

# Denigration of Choice

I have suffered a loss:  
the book I so loved

fell open to a page I cannot  
abide.

The book fell open atop  
a woman's body, and I

lusted over it. The body,  
the book,

the loss of choice.

I have been demeaned by loss,  
as though my dream that I stood  
naked in public

were a fact.

You see the dark hair on my back,  
the crumbling pages I clutch  
before my private parts.

On this I have insisted: the organ  
of thought was once paginated. It followed  
its own rules, its arousal  
was discreet because the text refused  
to act on its impulse. It fell  
as I suffered, a righteous  
debasing of the private part,  
neither fact nor lust, exactly,  
but a decision.

The decision returns with clock-like  
precision

to reduce my grief, so that my loss  
is my loss.

I fell on her body with altogether  
greater concentration,

hating the page as I did, and the book  
as I loved it.

All excess removed, the dream's fact  
read most tersely, the type on the page

an impediment to itself. Blacking out  
the sufferer as it heightened his immanence.

Knowledge mounts on feeling,  
but sorrowfully.

# Anti-Anatomical Conclusion, or Stealing the Trespass from the Thief

An ending is an alias. The poem goes on, in disguise, elsewhere.

But that change of guise or gait often seems painful and awkward.  
The culprit is anything but elusive. She stumbles at the portal of the  
next poem, the 'new' one. And can't get in without damaging  
its architecture, anatomy.

Or

making the poem might require stealth. Coming or going.  
And given the sometime circularity of the word, of the a.k.a.,  
it's just as well to grant the interchangeable quality of beginning  
and ending.

Say the poem is a form, albeit a moving, animate one.  
A generative structure is not determinative.

No consistent fingerprint.

Or say that the poem's costuming is only suggestive of identity and  
some kind of lung and gristle flail underneath with a volition all  
their own.

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The spectral ends of continuity get damaged, bruised and this is  
the poem's basis. The bruise says: I'm alive; blood has flowed  
through this channel.

(At a recent appointment, my physical therapist began kneading my thigh in an excruciatingly painful way. “This is not relaxing my muscle,” I gasped. “Oh no,” he replied, “this is called traumatic massage.” The idea is, almost, to do damage. Bruising the muscle brings in more blood, which, it is hoped, will soften, make more fluid, the rigid fibers.)

To display the bruise is not to delimit the vigor of the poem. It only exposes a part of the limb that extends indefinitely from the seam of the garment. Blood once flowed here. And still does, in tracteries no one deigns to specify.

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One might pick a lock and that’s a way to blur the doorway’s sense of exterior and interior. Someone is breathing, there, in unsecured space. Pursuing the free movement of air through these passages, while the air, without remark, generates itself. Lung’s moist repetition.

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If a poem were to have a ‘heart,’ the mechanism against conclusion would be in place: poem as circulatory system. Boundaries are vaguely decorative in relation to a nearly endless movement.

The name of a particular word, its enunciatory title: lub-dub’s ironic and happy irrelevance.