

Autoorthography: identity poetics with poetry

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Abstract

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This paper explores a poetics of hiding through explorations of language, identity, and literary influences. My preliminary findings are presented as poetic prose, scientific descriptions and small memoirs. Though fragmented, these short essays are arranged in five books each crystallized around a central idea: (1) identity and confessional poetry; (2) presentations of scientific fact in and societal impacts of writing; (3) the role of love in literature; (4) influences of traditional fairy tales and forms on contemporary magical literature; and (5) the role of naming in identity formation, problematized through uncertainty. I would like this exploration of hiding to be an exercise in disclosure: who I am in person and who I am in language; who I am in logic and who I am in sound. where the lines blur and where they solidify provide results for a hypothesis I have yet to write.

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BOOK I
[ANAT- to ECHO-]

AUTOANATOMY

because we write about self, our poetics describe us as people not only as practice. because we revise when we write, our poetics describe only transcribed, less incidental language. i write in a torrent without many pauses though revision. we live in a torrent without many pauses though backtracking. definitions loop: poetics as identity, or identity as poetics, or neither as both, or both are nothing, or both are meaning, and I and text and difference. we reduce sense to uncertainty in self and in language, meaning: I bury us under abstraction. i hide beneath exhibitions, curations, translations. we tangle in codes we write on palms to speak, identities we drape over bodies to walk, shapes we give to mouths to keep eating, keep spinning, keep changing.

our view of the world is shaped through genetic predisposition and what we learn when we are too young to choose what we learn.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY I

i learned friendship from television. i learned compassion from my mother, empathy from my father. i learned chemistry and anatomy from dissections and textbooks. i learned jesus from one girl, séances and crystals from another. i learned money from my parents, social work from my aunt. i taught myself to peel off skin. i learned pronunciation from a therapist. i learned the incapacity of language from the spectrum. i learned rocks and dirt from the neighbor's creek. i kissed girls in elementary school. i kissed boys in high school. i repented in the middle. i learned frogs and tarantulas in one friend's bedroom. i learned eyeliner and knee high boots in another's. i learned matlab to image cancer cells the same year i learned we teach gratefulness with condescension. i learned excel then matrices then java. i grew pitcher plants in fractals. i learned myself pretentious and logical. i learned from religion that natural disasters are cures. i learned tongues. i learned mental math because i always lost my calculator. i learned reproduction and spontaneous abortion. i learned action potential. dreams are misfirings recompiled. i learned acidity, complexities. we make the most funding in laboratories. i learned where funding goes. i was funded for pitcher plants and fruit flies because i was a girl. because i could write, because i was a girl, i learned the institute accepted me more easily. when i woke up there i paused. i thought about intention and i abandoned.

I tell you facts not because they matter, not because they effect interpretation, but because the poem is personal.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY II

i learned to be alone playing hasbro games in a dorm room. i learned genetic traces and basic calculations. i adopted movement: steady, sure. i learned to drink in the deserts of nevada. i learned to smoke from wikihow on the floor of my apartment. i learned chains at a party, first obsession, dressed in pink. i learned an academia of identity not purpose. i forgot path. i learned to throw up before passing out. i learned to write essays before sunset. i learned to fuck in the park. i remember the text and nothing of hands or solutions. i lent my room to a girl i loved so she could kiss her boyfriend. i walked with her to the fields at dusk. he told me of other kisses and i never repeated. i learned not to name what is. i learned to name what is contrived. i

bored quietly, quickly, a wallflower. i spent three weeks without speaking. i chose fiction over laboratories. i wrote myself a narrative to flounder under language. i tangled
then i left.

I tell you facts not because they are interesting,
not because they effect interpretation, but
because the poem is personal.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY III

i learned to be content tracing lake washington with mallards. i made friends i could keep. i learned parenting from three others' four children. i learned i did not want them. i could not. i sang to a girl without voice, with voice, incoherent. i learned i want what i say i do not. i cannot. i learned transcribed credentials mean little. we live with our hands. i learned to smile for career. i learned conversations work best when we forget we are heard. i learned the veins of the state. i learned to live in my car. i had home. i hopped places of strangers not to be alone. i became who they wanted: i, strange, smiling, coherent. i missed what i once was. i learned to write the past in present. i learned rejection forces presence. i feigned love again. let it go. i wished. i went. i wanted home. i wished to go. i wished. i wish
and so we cannot escape
and so i cannot.

I tell you facts not because they are interesting,
not because you will remember, but because I am
personal.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY IV

i learned life happens as fiction. if i leave now
if gone
I resolve.

AUTOCARTOGRAPHY

the I is the eye but not the i. the I is the speaker not the poet. the I is the poet masked in her lies. the masks are rabelais's not vendetta's. masks connect the self to a mass. we wear them to deflect total personhood.

i don't know why i lie.

I is important. i hide beside, a normal in the crowd, but I is the only capital. poems need more than life. I is a landing ground in abstraction. i like poetry of the head, nonlinear manifestations of memory written to let another in. I builds the head we land to see. I takes credit for the bad, a reclamation. I accepts striving, a longing to be better.

i always wanted to be better.

we cannot alter a surface without hiding beneath.

AUTOCHIROGRAPHY

we teach literature to children for knowledge, culture, beauty or empathy. i like books best for empathy: i know she is true because i heard her think. so i thought. so i wrote to you.

AUTOCHOREOGRAPHY

my childhood room was pink. i picked pink because my sister picked purple. i picked a beast and a girl for the drapes. i learned their story through disney, and i liked it. i though the word pious was pie, or. it did not matter that the line did not make sense. i think we do not care about the message until it settles into us. i watched the lorax on mute while reading dr. seuss to the television. i learned to love trees. i learned my nose in a book. i learned to be a friend to the captor. i learned he sheds his fur. i learned a different sentiment for the beast when i was older and playing *the mother goose suite* on a piano. it contained five pieces, but i only mastered one. i moved my body to the waltz. my fingers fell down and slowly twisted up.

AUTOCHROMATOGRAPHY

isaac newton identified the rainbow with violet and red and orange and yellow and green and blue but not purple. purple is not spectral but cultural, and sometimes electric. sea snails and sea urchins died for purple dye until byzantine materialists discovered the unstable combination of lapis-lazuli and minium. french manufacturers later made cobalt for monet. it was expensive though constant. it did not degrade. manganese replaced cobalt. quinacridone replaced manganese. quinacridone is $C_{20}H_{12}N_2O_2$. the structure does not matter except that it contains carbon, which resists water, and hydrogen, which protects against the sun. it contains nitrogen, which makes purple extravagant, individualistic, royal and artificial. it contains oxygen which is ambiguous.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY V

i learned days from television. i learned the future in wanting. i learned wanting from books. i wanted to cure cancer. i read lurlene mcdaniel and dreamt of diseases i never encountered. i watched *boy meets world* and determined contentment is self-articulation and others' constant presence. i had trouble finding others. i had troubling forcing presence. i thought days might feel rounder, more complete, or complicated.

AUTOCHRONOLOGY I

narrative identity describes who we write ourselves as in fiction separate from life. paul ricoeur made up the word as a way of saying we weave in and out of temporal identities. only by writing them do we rectify a certainty of personality or any intelligent description of who we are. in his theories, plot matters as much as character. the character is only forced to alter and present traits through action.

the easiest path to action, to plot, to motion is
destruction.

AUTOCOSMOLOGY

my sister picked out the first poetry book i bought: louise glück's *vita nova*. terrified of the dark, i repeated *timor mortis* as a mantra to fall asleep, hiding all my limbs beneath the covers.

i dreamt i was kidnapped
i knew what love was
how it placed the soul in jeopardy
i cut apart my body.

my therapist did not understand why someone would scratch themselves with safety pins and protractors. she spoke of medication then said my body would outgrow its discomfort. i asked of her life and learned about her ex-husbands, years spent stewarding airplanes, failed expectations. poetry ceased my habits before the therapist did, because they were reasonless.

