

People say, people say
all of us is borrowed from this
borrowing the sodden edge of sea's bay from the
daily house of participation
borrowing windows of opportunity
with their own nine reasons women don't
from ideas felt breaking
beyond the far side of her depression

Trollship trollship
bibliography of trollships, octagon
paranoia harbinger
I'm building my own private world to the bottom of my shell
to rescind from obligation
Black Friday looks on the body as an unfortunate obligation
idle Lexan forms,
the flight of the memory stalactites
Cupid laid by his cappuccino to get back to the question
there are too many poems in this world
falsely liberatory, introductory Elmo, cherub thumbnail
competing desires to be a world maker
machines can only be operated so much
empathy is action but
Ben Kinmont is neither

Volunteers! look inside the Tinder
where we watch The Daily Show as news
unintended prosody, progressively stripping off its clothes
back to the question of consciousness vs. action
comes to light, a photograph being developed
through the washing machine,
the dirty laundry of the past century
final flourish of the erection flowers
ludicrous cooing, I mean I was crooning
over lecherous Lettristes, phreakers, kinksters,
I mean I was coding, a calculus of doves licking the soldier out
of my crouch
kicking tuna fish cans through Cartman's empty mouth
most people have quiet nights inside America's Test Kitchen
Our Addicts Ourselves, together directed

Help friends are there any other monsters left that I can eat?
I was tormented with hunger started fantasizing about
self-cannibalism
not sure if cannibalism or Dracula struck first
in the midst of ketosis, get your head on straight then loose
your body
the uterus is the first thing to shut down
moved the metronome to its forced improvisation
hovering above a network hemorrhaging the malware of multiple
consciousnesses
looking over your own body through the eyes of someone else
looking at your body
then suddenly sucked into the circle of an image of an alien
botany
a second skin you wear over yourself and other selves
a spiral of possible self-monsters raking through the threshold
of the flashing confidence of the demonic edge
now I'm doing TED talks off your navel
along the high frequency wire of the national grid
duck below the stanchion-

In a giant white tent the lighting was perfect no shadows just
clear dawn on the knuckles and bouncing small freckles like
lasers, the kind that come off of watches
every long-haired person in the room was wearing a rose in their
top knot
and the petals were falling down onto the ground in tendrils and
then singeing
every woman in the tent was on birth control
and the men, guns in their pants pockets with daisies peeking
through the snouts
every teenager was carrying a winky lozenge under the tongue
they walked into the tent with tickets already bent
single bills hanging out of their flies, fingers crumpling by
their sides
the buyers soaked it up like carbs when the rainstorm kicked in
and started shaking things

The more I feel lost, the more I believe
I can be helped by this unknown source
of knowledge or understanding
I walk further into the magic mountain
slow pan over dead objects
others mushrooming in their inconsequence
my own memory bleeding in front of me
so you think you can justify your dementia by making an eBook
survive in the world by politicizing knowledge
failures in communication are not generally dealt with
by rerunning the portion of the communication that failed
you must get out the stair and ascend
the top notch Malibu sunset blows a kiss from the corner of its
eye-
slides down the banister like an Olsen twin
makes a big splash with mature viewers in mind
slapped into the bathwater
staring at your newborn babe trying to
divine how much it looks like you
there is so much dying here
we can't both inside
quits smoking

Above, a cursor in the shape of a ghost
so stealth and angular it could leave a mark
you let the arrow pass over your body and execute the tempo
Fellini slow pan over an empty orchestra pit and over the tent
Godard captions running along the exposed pipes inside Roger
Rabbit's spleen
with its side cut off so you could see the bare meat rumps and
perfect metal thighs
steady camera on the Astaire's toe as a hand truck goes by
somebody gets out of the way
you look through the peephole
fisheye

