white, and that I’m Latina by immigration (as are most Latinos, but some more than others), and that I’m only half a half-breed, & etc.

Sawako: Framelock, framing, reframing: I find this terminology very useful, both in terms

of explicit and implicit privileges, as well as the consideration of travel as dislocation – both physically, geographically – and “literary travel” via translation. But I would add that this “framelock” exists at both ends – one’s efforts can be rendered both adequate *and* inadequate, and the problem lies in the “lock” part of it, the hope being in a fluidity of the “frame” –

Translation also intervenes in typical forms of canonization, as potentially even counter to it (though I suppose it forms its own kind of canon in the process – but perhaps the more “canons” we create through alternative methods, the more we are able to lessen its limiting impact/s on the community). . .

Jen: Yes, I think it’s crucial to acknowledge the ways we re-canonize. Questioning the taken-for-granted canon is of course better than not questioning it, but I’ve been distressed, in some ways, to realize, for instance, that the writers in my anthology are now read differently in Mexico because of their having been in my anthology. It’s gross that it took some gringa coming down to Mexico to create an anthology (with the intent of unsettling and expanding literary conversations back home, mind you, not with the intent of shaking things up in Mexico, unless you count shaking things up inside my own thinking via living in Mexico, which of course I do) for these excellent writers to be read with any attention in Mexico – that’s indicative of gender bias, marginalization of innovative language use, and small-mindedness generally among Mexican literary communities. And in some way, despite the grossness, it’s wonderful that these writers – at least some of them – are now being considered more seriously than they were before.

Sawako: It would have been even grosser if your anthology did not have as much of an effect because you are gringa and not gringo. Does this mean that your whiteness trumps your gender, when it comes to perception in Mexico? In any case, I tend to see the wonderfulness of what you did as far greater than the pre-existing grossness. . .

And when you refer to a practice revolving “out of a radical openness to difference in the self . . .” Comparing China to our usual western standards, there are many aspects of life here that remind me that this is still a developing nation. And because I tend to see translation as a literary enactment of (or parallel to) traveling, inhabiting a foreign territory and language, I end up reading your words on translation with the word “travel” lurking in the shadows. And so what of it – even as we consciously try to eschew the obvious enactments of privilege (maids, chauffeurs, over-priced expat-bars), as we try to avoid that which smells of imperialist, colonial tendencies, the fact of our privilege does not go away. But what does that mean? While I’m studying Chinese in some gesture of “openness,” in an attempt to learn, understand, and integrate (to the extent that I can) with the culture, Chinese people are studying English because it leads to employment, and is a means out of poverty. And what good is my “openness” in the face of tremendous economic disparity? Who can be bothered to be “open” if all they want is to be able to buy food?

Which leads me to some thoughts about writing, art-making, “experimental art” and the fact that it is, largely, a bourgeois act. One has no time to make poems and stories and paintings and music, if that same time needs to be spent working and earning a living, having enough money to survive. Art can be made only when the basic necessities of life can be taken for granted.

Jen: There is a part of me that agrees with this wholeheartedly – that can see this absolutely. It’s clear that economic subjugation functions, in part, to ensure that resistances of all sorts (artistic and otherwise) will not be enacted. If people are distracted worrying about mere survival, about feeding, housing and clothing themselves and their children, about adequate (or even inadequate) medical care, about all the basic necessities, of course

they do not have any leisure time whatsoever to be practitioners of the arts or enjoyers of the arts. And at the same time, I think it's important to acknowledge all the ways that creativity manifests in the world – all the ways that innovations are enacted, whether or not a person is participating in any aspect of the “art world” (and here I include the literary world). So that the ways people put together their living spaces or vehicles or shoes or whatever are, in some basic sense, art. Isn't a thing still art if it's used for daily life rather than consumed in a moment of leisure? And if art-making is crucial to our thinking – I mean, really crucial to it – how do we differentiate between what is “leisure” and what is “necessity”? These questions are so complicated! (I think, though, about the ways that slang functions in Mexico City, those kinds of innovations in language, which are totally wild, and wonder . . .)