AUTOCHRONOLOGY II

the problem with learning or shaping identity through plot is that unless we have traumatic experiences, or carve narrative through writing, real life cannot form a self. i was concerned i was identityless. everything looked smooth and faintly pink but my

head pulsed faster than my legs. i had theories of life and no plot to enact. at the carnival in movies, kids kiss and yell to reveal themselves. in new jersey, we spent small change on a few rides than stood still in a parking lot waiting for our parents to pick us up. i think holden caufield matters to so many adolescents despite his condescension because he is the first character we are presented with who says plot happens when life does not: the world may pause but we move ourselves.

AUTOJESTALT

charles darwin first described evolution as a gradual process. mistranslations of code and environmental necessity slowly shift a species from one name to another. stephen jay gould amended evolution to a theory of punctuated change. he dug through rocks and determined that creatures do not alter continuously from one to another. rather, for most of geological time, a species remains exactly the same until an environmental trigger forces adaptation. rapid evolution then splits a single species into two distinct new ones.

fossil records support gould's theory of schisms, but some still believe in the gradual processes. they say the earth does not record all our steps. for them, there is the red queen: surrounding species force our adaptations by competing. for those who believe in triggers and divergent splits, there is the court jester: we are forced to alter abiotically by weather and earth, not by others.

AUTOCONCHOLOGY

i liked girls in blood red lipstick: the ones with absent parents, the ones in foster care, the ones who wanted away. i liked one girl whose mother placed us in the back of her pick-up truck with eminem on a boom box. i liked that she drove us to nursing homes to volunteer. my teacher said she liked that i convinced my friends to study. my mother said she wished i would stay home. i liked my mother. i did not like to worry her. i did not like what she said, how with them i might never become.

AUTOCRANIOLOGY

in animal behavior, empathy describes spontaneous acts that provide consolation or comfort without inciting a benefit to the actor. although researchers have observed what appears to be empathy in canines, bonobos, chimpanzees, felines, dolphins, monkeys, rats and mice, quantitative reasoning requires it be named empathic-like responses rather than empathy. it is impossible to see all possible outcomes of a behavior. while the female who grooms another female to comfort her after an act of male aggression may not receive an immediate benefit, she could weeks later receive

food or protection as a result of her previous kindness. scientifically speaking, suggestions of altruism must always be treated with skepticism.

AUTOCRANIOTOMY

i liked tasting red lips. i tasted red lips. i pretended. i, secret.

i did not like nickels thrown beside boys calling *porn star*. i did not like the name lesbian before laughter. i hid in the art room. i hid in the math room. i, clichéd spectacle. i picked different friends. i picked none.

i learned to defend. i learned books in place of language. i learned to want the future, to be quiet in present, slip under. i went away to escape. i went to the private school. i picked up ties and button-ups, political offices and aspirations. i picked up summer school. i picked up genetics. i picked a path. i, my academia, a picket fence.

AUTOCHRONOLOGY III

some theorists have criticized ricouer's description of narrative identity for focusing too narrowly on plot and its capacity to reproduce forms which enact change. some theorists have criticized narrative identity for promoting narcissism. some theorists have criticized because, although narrative identity describes our necessity to write ourselves, it does not explain why someone else would read our analyses. you cannot necessarily find reason in this singular portrayal of me.

AUTOCRIMINOLOGY

a writer tells me about her current husband, how he worked in an institution with mental patients and young men and women who self-mutilated. she cannot understand why someone would burn their arms. in her books, she dissects herself, so i thought she might know. each of our forms of destruction differs. i take comfort in hers.

poetry is a redemption. we take solace in one another's exhibitions to ease our own uncertainties.

perhaps because i first read glück and then carson, literature gives me aspirations for calluses. when i read of a woman begging a man to love her, defacing herself stoically to write him as an ideal not as a person, i stop crying. i do not know why. calloused has always sounded better than desperate.

i prefer illusion to living.

AUTOCRYPTOLOGY

joan brandon, adelaide herrmann, dell o'dell and dorothy dietrich performed as cute then strong to allow women into magic. joan and dell learned from their fathers and the circus. they spoke in rhymes, soft voices. adelaide acted as assistant first then became her husband after his death. she later transitioned to hypnosis. dorothy taught herself.

in the bullet trick, an assistant loads a gun with wax bullets or fires blanks. the magician falls to prove impact. in preparation, he squibs plexiglas to feign reality, hides a bullet in a handkerchief. adelaide caught hers with a plate. dorothy offered ten thousand dollars to anyone who could prove the bullets between her teeth were fake.

AUTODACTYLOLOGY I

ariana reines, chris kraus and eileen myles exhibit their bodies alongside documentation of the outside world. i use their books as idols of cynicism and hope. for all our differences of circumstance, i draw threads between us, because we are women and difficult to love. a life of uncared-for action teaches a darting eye of criticism. they dissect their desperate acts in romance and relate their failings and passions directly, then switch view to analyze the art world and policies with the same intensity. they hold every part accountable to the whole. in their texts, self matters as much as the world.

i bury truths under image. I mean to say the same.

AUTODACTYLOLOGY II

in *torpor*, chris kraus writes through her artistic career, her married life, suburban motherhood, adult abortions, the ny-la-berlin-paris art world, her husband's memories of the holocaust and mid-90s era romania all as facts, as they combine and collapse to a single point. i read her book one month after release from a relationship that would have made me a stepmom, in my pajamas, unwilling to move from the couch. *torpor* felt like my own lying voice begging someone home, not for love but for stability, to fend off the inevitable feeling of sinking.

i wanted chris more than my past. i wanted how much she cares about herself and everything else.

AUTODEMOGRAPHY

chimpanzees and baboons signal ovulation with genital swellings, enlargements of pink soft tissue. these visual representations of fertility allow them to copulate only when copulation might result in an offspring. these swellings occur in other animals too, primarily those with promiscuous mating systems. though gorillas and proto-humans had partially concealed oestrus, when humans began walking we lost the signal. we may have lost it to save energy when we shed our fur and stood up on two feet. we may have lost it when we restructured into semi-monogamous pairings to assist with the amount of resources our children required. we may have lost it so women could behave promiscuously without inciting infanticide.

it does not matter why. it matters that we lost it.

if we had not lost our swellings, we might be raped only when fertile. we might not be raped when fertile. we might have continued only wearing dresses so no one could tell we were fertile. we might have evolved clothes earlier. we might have not evolved clothes at all. we might have stayed in the savannah. we might have stayed in tribes. we might have used the swellings in our favor. we might not need birth control. we might have had them used against us, as signs that we were only capable of motherhood. only capable of motherhood, we might have rebelled or run away. we might have been better honest. we might not be better. without hiding, we might never have become.

it does not matter that we know what might have happened. it matters that we know what did.

AUTODEMONOLOGY

i learned math from my father. i learned femininity from my mother, my sister, my nana. i thought they all looked sad. i learned it is hard to be any woman. i learned my genes make us complicated. i learned my nana spent thirty years alone, ten hit and running, twenty in a marriage of partial monogamy. i learned she left the university of toronto to support my grandfather in medical school and love his five children. after her death, my sister asked my great aunts about my grandfather. they said that he married her. they said she was mary. they said she was not easy.

she preferred illusion to living. we prefer

AUTODACTYLOLOGY III

eileen myles moved from boston to brooklyn and never altered her accent. she learned to imagine being a boy. she learned she loved her teacher. she fucked men for money and never lost her preference. she switches roles when she writes. she is first a woman then alone, and once she was a kennedy. she writes about writing because writing matters. it learned her an identity. she writes in long phrases. she breaks the lines where she wants to, sometimes unreasonably. i like her unreasonability. she writes like a sentence but calls it a poem because all it takes to make art is to say: this is art. all it takes to be is to say: I am.

i did not like her poems when i first read them. i said she was not lyrical. i was young and wanted rhythm apart from meaning. i did not remember her words until i needed too. i was soft once but now: i watch her eye, how it spins to sickness. i learn what she sees. we grow up and need what we find and we fragment, absorb it into ourselves.