Attention-grabbing 'wipe' transitions in the gallery booths
Ferrari scissor doors
you lock eyes with someone on accident
this is some J.G. Ballard shit
won't let go of the split second of tender and angry focus
anime panic-water droplets from the forehead
streaming from the eye
the remarkable pleasure and vulnerability
in imagining the pagan end of you
flowers blossoming from the holes where your eyes were
you look away for a second and that booth is packed
you lost the deal and the only way is out
out of this room
into the next

The room you see next holds tiny translucent fans whirring
the fans push air into silver whistles wheezing ever so softly
whistleblowers—framed pictures of Edward Snowden and
Julian Assange, Gottfrid Svartholm Warg and Peter Sunde, Daniel
Ellsburg, Glenn Greenwald, Deep Throat (W. Mark Felt), Chelsea
Manning, Ai Weiwei, Marsha Coleman-Abebayo, fingerprints hanging
by a nail
the stench of hubris the smell of the Transportation Security
Administration
the trans hacker fan boys blogging
Michael Moore on your tail
spent so many essays procrastinating
Caffeine spilling on the lap like a warm bladder
Metahaven makes another blanket
someone's buying

Everything is incoherent but the point of our bodies is to be
specific enough to find some things coherent enough to deceive us
into doing things to survive
some things should be shocking but probably aren't
small violence so common enough to be excused
the barista winked at me

Across the hall in a room of the tent flapping in the breeze.
Ken Burns pan over a sea of asses each one shaking in a spiral
you are looking at the ass of every fine specimen on the Subway
the sound of the universe they recorded on Hubble
summoning the hype
no one gets the girl, she gets herself

Another room flashed back
a giant lake with thousands of lily pads broken by a small path
an old brunette with a young tight body swims
tangled lily pads to a chair
on top of a corroded wooden pole in the water
she begins conducting the waves
the brunette is my mother peeing in the water,
and next to her is yours
they are listening to Eminem and my mother is loving it and
swinging
and your mother's lips are in the exact shape that it is when
she hears

You could call hallucination a deeper reality
they always have an open door, and another
though the depth of the incision not reflective of the pain
when crying tiny pockets of sadness congeal together
multiplying within a non-center like a blight

In another room, the Subway Poet on Broadway-Lafayette
sits on top of a pile of bodies having hetero-sex
skin-blankets with tiny pockets for fingers
the rape of the ouroboros
the Subway Poet continues to transcribe from memory
the Valentine poems that he wrote this year for \$5 a pop
the bro-ceptionalist lie that night, handing the poem to his
spouse
the Hallmark moment: reveal shot at the knees, like a shootout
"I wrote something for you baby"
too sad, don't look so you look
click to a sharp elbow on a windowsill
you live in paradise making a ton of money
what would it take to make you leave everything behind?
certainly not the piece in this booth
the one that the artist made to spite its buyer
or do you have a collecting strategy related to the
death-instinct?

Walk through the walls of this room, invisible and flying
through the garden of Adam and St(eve) Jobs
combed by a Food Not Bombs collective
baking mush collected from the trash bins of the finest groceries
of the East Village
they are grabbing bloody red roses from the lawn and sprinkling
them into the soup
murmuring into the keyboards of their belts and bellies
each belly button holding a single Daisy
plotting the next action, the recruiting officer of the MRA on
their tails like Calamity Sam
cut to an empty frame and let the subject come in, that's you.
now, sit me on your lap and read me Lorna Doone as I fall asleep
walls fold like a cootie catcher
crushing on all the anarchists

Frame pause the jump shot—
he will never take you back
she won't either it goes that way sometimes
in the back of your throat
smooth dawn
delete message history
no one is lying to you
forget about

You spit and it accidentally lands on yourself
next up: George Kuchar's video Weather Diary
when he's filming little boys.
such molestation and yet we are uplifted
traumatic hormone pimple everyone's problem
let your spleen hang out into your sandwich just to show it off