Sawako: As for art-making existing in non-officially-sanctioned locales for art, yes absolutely . . . I think this especially with regards to poetry and language, and the people I know who produce such pleasurable and interesting moments of poetry in language, yet have no desire or need to make it official as “art.” Slang is a great example – those teenage Japanese and Mexican girls should have a slang-slam contest of some sort –

Jen: Another thought: in many ways I very much agree with your inscription (a harmonic inscription) of travel into/through questions of translation. But I think there's a difference, or at least it seems so to me from this vantage point. And that is that if you're really translating (and that phrase could be unpacked, for sure!!) you're necessarily letting go of the self to deeply engage with and enter the work/thinking/vocabulary/philosophy/expression of another writer/artist. I don't think it's possible to do what I think of as translation without that. And I do know that it's possible to travel without really “getting in” – and consequently, without really being changed or affected by the experience of travel. How do you think of this?

Sawako: I still do think they are parallel – that writers are also capable of translating in a similarly surface-level way. I like to think that we both strive to do both (travel, translation) in as engaged a way as possible, but even when I consider having translated one book by one poet – in a country full of writers and literature – it seems not-so-different from getting to know only one person in a new land.

Jen: Another thought: there are different kinds of necessity. The necessity born of economic deprivation (i.e. the root of most immigration to the U.S.) seems to me to be a completely different kind of necessity (though not unrelated?) to the necessity of getting outside the self and/or engaging in curiosity (to use an Oppen term) about the rest of the world (the root of most travel). I do think of the latter as a necessity (and also a luxury) – because I think it's necessary for us to participate in reconfiguring the fucked up world we live in (which we inherited, which we are building) – but I do see that there's necessity and then again there's necessity. And now, my necessity is to get myself on my bike and get to work!

Sawako: I must say that you use the word “panties” a lot! What significance does this have? When I was in college I knew a girl who hated the word “panties,” and boys would tease her by frequently dropping the word “panties” into conversation (yes, I said college). I remember the way she squirmed and struggled each time she heard it, and now I realize that although it has never been of terrible concern to me, there is a part of me that squirms, on her behalf, when I hear the word “panties.” We are empathetic creatures to the core.

You ask: whether people who benefit from current-day hegemony are willing to give it up. The sad truth seems to be “no” – what do you think? Would I give up my education so that someone less privileged might have taken my place? Do I want to live in a tiny dirty shack and work for \$5 an hour if I don't have to? \$10? However idealistic I may feel, I'm

still, essentially, overwhelmingly glad and grateful to be who I am, where I am . . . it seems crass, but I have to admit it. So then the question becomes, how great is it to be living here? To be reminded on a daily basis how privileged I am? And to witness others with similar privileges flaunting it in less subtle, sometimes offensive ways (often the case with super-wealthy Chinese people)? Is it better to be here, seeing and feeling my privileged status explicitly, rather than in the US, reading about China's pollution in the *New York Times* online? And – in either case I feel like I am not doing much to ameliorate matters . . .

Jen: I like the word “panties” – especially when used in relation to men's underwear – but I'm sorry to make you squirm.

Reading as white carries with it certain privileges which are afforded me whether I want them or not – I benefit regardless of my beliefs about the system that creates institutionalized racism and the white privilege that is corollary to that. I can't not read as white, so perhaps my being “not-exactly” white signals the complexities of whiteness, rather than any actual non-whiteness on my part? But what to make of the fact of being the daughter of an immigrant who is himself the son of an immigrant, the daughter of a non-native English speaker, someone who has had a consciousness about race and ethnicity and language all her life that's (I think) different from the consciousness or lack of consciousness most white folks have (or don't have). Am I trying to say I'm special, or exempt from racism, or exempt from critique of my privilege? Not at all. Am I trying to understand where I come from and where I stand, in order to move through the world in a more activated, more thoughtful, more self-aware way? Surely. And am I trying to figure out ways to work against inequalities of all sorts and the distorted manifestations of privilege and disadvantage that seem so egregious everywhere (differently egregious, as you've noted, in China than in the U.S., for instance, or in Mexico or Argentina or wherever)? Definitely.