*i have to be very sure where i am
i'm telling you so.*

*in the sexual
encounter...(when your time is
uncommodified, amateur, kid, punk
unobserved...life stays in the swarm of
free range sex shifting into art...)...we
take youth and space and time...the
privilege of our living, to spend it like
this...all events and moments
are...infinitesimal jangling power lines
of ecceity...wasted lives. we spend our
time on this poetry orbit. it's m-m-m-m-
myth.*

AUTODOXOLOGY

wind-up toys work through a system of gears. a twisted handle rotates one circle which transfers motion to a series of others. the simplest way to learn gears is by drawing with spiropographs. the simplest way to learn song is twisting a music box. cylinders spin hammers which make notes when they land on strings. once i set up a stage and left it. when i opened the door, the door hit a mannequin who hit a go board which tilted and landed on a ceramic ball which rolled and hit a fluorescent lamp which crashed and filled the room with bright dust and chemicals. someone wrote instructions to make wind-up toys from paper. we can complicate or simplify and sometimes life is only spontaneous. my favorite toy was a sky dancer. i pulled a string which spun the fairy's knees. as she unwound, her arms raised creating wind to lift and slowly twist her back to earth.

AUTODACTYLOLOGY IV

i read *couer de lion* one month after leaving a boy i continued to send emails to every night. the letters begged him back and described my days. he asked me not to, but i kept composing. i read ariana's emails and stopped sending my own, not because i feared becoming her but because she had already written them.

i am one voice, a sea of voice.

ariana's I distills the bombardment of the political world, sexism of popular culture, and an impoverished mother into the masochism of her sexuality. i distill her chaotic books into two remembered lines:

*POETRY DOESN'T NEED ME
BUT I NEED IT BECAUSE I FEEL
SO FUCKING LAME*

*shimmer
shimmer
shimmer*

because this all looked futile, we dissolved into words. from our meaninglessness, we believed in anything again.

AUTOECHOLALOGY

1. fairies tell of the sea & the sound
2. a lesson on detached somatic states
3. the retrofit myth of dendodendrytic synapses
4. a lesson on the constraints of supersymmetry
5. fairies tell of a drive to greater complexity
6. a lesson how to deconstruct the color of burnt salts
7. the myth of fits of easy reflexion & easy transmission
8. a lesson on the debate of nature & nurture
9. evidence for the quantum ephemeral nature of consciousness

FAIRIES TELL OF THE SEA & THE SOUND

yesterday a girl stood up.

yesterday a girl stood up in a daze.

the place around her was absent of weight. there was no ground. there was no aether. there was space. in space, a girl reached for her head, but there was no head. she searched for her hands, but there were no hands, no body.

yesterday a girl sat and waited
balancing carefully her mind on the void.

yesterday a girl knew that creation once occurred and would occur again. creation is always occurring. the girl had no words but thought. in her thoughts she saw becoming. this kept her calm as she floated.

it is nice to float,
another way of sea rocking.

yesterday the second creation of the void was air.

the girl felt it strongly, a spreading of spirit and particles. to avoid displacement, the girl made a sheath of skin. skin separated the girl from the void and the air that made the void no longer a void.

skin created her and it.

yesterday a world had air but no ground and no words and no sight and no sound. the girl had feeling, a bombardment of atoms on skin. this reminded her of touch.

she thought of touching and reaching. as she thought, her sheath segregated into limbs.

it is nice to have limbs to feel.
while sea rocking, limbs can skim the waves.

yesterday the third creation of the void was sight.

as particles collided against the girl's sheath they made
holes for her eyes. her eyes looked down to her hands
then up. without anything else to see the girl saw air.

the air was dark centers with swirling dots. the dots
collided and traded paths. the centers collided and
created light.

yesterday the girl did not sink in air.
she was light with only spirit and sheath.

when she tired of watching the girl lifted an atom. she
threw and saw one center hit another center propel many
centers, making paths.

the air compressed. the air expanded like wind.

it is nice to have wind.
wind makes the waves that rock the sea.

yesterday the fourth creation of the void was signs.

with a tilt of her limbs, the girl made paths float and sink,
atoms spreading away. she remembered waves.

waves are notes are messages.

yesterday a wave she had not made drifted towards her.

the girl imagined another girl in this void, or in the past,
in a world, or in sleep, waving. she remembered notes.
she remembered hearing.

she wished for an ear that arrived as a snail who spun
floss to attach to her skin.

the snail funneled waves through its mouth that shook its
body that shook its shell. the shell made the ripples that
made the girl an ocean

big and important.

yesterday the fifth creation of the void was song.

one wave became many waves. many waves drifted inside. the girl spun to find the limbs that directed tides. she remembered waves are notes are messages, but ears alone cannot make sense of ripples.

yesterday the girl asked for meaning.

yesterday an orb of clay appeared. the orb was etched with ridges. the girl tied the orb to the snail and hid it under her sheath. inside the orb the waves were sound.

the sixth creation of her world was change or voice.

it is nice to have a voice
who sings of the sea.

yesterday the sixth creation of the void was weight.

with the weight of the orb and all her words, the girl began to sink. as she sank some waves fell with her, amplified and distorted.

the girl remembered others sinking beside. she imagined another thinking beside. she thought to find her.

it is nice to find other girls.
other girls speak or sing.
other girls can rock beside us
in the sea.

yesterday the girl spun and spun but could not find direction.

she wished for perception. fourteen snails appeared with strings on her sheath. all their signals formed a path. the girl followed her ears and arrived at the other voice.

yesterday this girl found another girl with sheath and limbs and eyes and ears, but also mouth.

yesterday the seventh creation of the void was prayer.

between the girls there was only one mouth. they thought
and remembered and imagined and asked for another,
but the void did not respond.

yesterday the seventh creation of the world was absence.

yesterday one girl could not speak, so the other could not
answer. so they made waves as they floated
so meaning was only
meaning was only
meaning

& the waves.

A LESSON ON DETACHED SOMATIC STATES

yesterday I accidentally became a ceramic pot. my skin was hard. I could not feel. there was no body unless you touched me. I was only body where you touched me.

let go.

inside I had no organs but one thought at a time bouncing until it split and fell out the mouth. words were broken syllables. I thought I was song. you said I was not. I thought the sounds sounded like birds. you said, they do not.

always there is never only one.
the sight & noise & want & movement, then

(close-lid eyes)
(the ears give out)

today in church we say a prayer and it's kind of the same thing isn't it? a steady voice elicits all, distills us into one. no body. I know you said prayer is god in tone. it's just that word undoes.

today in church we speak in tongues. to be correct, to mimic him

let go.

(personal predispositions)
(found ecstasy)

yesterday I understood impossibility in singularity: to have a single word, unpronounceable, trapped inside the porcelain skull. yesterday it did not matter if we could speak.

(caving in)
(our separations)

today in church we sing some hymns. to be distilled, to mimic, it feels the same, but it isn't. no body. no bodies. no hand, no

I let go.

today in church we say a prayer, and I know it's for him, and I know you say transcendence. and I know I say transcendence. transcendence. but it is not like bird and it is not god and it is not transcendence.

for a moment, there is another mind, my mind, smaller, unbounded caving in.