In the next room you see a long distance romance
the static on both sides
shut off mid-ring,
waiting by the rotary phone.
Twirl that curly little cord around
your fingers and around your neck while you
kiss me like you are applying lipstick in the dark
somehow finding the curves
don't sweat it
scam my whole plan
take the cat out of the bag
bag it

And in another
your boyfriend is watching
semi-pornographic YouTube videos
of posh goth net girls reading poems in 2009
where is she now? do you wish her success?
duck lips crescendo
hips so easily swayed
you have begun to sink into the mattress
fall through into another room like a trap door

Lights, camera, Timberlands
into the middle of a new age religious movements (NRM)
the circle of hands of the core membership
dotted line moving over an animated map
braces your fall and lowers you down into temporary photography
so easily given, so easily taken away

You don't have to believe in things they just happen but they
happen incoherently you find yourself in a room completing a job
you found on Craigslist for this Art Fair booth
Risky Business, dancing alone with yourself and the broom just
slightly the shot in De Palma's Carrie (1976) where Carrie White
(Sissy Spacek) and Tommy Ross (William Katt) are dancing at the
Prom dance scene body core horror, Viennese actionist revival
the mind so easily imagines the body's inversion and skewering
the trope of everyday longing to throw yourself on the Subway
tracks in New York's finest borough where the womb feels like a
shirt buttoned to the very top button you exit into the screen-
saver's indoctrinating pastels

I'm not taking names, I'm talking memes filtered through the
unconscious and the dark spaces of the deep web and Creepypasta,
beastiality, cut shots, cutters, slender man, teenage shooters,
demonic possession, the fecund growth of the recessives bearing
their toe heads enough to scare the bejesus out of copying their
HTML template and making it your own

I decided this Friday I couldn't go out couldn't go on
until I figured out if my mind was the only reality
but the whole process of believing you are making a decision
has its own assumptions and also the answer to every question is
process
colonialism starts in the search term discovery
scary to increase the SEO of these things you believe in
these people like to say they go on "urban adventures"
as if you ever have to go anywhere

Note to self: don't "be the philosopher who has begun to engage
with the great mass of writings that remain in the archives," be
the lips so tight around the bottle of water they suck the wells
straight from the wells, or like the lips are wells, and so is
the throat and stomach
exit to another scene no sweat

You open the door with the ten-foot pole and run out
you are running now up the stairs of your college apartment
down the stairs of your grandmother's padded house
grandma scrubs the dishes with her back to you
cut through a hallway each stair a ringlet
incoherence disappoints the traditionalist
time to return to the framed place, the return address
a brief infatuation plowing through the sentiment left in failed
art projects of childhood
charge your phone check your snaps
this one ruins your fetish of her
It's your friend at Occupy, Zucotti Park
hack into it come out the other side before they confiscate your
Piccolo
the next thing you know Cecily McMillan is on Second Life
move it online into the furry dance club
we get passed around we get passed at
pass the jar around he has the coolest tip jar
check your snaps

Arrived late to the boardroom
conceding to well argued points, treasuring your condescendence,
slurping
some conversations—dip their toes in other people's bathwater
some enervative ears prying through the imprints of our own
biases
subjectivities tailored out and even then, beyond to new ground,
the newness of an ice cube
of bodies hacked and coded in the minds of academia's larger
dragons
empirical research of states of exception prying into bodies of
exception
still influenced by prior beliefs
you engineered the matrix too soon
Can't unbuild eugenics absence sticks around
the age old story of machine mimicking human

@Horse_ebooks is already in our cultural subconscious
so speak about it without speaking about it so you can speak
about it when you are speaking about it

Cut to another scene—
visited mother in the mulch
the role reversal, I didn't choose
still sympathetic to neglect, apparently
she was 86ed from the sports bar we met at, charmer, somehow
managed to come in
the Lana Turner of addicts breath, and the tolerance and
forgiveness of small town personalities
we smoked cigarettes and she showed me her tent in the woods,
she called it her 'hobbit hole' off the beaten trail, I don't
talk about it
there's only so much you can do for the people you love
you gotta do you