When I talk about ceding privilege, I'm not talking about completely giving up what we have – and it's certainly impossible to give up what we *had* – i.e. our educations and their attendant privileges already happened, the fact that I come from a family that can afford health insurance and to own a home is non-negotiable and continues to reverberate in the ways I navigate the world. As I see it, the idea isn't for those of us who have privileges to live in misery in order for others not to live in misery (as if!). It doesn't shift anything structurally for you to become disadvantaged in favor of someone else's “taking your place” (as if that were even possible). But would I have been willing to go to a state school instead of Brown if the money saved would have been used to send some other kid to college who otherwise wouldn't have been able to afford it? Absolutely. When I was going to college there wasn't a way to make that happen (or I wasn't in a place to construct one?) and, perhaps even more to the point, it seems to me that what we need is structural and societal change, not single people making space to help other single people – though that's good too, and desperately needed.

Your working in a sweat shop or maquila doesn't help change the fact that sweat shops and maquilas exist and exploit workers. This is totally improvisational thinking here, because these are questions that bedevil me no end and cause me quite a bit of anguish in terms of my own concerns about how to make myself useful to the world in daily life – and they are questions for which I have really absolutely no answers – but it seems to me that there are maybe two different fields or zones we're trying to talk/write into? One is a concrete sociopolitical space that requires structural thinking and structural change in order to become different and more humane, more viable, more equal. Another (and obviously these are not completely opposed by any stretch) is a space of subjectivity and/or interpersonal relation and/or thinking/philosophy in which we can actually think about ways to work against our own privilege. For instance, I can dedicate significant space in my own literary practice to translation, rather than simply to creating and promoting my

own work. Or for instance, I can work as an interpreter in social justice settings, so that instead of privileging my own voice in various political struggles, I'm using my voice and skills to enable people to talk with one another who would not otherwise be able to communicate. Which is not to congratulate myself in the least, but rather to say that I'm just at the very beginning of figuring out how to make a life that actively and variously works toward constructing the world-as-it-might-be-imagined and actively and variously struggles against the world-as-it-is.

Sawako: Canonizing, re-canonizing, labeling, identity, ethnicity . . . one of the things I loved about Kenjiro Okazaki (at the Yotsuya Art Studium, in Tokyo) was that often in his lectures he made transparent the dubious means by which art got canonized into and through art history. And then he'd rewrite it, on the spot, in any number of ways. This of course applies to all arts, not just visual art, but all of it seems particularly interesting at this moment in time, when people shift geographies more fluidly, globalization (for better or worse) continues to affect people in different parts of the world similarly, and there is more of a blurring between ethnicities, languages, literature, genre, border (or am I making that up?! This is probably a description of my world, not necessarily universal . . .). And I want to turn this a little towards our own projects in writing, language, art, performance. I see your poetics manifest not just in your poetry but in your performativity, the puppet theater, and then again not only in art – your poetics are part of your daily lived life, it resonates with the way you arrange your home, ride your bike everywhere, the Whirly Girls, and how you engage with real people in real life in real time.

But what I was going to say earlier: perhaps this idea of border crossing/blending could now be applied to canonization, re-canonization. That it could all be loosened up, so instead of having canon or no canon or this canon or that cannon, we could have caaaanons, cano-anons, cancanons, and so on.

Jen: As for can-can's and no-no's of all sorts, and all sorts of crossings of all sorts of borders, I think that wild plurality and depth of engagement are equally important. Do I risk canonizing Dolores and/or Laura's work by saying – as I have said and honestly believe – that I will translate every book that each of them writes? Certainly. But my sense is that the depth of my engagement with their work is central (inextricably so) to the effects of that engagement: how informative it is for me, how challenging to my own ideas about writing and language and selfhood, and how nourishing to my own work and thinking it is. And then hopefully these effects reverberate with other readers of their work. Also, I sincerely hope that the limitations of my own translation practice (how necessarily partial, for example, the list of writers I included in my anthology was) will galvanize others to translate more, and more widely than I am able to. So that yes, the borders of the canons constantly being created are also constantly in flux – doing the can-can, with skirts flying and an occasional titillating glimpse of panties.