(stuck-still tongues)
(your touch restrung)

THE RETROFIT MYTH OF DENDODENDRYTIC SYNAPSES

there were unicorns in the shed behind her house. I don't remember if she found them before me or if we divined them together. on sundays, we sang pop-songs in her bedroom, fed the spiders, the fish and the frogs, wrapped our heads in scarves. we ran through the yard. when they called we walked close, our ears to the door and open. the unicorns were not so much colorful as soft, not so much tall as warm in spring. her yard had hills and valleys and the unicorns spoke but we never understood. we never named or counted them but returned. we ran and ran, their legs a sound chasing, speeding away.¹

¹the neuron is made of body, mouth and ear. neurotransmitters are the voices that whisper through the ear. it takes many voices before the body pulses, but when it does it cries out in a line, always directive, always through the mouth. mostly mouths sing to ears and ears to mouths, but sometimes there are mouths pressed to mouths. we were ears pressed to ears.

between fits and charms, we plated snowflakes to analyze patterns under cheap machines in my father's walk-in closet. we garnered a kit of knives from the neighbor's shed, then cooled the tools for sterilization. we never went to the movies when her sister asked. we hung rosary and eye charts on the ceiling. when animals died, our parents froze them. we held funerals, lit candles, before we cut the bodies open.²

²memories are collections of impulses and crooks in the bodies that create the correct cascade of signals to recall a voice once heard, and scents, and images. and sometimes in the dead leaves I think of her. and sometimes in the song. our bodies alter as we grow: the more we look the less true we are. someone once told me he never speaks of the past. every thought rearranges.

her fields had unicorns. my pond had demons. in winter the water froze for us to skate on, but in summer it was our altar. we printed pages of names and incantations from internet sites with flash animation of candles and women. my mother said we could not present our findings to teachers, but she gave me a ouija board on my birthday. we calculated the fullness of the moon then sat in cattails at sun's peak, screaming when the triangle moved. we never read the letters.³

³memory is half transmission, half organization, half imprint. the axon carries the imprint. broken axons separate into cells: soma, sheath and schwinn. the cells each carry one frame of thought. a broken brain expels cells to disperse thought in air. sometimes blood too emits. in violence, from broken skin, the cells enter place. memory integrates with walls and grass.

when she left for virginia, everything still moved but my feet. because the other children did not like to walk slowly beside me, I spoke to geese. because language did not work, my words were arms and *gawk gawk gaw*. she gifted me her frog. it died because I thought there were enough flies above my bed. once we dissected a family we found dead by the pool. it was different as an extension of her. we grow up into diagrams. there are charts on cognition and muscles and lorenz. it is different when you are young and believe you are the only living beak.⁴

⁴visions are not of the deceased but what someone dead once saw. spirits are not exact, because the frames are saved haphazardly. something is missing. we do not find people, only their compiled essence. dead we are wind released and insubstantial. perhaps then a new body. perhaps too a new place, or so many at once: the breeze and the ghost.

A LESSON ON THE CONSTRAINTS OF SUPERSYMMETRY

she is the school of performance art.

were you named for a dancer?
I was named to be loved.

a names no thing but the shape a body takes.
a body's nothing but the way the neurons shape.

if we were all bodies, how would this world evolve?
indefinitely.

we walk to my room where she shows me the mirror and an
arch in my back that lifts to the shoulders.

her knees are soft. she says

posture
and
disintegrating.

if we don't bend the bones never break.

here is a map of thought history:
here is the story of the world.

we have all seen cells but the mold of a heart
different (diffident) hues of our hair
tangled up.

FAIRIES TELL OF A DRIVE TO GREATER COMPLEXITY

from one living filament mother was not mother but a tall string. mother rose the day before light. there was no need for leaves until there was need to grow and feed. when the sun ignited, mother needed more.

father was not father but the water that made mother grow roots to drink. he had no want for width. father fed the land that closed in. mother grew bark to protect the string that fed her growths from father's stream.

sister was a leaf that maybe fell. brother was the root displaced. I was a shaving of bark left on land. since sun, since water, apart from them I grew.

of inheritable traits the myth is myth because it never was as important to him as they taught.

transmutation after bark I was dirt
and amoebas. the palm wanted more than dirt and
amoebas.

after dirt I was a shifted spine and
fanged teeth. the palm wanted more than shifted spine
and teeth.

so I was fur and claws, but the palm wanted
more than fur and claws, held me to her cheek.

the cheek
wanted words and arms. so slowly I grew up,
words and arms.

of gould's expansion the myth is as significant as
the story but a sentence without intricacy, plainer to
swallow, remember, assess.

use & disuse if mother knew to
leave me in the sun, my skin would be green with
chloroplasts. if mother knew to place me in the sink, I
would wash the dishes. when I turned double digits, I
looked down to the last black flaking patch as she fell
from my knees.

I am soft and pink.

A LESSON HOW TO DECONSTRUCT THE COLOR OF BURNT SALTS

unwind tired times of days and catch them, test the bands
for strength.

today red evolves making art of minerals, long: the
moments between what we learn and sew and what we
simply let grow. how it tastes in my hands: less intention,
more salt.

(I tried to find the way to make myself glow)
(amber)

mother says of summer, sun. mother said of winter,
earth. but the glow can grow from fingers dropping,
bunsen burner light the cold. from the fist escapes: so
vibrant bites the flame.

(I try to light the way to burn my nails)
(yellow)

mother says of color, energies. mother tells of nanos,
spectrum lengths and spreading waves. to capture color,
the girl must make sense of source: more beauty in the
underneath.

(born to live the way to make my brain)
(great grey)

the atom is the nucleus the electrons spin around, all
gravity. what leaves returns: fire gifts unstable forms.
each capacity stored depends on the weight of the nucleus
pulling us back home. from this yank the color's born.

(I try to twirl my knees to catch my hair)
(purple)

THE MYTH OF FITS OF EASY REFLEXION AND EASY TRANSMISSION

ground froze over beside the wooden house. the parents left the suburbs to barricade behind six foot whittled bears. I watched them from the window, crusty with snowflakes. they did not speak to one another but to me.

step inside.

this is the family: the quilt the father made, the song the mother sings slowly on the acoustic, the love they give and so we take. this is who I am, who made me, where I am home. I am home. I will become.

let's never fight, except stone eyes and silence.¹

¹aether was the matter between the poles that carried light as particles from stars and fire to eyes. the wind also moved to make heat. newton and boyle saw and named longitudinal waves, like those of mechanical dispersion in water. by the first description, light could propagate only one direction. we could not explain certain refractions or birefringences of crystals (corpuscles of light, a particle retarding the motions of great bodies, to hinder the operations of neighbors, no evidence for existence).

I snuck outside at night. the many dogs crowded the couch to bark at the sound of the door. everyone knows when one goes, still: the cold and the black. the ground slipped beneath feet. from evergreens ice storms rearranged, the song of negative degree wind: a howling. no need to speak but to ghosts. I know there live ghosts here. I mimed to them. the shadow of the bear at the door was a man sneaking to burglarize. do not ask why I walked further to the boughs. a child is to save. to return, to kiss good night. here: kiss. I am. here: kiss. I am not.

did I look as you?²

²bradley sought the parallax, the lower limit of stars. but young and fresnel revived light as waves to reinstate belief. waves need water and light's is the aether, a gas to permeate. it was dragging and entertaining. it was entrained and fairly free. yet maxwell needed magnetism, a sky of dielectrics, which made the air too magical. "aethers were invented for the planets to swim in." by then we would have rejected, but we were too entrenched.

in every kiss see the way of becoming this.

I helped bake the bird this morning. I drank the mud in the fish engraved mug. we played games. they passed the hours together. my head sang equations. one plus one, and evens always made more sense than oddities here. I saw her cry and flew to an other. there are other coasts, so many basins the world made.

so be the one polluted with your birth.

so books spoke of escaping to mountains. you will feel guilty for leaving and then

it does not stop.

I returned holidays to the new places. there was a moment kind between. I admired my own love, my brevity, and never dreamt of man, lady, baby.³

³before quantitative reasoning and peer review, we wrote the world how we wanted it to exist: first the bible, then the wind (a simplification). in the twentieth century, science needed proofs and evidence. michelson and morley took to the aether, detected to be mostly stationary in the atmosphere. physicists recreate their experiment at the institute. they send the sodium flame to a mirror, to recombine in the splitter, the eye. where should be a shift, a fringe, there is nothing. the nothing is the evidence (a negation, set off, the spark of a second revolution).

I think there was more beauty before disproof though
faulty, though pointless.⁴

⁴in the trees hang relatives who stayed on earth because they
were never content here. I dreamt of spending the world on a
ridge above a river, frozen aether in my breath.

A LESSON ON THE DEBATE OF NATURE AND NURTURE

we tried to save the fish by feeding them powdered
make-up. we thought by buttoning your father's white
shirts and calling it medicine we would be doctors. they
died just the same.

I told you

science is the problem.

you said no

life is.