So shoo fly don't bother me
look at that hawk up there like a John Deere cumsuckle
America brave our wheel box
nowhere more enchanting
melon hole on
to the slide in your Ray-Bans
hooked on to done
this is how you ride a lawn mower
Johnny said you have to straddle it and keep firm
evenly steer and watch the grass from your eyes
It'll sting soap on your eyes I can't wait for the
baked beans straight outta the can with cereal on
the side shut that flap over the door or the
guinea pig will run out to give the dog a bone

She sat there twiddling a bowl of ramen into her hair not eating
a bit
there are words I don't say anymore that I forgot on purpose
the words were trapped inside the ambidextrous hunting of the
dove family recipe
Tweety bird duck fly soup
my mother put a piece of bread between
two pieces of cheese and barred her teeth
Hunny don't ride the lawnmower over there anymore
as a little kid they covered us in gravy and put us in the pit
bull room

Lolita loins talking to carpets writhing in the most delicate
lamb and Lambda of glass
seemed to be saying over with the same words in the different
ways like subentries of an index
or rather plummeting down the restless vegetation of wires which
transported us to the our seats under the glorious night bath
our faces were slots shelling out the appropriate currency
everything had become applanced to the singular use like
millions of toasters reconfigured into the synapse the world was
speckled with separate operations but then woven together again

Fewer relevant mysteries existed now or at least everything both
clearer and less clear
and this troupe of fuccbois wearing draped black fabric outfits,
zebra print, blinky rings, binkies and gem toned eyes were all
packed in the pod in front of me positioned up close in front
of the gigantic curtain which rolled up right then like a hand
suddenly pulling back after being too close to the flame like the
sudden good news of a puppet show tethered to the drug of the
light
this cruel and ruthless industry, clad in a lab coat barely to
bat an eyelash
angelic creature, liquefying sensuality into a baptism
a sudden ray down the middle of the stage,
a passage of forgotten grime dust and purple light as if to call
you to death
It was impossible to tell if the models were drugs to our own
system
I heard one of the fuccbois say something about the drones over
Coachella the way they obscured the sky into a constant state of
dark

Below us were the model blips
cartoonized bodies steeped in the alienated effect of
consumption
cartoonized in the sense that they were emphasizing the leakages
of themselves the ease of appropriative objects spilling mucous
blossoms constantly becoming on one side of childishness or the
other
sometimes perverse and demented children nothing too unfamiliar
but also strawberry in the delicate frescoes of the inner eye

As if every person through their entire life is only capable of
saying one thing but the job of the designer was to hone that
plaza of ideas all destined to the same fate and resolve their
contradictions, the torment, emerging from the salsa of a
Fellini fountain
freedom is the sleep in which we are our dreams
addicts observations obviated by the extremes
there are really smart people and there are really beautiful
people
then there are really smart beautiful people, who didn't start
that way but have figured out how to be beautiful
by melting this glass of what's been already revealed
chewing the sloth of meatspace
in the leaves of wires we walk and moisten the space with
ourselves
like the thickening of the wind
or the frosting of glass
Fade to black-

I'm floating in the non-object of you
the embodiment of the incomplete shake
of a so-not-happy-with-the-term-born-digital chicken bone
lovers flinching hands reach to touch anything they can grab
a yarn running pulling in all directions like a Maypole
disbursed bodies, and between wrist extensions
the yarn weaving itself
old Arachne spinning her web
two consonants strapped to back
aching to squeeze the vowel forehead
into the biggest headache
is taking the wings off

Dorothy Howard is a writer and researcher who covers topics in technology and contemporary art. She has bylines in Rhizome, DIS Magazine, The New Inquiry, Adult, Vol. 1. Brooklyn, and Whitehot Magazine, among others, and also creates Wikipedia entries. Dorothy was born in Yakima, Washington and lives in Brooklyn, New York.