Jen and Sawako welcome correspondence, and can be contacted at jenhofer@gmail.com and sawako@gmail.com respectively.

Between February and April 2008, Sawako and Jen conducted an experiment in collaboration which involved the simultaneous exchange of floating ideas in both epistolary and poetic form. This is the poem we constructed:

Or Wall Or Wall

bricked up but not bricked
over, stacking, counting, not counting,
similar to no known quantity (she maneuvers
an endeavor of architecture, physicality of
accretion, cumulative intents everlasting &
otherwise considered an instigator of
still-shifting synthetics (she accrues
plastics & properties, further opacities
patently bloom, intrinsically rerouted
or yet-to-be manifest, bundle of which
joy, time-kill or tremble, a helping of grace,
how many doses of ongoing uncertainty,
relentlessly progressive and yet mired
to the hilt or hinting at history, inhaling
or exhaling as the body wavers, woes
and wants, glimpses and grasps (she
rearranges identifications, modular
tonalities hung into the core of that
which springs forth when, or that which
remains pendant, resonant, the part of
sound which is milked, well after the act of
making itself appear, milky, touched
as obligation pendulous, verdant
as datura or detour, fluidly fluted back-
wards, pungent spongy invertebrate
sill or not doing her job (she suits
up, unsuited or uncut, rough material
of whose making, cut to the quick and
spun out of a fleeting color, moment,
gloom or looming endgame, breaking
point, match, set, on, onward, forward
modulations or merely a flicker tailored
to whose specifications, recruited or
convinced, rather unconvinced, moderated
by which we hold close, clutch, rekindled
and trampled designs of a finer hour or two
waiting in the wings or pit, cleft or swell,
distended new bellies to utter abandon
or belly up, signs of submission sweep
temporal ligatures untied, by which we
realize the decision made us making it
denatured unspecified felled had glimpsed had
fled had undone, itself a fashion of law,
lawful mindfulness in direct opposition to
which neighboring position which companion
resisting completion itself become liquid structured
to resist to transit to neighbor as if
somewhere in there the life were to be found
as if tender battle, hankered to the quick, all
speeds of faith, trust, blood, beginning with
or falling-stepping out, dropping in-out, a

new lease, never new, never not noticed
or being notified of further goose-stepped
regulations, having become regimented (she
half-lives or forward-march under, unto,
from-with and there-there, a neighboring thought
trying to friendly it up with an old thought,
digression, antimonious or antipathy's end-
run run-down worn-out out-and-out last
best thought as if best were the point where
these delicate flowers are concerned, concerning
being beside the best point, having yet to
ante itself up for the greater or finer hour of
engagement, purpose intention not-with
standing, awaiting, not with-standing nor
ponying up her seat, transit, regulation vinyl
cracked, starting to, coming to, striving
tete-a-tete or toe-to-toe, a toe in the hold of
a transitory boulder: thank you, you've moved a
wall, face, continent, surfeit, fault line, cleft of
which essential movement imperceptibly routs
regressive fauna, and aren't we all, fonder
failures furrow gratitude's geometry, fodder
for which expendable geographies of risk,
tendentious inhalations of oncoming traffic
bent over itself to ask the same question
vaporously in swirled circuits funneling
toxins under the skin of inquiry dead-
ended, up or given over to which cracked
night, what such truce, when the other shoe,
buckled up or buckled in, over, in heat,
in close-companioned dusk, element of
electro-magnetic diffusion, loss, total
loss, wrecking-ball dispersion, nuzzled
clusters negated and denied, denuded,
naturalized with no future morning