THE MYTH OF A QUANTUM EPHEMERAL NATURE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

sir penrose met physics then anesthesiology then
 hameroff when he had acquired enough esteem to reject
 the theories of conventional scientists, when fission
 mattered less than consciousness. uncovering numerical
 equations in the synapses of the body, he wrote
 mathematicians outside of relativity.¹

¹we met travelling to learn of rivers.

we met on a plane.

we slept the cold desert night in a red tent.

we climbed an oak tree bridge between two cliffs,
 examined lines of rocks and deposited glaciers.

memory remembers little of lectures and mostly touch. we
 did not kiss but wrote ourselves.²

²in the myth of the joshua tree the roots surrounded the
 tent and pulled us down where we spent forever
 transforming into water to return through bark and leaves
 to the night.

before meeting hameroff, sir penrose fell for gödel. before being loved by penrose, gödel disproved the provability of arithmetic through incomplete truths and inconsistent fallacies: the limits of the machine are the limits of human beings. sir penrose loved gödel by altering his language: arithmetic's unprovability does not apply to mathematicians because humans are not programmed calculators. we are blind and true.³

³we kissed before we would admit we kissed.

she kissed a boy while I kissed ash, in the basement of a house.

we swallowed something gray.

when the boy held her, she held him. I followed them to his room where they twisted beneath patterned sheets. I stood until they stood. laughter is innocence reclaimed or buried under.

we spent the night awake at grocery stores, on the edge of the charles, building nests with my pink blankets. if I left the room or closed my eyes, she climbed on top of him.

in the morning, we went to church. it was a service to honor men. the boy sat away from us, beside all the others who shook his hand. he stood to be saluted. after the first hymn, I whispered to her that I am still susceptible. we left him.

as we walked, she apologized.⁴

⁴in the myth of soulmates we existed in separate universes that once collided. for a day we sat on a bench together. after that we sought but never found and never settled on anyone else.

after loving gödel, before meeting hameroff, sir penrose kissed schrödinger. a body computes movement and pulse algebraically. schrödinger's lips were the collapse of many eigens to a random state in his brain. the node where noncomputation exists may be observed if there is no reason to see.

sir penrose did not like eigen's taste. he did not believe in randomness because randomness is so rarely understandable.

sir penrose left schrödinger to write a new proposition: waves collapse but understandably so (an objective reduction).⁵

⁵I left my apartment just before sunrise, faint purple sky of spring.

I stood barefoot leaning on the sea green front porch. I meant to crack the door and return, but it closed and locked. I had nothing.

I walked a mile through cambridge streets to the institute's unlocked rooms.

she found me asleep on the tiles. she said she could feel it when I needed.

as we lay to sleep in her red stained bed I told her a story.⁶

⁶in the myth of seahorses we were swallowed by a giant at the aquarium. because he ate us, they released him. in the ocean he gave birth to sea stars who forever lived content, making bubbles in the coral.

sir penrose wanted all our theories to combine. he wanted spacetime to be relative, blistered and discrete. sir penrose wanted all of us to collapse. the smaller we are the faster we can. our brains, he said, are infinitesimal relative to the world. he danced with planck and plato, then made humans noncomputable. when sir penrose wrote his first letter, hameroff heard. he travelled to find him and suggested they look into each other's neurons, where they found waves.⁷

⁷she wanted space from me. she said she needed room to find herself.

I wanted her to be herself.

she left the state and returned sunburnt. I passed her on the street and hid beneath a lamp.

I wanted her to be like me. I wanted her to like me. I threw a party, did the frug in purple lipstick and a red silk dress. I waited, leaning over the railing to watch everyone pass.

I kissed her boy when she did not arrive. I said he did not matter.

I did not write. she did sometimes. I compiled her disparate lines.⁸

⁸in the myth of the space room she lost her voice and arms in a small fire she put out with her sweat. she could not open the door or scream for help so she had to climb into the rocket ship painted on the wall and escape through its black lights.

before hameroff met sir penrose, he lived alone with microtubules and proteins. their shapes forever lingered. he thought penrose's brain contained special electrons to make quantum entanglement. that is the reason he went.

before hameroff met sir penrose, he loved bose and einstein. he thought he could mimic them. time proved this unattainable.

when hameroff met sir penrose, he proposed they act like frohlich: an oscillation of dipolar moments. he suggested they try the nanoscopic: to shrink until gravity no longer controlled thought.

sir penrose agreed to the least impractical. they collapsed.⁹

⁹I walked to her house wearing rain boots and snow the night szymborska died. her boy had lines to help us speak.

I recited old words. I had no new ones. I wanted to leave, but she looked at me in-between the seconds she looked away.

and all is as it once was, until it is not.

I remembered what she said of love the night we first met. I wrote it on a post-it note. I left it in her boots.¹⁰

¹⁰in the second myth of soul mates they did not exist. fondness was a countable object existing between lovers. if one took more the other forever had less.

when sir penrose met hameroff they joined their names,
spoke of gammas and wrote side by side. the
nonobservable node of our brain noncomputes time into
experience that spreads slowly through maps of pocketed
space.

under public eye, it is best to ignore critics. sir penrose
and hameroff made theories they never retracted, even
though brains are inconsistent, even though we cannot
superimpose the discrete on the infinite.

we are trial and error and finally formal.¹¹

¹¹we became the morning we killed touch.

she lived on my couch the summer before she flew across
the map. I was younger, staying. she found boys. I found
someone. I heard her kissing through the walls. I was
quiet beneath him.

the break is rarely significant, slow fading, becoming else.
I cannot write what computes this: up close a face is pores
and wrinkles without form: mine was always observable
and silent, hers buried under loud.

once we saw.

i hoped.

i think that is the point, the results, the only ending if we
end.¹²

¹²in the myth of finality we sat in the car. when we were
meant to leave to fly away we locked the doors instead.
we grew old off the food in the dashboard, never aged
under the light of the moon roof.

BOOK II

[ETHNO- to LITH-]

AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

art has always co-opted the language of science. science has always borrowed the sense of literature. love follows metaphors of chemistry. psychology takes the names of people and society for experiments and theories. sociology sounds like biology like anthropology like phenology, phenography like autography. we do not live as individuals but as a system embedded in a net of self and facts and others. when benoit madelbrot discovered fractals and chaos, artists and philosophers adopted his images without making sense of his math. his sensible nonsense described god's design: the rocks, the trees, flowers, our bodies, their cracks and their colors. sex became logical. jackson pollock threw paint at a canvas and let the colors fall with gravity. we analyze transgressions through patterns and graphs, use calculators to describe the chaotic dispersion of beauty.

AUTOFLEXOLOGY

marsha bryant wrote the term confessional othering as a description of poems that depict an outsider between lines of self-revelation. in her framework, the other is a minority within a web of american confessionalism. her analyses show how sylvia plath, robert lowell and ted hughes depict the racial other as a caricature, a sketch, an exoticized portrait, to obscure their notions of space and time, to unhinge their own certainty, and to spur an innovation of language and form. it is difficult to read innovation spurred by othering. we still do it. if not in the places she notes, we adapt it from these poets' antecedents.

AUTOFLUOROGRAPHY

i learned. we learn.

i learned i am educated and loved. i learned i still cry sometimes. i cry often. i wondered if our emotions belong to another. i wondered if we absorbed them. i used to walk in circles around a small town because the sidewalk felt like linoleum. i thought there was no outside. the air tasted stale and i imagined the earth was a house. i wondered if my reality was another's i wrote into for fluidity, spontaneity.

AUTOGEMNOLOGY

i twist marsha's words. what we write has a reason and then someone else obscures our meaning. i like how she dissects the confessionals' contexts, renaming bees and grandfathers and a white women's kaleidoscope skin. i like that she asks if they should have written this way, how she rediscovers my heritage of depiction. i watch myself for this, the way i sketch someone i cannot fully see.

and then i use her words to mean something else:

if i live alone then anyone is another. if i live in one state, all places are other. if i only know how to write and add, any act of a hand, of a body, of labor, of love, is separate from me. i still want to look out of my head: this is globality, relational relevancy, or

i am not an honest confessional.

AUTOGLACIOLOGY

models used to analyze warming present average yearly temperatures with curved lines and boxes around important nodules. from embedded rocks and fossils, through assessment of sea levels, ice ages, and density of flowering plants, we can approximate the temperature of the past. most scientists who study global warming use long-term models and recent small variations and increments to predict the ways our current climate is spiraling into a problematic heat. but there is another way to look at the data, by zooming in.

according to dick lindzen, a climate scientist tenured at the institute, computer models which span too much of the past are inaccurate. according to dick, we are not in global warming. through yearly averages, which always fluctuate in long term cycles, he observes that the earth regularly warms and cools itself. he altered his political party to denounce environmentalist claims. when the warnings about tobacco were first announced, dick also countered. he smoked but has yet to show signs of cancer.

AUTOHAPLOLOGY I

we defer to individuality when globalism overwhelms: to change the world is necessary; to change the world is futile; to change anything is selfish and selfless and empathetic and narcissistic, but also not.

to change the world we can give up on self. in *let the great world spin* colum mccann writes a modern jesus who eases days of homeless irish men and new york prostitutes by abandoning the niceties his childhood handed him. he dies when he falls in love, in a car. falling in love does not cause his death, but it also does.

i listened to this book while shelving humanities journals in the institute's library the summer i decided to stop researching. i piled my skin with dust and dreamt of disappearing under a stained cardboard cover in the basement of an institution. i dreamt you would find me there and alter.

AUTOHOLOGRAPHY

a group is a set of objects, relations, numbers, or transformations that combine to form a similar object. to be a group, the collection must satisfy identity, inverse and associative properties. group theory was written in 1829 by evariste galois. it affected jean piaget and gestalt psychology, ludwig von bertalanffy's wholistic biology, erwin laszlo's ethical theories, and later structuralist thought. ernst cassirer wrote that group theory extends from gottfried wilhelm von liebniiz's formalistic view of mathematics rather than immanuel kant's principles of intuitionistic theories, as most contemporary mathematics do.

we are sets of objects, systems of relations, desubjectified into logic.

transformational groups imply an invariant, a property of a set that cannot be affected by the transformations. when the cartesian axes are spun, a point always remains the same distance from the origin. paul valéry folded this concept into his poems. roman jakobson used it to formalize linguistics and literary criticism. i learn evariste's words but not the mathematics. we read the poems but not the theory. i read steven casedy who read elmar holenstein but not roman directly.

we hang from the thread of another's web.

AUTOHYMNOLOGY I

the importance of science and fact in literature is not to teach. if we want to learn how molecules work, we unbury textbooks and wikipedia. i learn most of my science from wikipedia, then transcribe incorrectly. we write through science because it is the way we understand the world. sometimes facts serve as metaphors, sometimes facts just present themselves, the way loneliness or greek figures do, as lenses or mirrors.

AUTOCRYSTALLOGRAPHY

christian bök dissects the language of materials and transforms molecules into visual poems. by paying attention to consonants, syllables and vowels, he crystallizes words, allowing us a microscopic view, bringing us close to chemistry and the details of our air. he connects art and culture to science but does not force more meaning than that. we do not need to become from his poems. we can simply sit, weaved and entrapped in

*dolomite pagodas, built one grain
of dust at a time, melt in the rain,
like models of mushroom clouds.*

AUTOHYMNOLOGY II

I speak through science because i want it placed equal to identity. misteachings that render science incomprehensible situate it on a pedestal. because of its inaccessibility and cultural prestige, we devote so much money and reverence to fact, but fact fails just like people. science lies as much as i do.

donna harraway shows the myth in factually stated scientific theory. i think we cannot perpetuate robots. a six-year-old maps me into

character, first asking if i want to be human, robot or cyborg. i answer cyborg. he tells me i should want to be human.

AUTOHYMNOLOGY III

by asking poetry to present fact beside self, i am asking us to recognize that both self and fact are true and necessary. we study medicine to elongate life, but without identity, what does it elongate? even the blade runners wanted memories. it means as much to learn a parent's unhappiness as to learn how electrons relate to protons. both are true and both are false. both change us and both do not matter. we learned a little about consciousness. i can kiss who i want. i believe in ghosts. i do not understand myself. at *childhood's end*, the babies stood, eyes glazed, to walk to another earth. we need our bodies, identities, or we transcend. the computer attaches me to the village but it does not change how i see myself reflected. when i die, my sexuality will not matter. the facts still will, but only as they relate to another's life, their momentary body.

the role of technology has always been to improve humanity. it also distracts. it improves the group to shadow the self.

AUTOHYMNOLOGY IV

the traditional intersection of science and literature occurs in historical memoirs or science fiction texts. these stories base imagination in fact to make predictions and social critiques through metaphor and stretched possibilities. i began reading science fiction while at the institute, surrounded by literary realist traditions. i had difficulty reading these texts because they placed more importance on plot and technologies than people. the outcomes they imagined were difficult to assess because they resulted from force not human decisions. they seemed to me to perform a mistake: forgetting identity beneath wires. i did not know what to take from them.

AUTOICONOGRAPHY

samuel delaney writes science fiction as poetry and from a character centered view. i read *dhalgren* for my first failed book club. i was the only club member who needed him enough to fight through bellona's smoke and the kid's dense typography. samuel turned relationships voluntary and temporary. he split the moon in two. he made the gang nothing but a quarter machine toy, violence an optic, community seeing past it. roger calkin's told the kid there are two types of artists, the ones who write between

living and the ones who let creativity kill everything else. it is the second who lasts, but only after they have sacrificed themselves.

AUTOIDEOGRAPHY

in immanuel kant's intuitionist theory, before the necessity of peer-reviewed journals and proofs, to think was to think regardless of genre. lucretius wrote atomism and love. isaac newton wrote physics and religion and the rainbow. albert einstein wrote relativity and played violin. johanne wolfgang von goethe wrote poetry and furthered both botany and optics. john james audubon could paint but could not theorize so he lied and they believed him. to think was to think, to see was to see, and to see was to think. william carlos williams was a doctor remembered for poetry. pierre bourdieu was a social scientist criticized for theorizing politics. a system of specialized labor promotes wanting one thing. in chimpanzee hunts, only three males go out. they share the meat they kill with the others, but only a little, only with mates. new art encompasses anything because it can. i cannot write code. it seems poetry should be the secondary career. we cannot so easily hobby into mathematics. i cannot run a laboratory for good reason: i forget most of all i have ever known.

AUTOHYMNOLOGY V

facts provide a lens through which I makes sense of outside. shapes seldom unify. when i succeeded scientifically, i let go of identity. we have little time and both world and self require all of it. we can subdue the need for one, but abolishing either requires a numbing.

if our policies tell schools to wish students success in test scores only, we will know grammar and addition. we will not know language. we will not know math. we will not create. we will cure computers but not humanity. if schools wish students success in technology only, we will save bodies but not identities. what is a body with no humanity? if we wish ourselves success in productivity only, we wake up old, realizing we forgot to become while we were still young, stuck standing in lives someone else constructed.

or not we. i mean me.

i woke up.

AUTODACTYLOLOGY V

in her twenties, jane goodall moved to tanzania where she met richard leaky, an anthropologist who believed we could better understand human behavior and

evolution if we knew more about the great apes. over two decades, he picked three women to study the gorillas, orangutans and chimpanzees. he believed because of their different social skills and maternal attention to detail, women were better suited than men to study animal instincts. though jane cannot easily decipher between human faces, she was able to note characteristics of the chimpanzees, name them and begin a tradition of deciphering animals not only through numbers but through personalities.

when jane moved to tanzania, before diane fossey's murder, she was told to bring along a partner for protection. she brought her mother. long after establishing gombe, while travelling to an elementary school, a student's project prompted jane to begin roots and shoots, an organization that supports children in projects that affect the environment, animals and the community equally. at gombe, jane employs locals preferentially to american and european researchers. she works with national parks to make conservation economically sustainable. she holds every part accountable to the whole.

AUTOHAPLOLOGY II

to change the world we can seek positions of power. we need power in this world we built. we need this world in the lives we build. we need power to better these lives we built. we try not to succumb. by living, we do. by desiring anything else, we do not.

a tired girl asks softly for money from the middle-aged women sitting in the coffee shop i write in. the barista watches but does not say anything. we can change the world by believing in an even-ing, our unhappiness satiated by rising up someone else however slightly, however temporarily. you do this. i do this. we all do. we also read comics and romance and mystery and vampire books to forget. we also sit in coffee shops. we buy houses and ornaments and clothes. we also write letters and call friends and read poems. we listen to each other and respond. we try. i try. you try.

AUTOIRIDOLOGY

as soon as euclid wrote the elements, others started to question him. to speak with any certainty incites objection. it took centuries before mathematicians could disprove his fifth postulate, but when they did they disrupted a paradigm and made bendable lines. before noneuclidean geometry, we tried using parallels to make sense of outerspace but we could not. with arches and hyperbolics we can.

noneuclidean geometry matters to mathematicians because of its numbers. it matters to philosophers and artists as an ideal of twisting tradition. lewis carroll wrote about euclid and his critics. lovecraft and fyodor dostoevsky wrote about alternate lines and angles, a matter of possibility or changing views. abstract visual art takes its cue here

too: if we only draw with parallel lines and representations that will not bow, what truth can we enact?

AUTOKARYOLOGY I

poetry provides a clearer view of cultural philosophy than prose because it offers openings without directive language. we imagine ourselves into the frame. what we do not understand we improvise. what the poet does not give us, we create. but the sparseness of poetry also leaves gaps of translation. reading more directive theory clarifies the inaccessible. i prefer theory that does not differ much from poetry. i prefer words that grant entrance into a head which declares its own uncertainty.

AUTOKARYOLOGY II

roland barthes wrote the language for photography criticism as a means of mourning his deceased mother. by presenting himself beside his theory, he gave a tangible reason to perpetuate the art. when he finds her essence in the punctum of an old photograph, i believe i will also find my past, my heritage, my mythology, my ghosts through art.

a similar fighting for self perpetuates antonin artaud's writings. despite frequent contradictions, his belief in the capacity of art to render life livable makes his theories read more true than logical suggestions. i read him again and again. i look for pure art. i do not believe in pure art. i wish other artists did. i wish charles did. i wish ben did. i wish sylvia did. i wish mary did. i wish my mother did.

i wish i did.

AUTOKARYOLOGY III

in detailing the teachings of socrates, hannah arendt explains how every person has two voices inside them who argue for identity. in solitude, these voices have it out. though they never solidify, around others our two selves must reconcile into one, an identity filled with contradictions and uncertainty. hannah defines philosophers as those people who allow themselves to be alone but also to come back together.

i allow myself to be alone. i have yet to come back together.

AUTOHAPLOLOGY III

to change the world we can understand more than ourselves. we can first understand ourselves. to change the world we can acquire degrees and knowledge and transfer theories to daily life and policies.

i learned the names of books then sunk beneath misunderstandings.

AUTOKERATOTOMY

for two molecules to react and form a new molecule, more energy must be put in to break their stasis than the reaction actually needs to occur. the first step takes the most work, the others follow simply. graphs of reactions map a peak and two offset flat lines. the peak is the activation energy.

AUTOHAPLOLOGY IV

to change the world, we can believe in the lives we lead or an ideal life we once saw. we can write policy pleas to open borders. we can charge red cross donations to credit cards. we can educate or alleviate or subvert. we can speak on air or beneath bleachers. we can entertain, give everyone a momentary break. any step is worth a difference. we can say ceos change companies from the inside out. we can meditate and teach others the way of our breath. there are many choices, too many choices. we can be the face of adoption, or foster. we should. we can create our own children and name them a purpose. we can cure a disease we do not have the means to reach. we can understand the molecules. we can speed up the internet to give everyone one more second, just one more thing.

or we can ask to pause.

AUTOLEPIDOPTEROLOGY

i like picnolepsy because of the sound of the word, like limbs of an elf. i smiled as i learned it. i like picnolepsy because there has always been too much to process. young, we take in all we can from books and language and experiments. i was a girl staring blankly at the wall with her mouth open. i closed my mind to process, exited for minutes. facts take time to embed. we rarely retain what we learn. we try.

AUTOLEXICOGRAPHY

taught to learn, to trust variables, texts, images, language, our minds, the curves of axons, we pass through lives and lives and books and books and classrooms and experiments, equations, proofs, people, schools, theories carrying out only ghosts of knowledge.

i do not know how to meaningfully compile ghosts.

we chose paths by philosophies, by capacity and what we desire to rearrange, what of life we believe we can alter. we impose our philosophies as ideology until we wake up in pure thought.

i woke up without want.

AUTOLIMNOLOGY

the child does not know relatively. she feels her feet sinking into ground and without reason cries. mother does not say there are others. the television says there are others. some are happy. some live worse. most live worse. should the child swallow the sinking? i learned enough to tune out and fold in. i learned nothing stops and we begin. on the amtrak on thanksgiving, we were delayed nine hours. everyone complained because we were standing still until the conductor announced that a man jumped in front of another train. we had to wait while they cleared up his body. does the body die when the brain stops or the heart? i imagine when the body is hit they both stop at once. telephones send signals through satellites. the signals must be the right wavelengths. how often are they not? how often do our voices scatter? more people entered our train from the other. the evening stood calm and dark. more people on the train. more people to complain. in twilight, the voices dull. i learned nothing happens but then again, again, again it does. i told the child to swallow.

i spoke to her relatively.

and then what unravels she unraveled makes sense of.

AUTOHYMNOLOGY VI

in fact i search for myself, for roots to plan a life above. with rearrangement of the past, i create a definition of a world i understand. or i try. once begun intention slips. poems wind around true fact as frequently as fabrications and conjure ambiguities as much as sense. poets do not write bibles but detailed self-analyses, collages of uncareful and altered life stories.

i was afraid our thoughts would decompose.

AUTOHAPLOLOGY V

to change the world we can enact a first thought or consider what the world, what our hands, want. there are libraries of books for reform. there are laboratories for all the hypotheses. we can walk forever along one path, forcing movement as we pace. or we can compose ourselves, peer under covers, find some way to be intentional.

AUTOCRYSTALLOLOGY

wysława szymborska was born in poland and took underground classes through world war II. her fragments and poems spoke of universal hope and longing. she won the nobel prize for her poetic gestures towards humanity. each list, even the frustrated ones, wind into a reason to be happy here. she uses we and I sometimes. she self-deprecates but never dwells there. i wonder if her forms were born of necessity, if where she lived wanted for hope. but everywhere wants for hope. everywhere is everywhere else. everywhere is earth.

*life on earth is quite a bargain
dreams for one don't charge admission
and illusions are only costly when lost.*

the ideal poem would join christian bök and wysława szymborska. it would bisect life and believe in it. it would fragment skin to build the body. it would spend a second magnified then zoom and haze until we all faded away.

AUTOLITHOGRAPHY

1. the fable of still life in small mountains

THE FABLE OF STILL LIFE IN SMALL MOUNTAINS

she knew too much so we let her to the stream. there was
room there for digging without interruption.

she knew too much and could not quiet. she walked to
the water to find everything and silence.

in one year, she asked, come find me.

in the stream was silver water. at first the water reached
her knees. at night she lay her head on meandering banks.
during the day she waded in mud and swam. her fingers
and toes bloated.

around words there is always the need for more.
at sand gray banks thoughts are less important.

she found things without meaning to. she tugged grass,
dug into sand, dissected fish before swallowing. she
mapped the stars with stones and named them, then
slept. and when she slept there was stillness, a quiet
distilment.

when we first returned she said the stream had cured the
voices. she asked to stay.

the night we left, she looked through the system around her. she looked at her hands so swollen beside the memory of ours. why had she not left the water? the body is accustomed to its own repetition and warmest where equalized.

climb out.

in the first year she had seen what everyone already knew: how grass grows, how sun stings, how the sky is pink through a tinted lens. she saw it slower, more deliberately. but as she walked on land, straightening her legs, she saw the first thing new: how the stream was sinking.

with sealegs, you might think perceptions change, but trust your eyes: it's only knees that wobble.

she marked water levels with sticks. she made predictions by etching into tree stubs, and conclusions: the same thoughts every day, small circles until they changed:

water is not renewable. there are too many mouths and too little rain. and most of what we have is so useless anyways.

she tried to cure the rain but could not dance the clouds to tare. so she thought of mud pots instead. she collected tin debris and tested puddles. she made her first invention.

when second we returned, she told us the stream had woken a voice. she handed back the cure.

alone again, she thought of other ailments, all she could heal. she sat for days, and there was voice but it was just as before, staggering. your mind is a song is a remix or a hum, if all it has to repeat is wind.

climb down.

in the stream she floated. there was little water and her body was heavy, but what was there was oil. it held her suspended one inch above mud as she slept, a boat, before she crashed.

she crashed into a mountain, small accretions of sand and stone and streaks. she stood up and knelt down, dug her nails across the chiseled surface. with her fist she broke in.

you may doubt your fists some days but bone is steel if trained.

first she found only cambrian excretions and mats of green moss pressed between dead crystals, but she kept breaking. for days she sat, reading through the script imprinted: a radiation, an explosion, a drought, a fire, a million bugs.

she continued to exhume the earth until she found what was buried under: a trilobite, a story of a life, formed and completed before we knew enough to record the details, an extinction of all but outline.

there is no reason in an imprint just the present and then what can speak but cannot change. you can name each fact in endless streams or let the earth discard.

when we returned the third time, she handed us a rock. she said it was important. she told me to look.

before she left, we were fire and capitol. I was a farmer
with corn on my feet. the church was born new.

before she left, our questions were of faith and words and
money and she said something about the earth, how she
thought she might sink.

because there is no space to laugh, no place for useless
reason. I had roots in my thumb her voice shook.

when we last returned, her arms were strung with stone
and dirt. she stood in the stream chanting and humming.
she beckoned with her arms.

the song was not of farms or cities. it was not of thought
or god. her words were only sounds. her face was wide
and

the stones dust, the water drunk, spit out and
silver. she had painted her chest and tangled her hair and
swayed.

BOOK III
[METAL- to RHEO-]

AUTOMETALLOGRAPHY

deleuze & guattari play philosophies and texts as discs, out of sequence, made sense of in fragments. they ask not for comprehension but reappropriation. I do not hope you will dissect me with facts or logic. we have too many facts to process and our days state no means to resolution. ambiguity writes meaning when the art begs attention. assurance is a myth of texts too easily abandoned.

stating identity creates koan: by questioning alone we come as close as we can to being solved.

AUTOHYMNOLOGY VII

when i was thirteen, my nana was the first to name appreciation. she said we cannot regret our pasts if she loved me. we sipped twig tea and watched black and white films to understand katharine hepburn as dead. when i was twelve, my mother could not speak in french because she had misplaced all her nouns. when i was fourteen, my father took me to work with him because once i mastered trigonometry, i knew enough to help construct his graphs. he wanted to inspire me. i did not understand how he once knew differentials. he helped with my homework by reminiscing. i did not want to lose what i learned, made myself promise. what would we alter to find what life gave up?

my hand misses proofs.

AUTOMIMESIS

convolution is a product of two functions that calculates the average intersection over a period of time. convolution is designated by \otimes . it makes more sense when you try to visually understand. the convolution f of g from a to b is the area of overlap as $g(\tau)$ moves over $f(t)$ from a to b . when f and g are both rectangles on an axis, $f\otimes g$ is a curved downward slope.

i miss speaking in codes. i could write this absence into poems, but numbers do not read as well as words.

AUTOHYMNOLOGY VIII

everyone falls in love and everyone leaves love and everyone knows how to wish they stayed with someone while also being grateful they left. i write to you, them, me. what i regret is not a person or lost place, but my brain, dissecting bones and gravity.

i float now hoping. i say i am something. i want to be, and want has no ideology. i write I. i speak written romances, a hyperbole. we never feel what doris day sings, but we still hum her intonations. love is a metaphor, a tangent.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY XI

the first other i disliked i loved for four-years. i once told my mother i was smart in my consistency because it meant i could focus on academics without worrying about love, a rocky boat. i tell her now that i am smart in being alone because i can focus on

language without worrying about a person or place or time. she says i will find my one, my one, my industry, my city, my husband, my baby, my baby, my home, my one. i do not know that i one. still i look.

AUTOKARYOLOGY IV

because policy requires an understanding of both logic and ethics, socrates argued that we should not distinguish between politicians and philosophers. politicians should encounter solitude enough to understand themselves and what they fight for. they must also speak to others, to try to understand. this duality and necessity for personal understanding to affect change is also an argument for love.

only with someone i have kissed do i try to write full descriptions of myself or to fight through contradictions to unify. we never reconcile. perhaps i never want to let go of lovers because failure to love implies an inability to ever listen. and if the world is built on infinite individual points of view, which must be understood and let to exist or reconciled with to make change and i cannot understand a single other, how can i trust myself to a life? i try again to kiss. it is not romantic. it does not work.

AUTOMONOLOGY I

dick higgins named intermedia to categorize works of art that use multiple mediums inseparably. the inseparability matters most to him: if the photograph and the poem mean the same apart or together, why press them together?

two people fall in love and their worlds learn them together. their love dissolves and they are relearned apart. we become. we let go. we adjust.

i like the word intermedia, its sense of dispersion and compression, the way it gives a possibility of existence between planes. i try to convince myself to detach importance from language and affix poems to images. sometimes i cannot.

AUTOMUSICOLOGY I

I learned to argue in poems and stories with my first boyfriend. we traded letters each morning at school. he spoke in fantasy and comic books. i was the heroine or the villain. i was the earth burying acorns from the squirrel. at night we watched television. we were both wrong with no sense of normalcy. we wanted ideals and narrative. we wanted self and a first love easy. we sat waiting.

it is uncared for to let the first pick the sternum apart. you do not grow back bones taken too young.

AUTOMUSICOLOGY II

my lies called me pathetic, sympathetic. i was not. i knew. i wrote him poems:

*if you had a dent i
would crawl inside and dance in it if
you had a scab i would press in it
wriggle my thumb and reopen it
dispelling shrill fire tones steely begging
do not go i wish you knew how to care
for all the thread in your palm you wrap
it around my legs watch me hover
stuck in place.*

there was an ending in which he let go of the string and i flew away, a spinning top, a dispersion graph. i drew a picture. he said he did not understand. he said to be direct. i said it meant i love you.

AUTOMYODOLOGY

symbiosis is an extended co-existence between two creatures. sometimes one animal thrives while the other dies. sometimes neither dies but only one gains. rarely both suffer. when they both die, it is called synnecrosis. there is a name for all the variations of intention, some more beautiful than others. mutualistic symbiosis describes a relationship of equal gain. i learned it first. i learned the moss on the tree. i learned the moss saves water. i learned the tree gives shade.

we speak in fact for deference, a pause when we have spent too long gazing into ourselves.

AUTOMYTHODOLOGY

when adrienne rich defined the lesbian continuum, she was asking us to define lesbian relationships separate from reactions to male cruelty. women have always sought companionship and spiritual compatibility, closeness detached from the relationships that define domestic spheres. we want dialogue that strays from the power dynamics implicit in tradition.

i once believed we coevolved from both chimpanzees and orangutans. while chimpanzees rely on grooming and closeness other than sex, orangutans need only minimal interactions. i said i was orangutan. persistent loneliness taught me otherwise.

if i have found closeness in love, if only in love, if only certain love, if i read adrienne, is there an explanation for this detachment?

AUTOBIOGRAPHY XII

i left the first other i disliked when i decided that mathematics was unimportant as was environmental science and biology and medicine and chimpanzees and literature and computers and buildings and televisions and books and paper and my words and him, as we could consume without stopping, as i could be loved if i wanted to be, as we can make life without worrying, without trying. but i was worried and sitting on the floor staring at the dictionary and all of my clothes. i took a pill to lie in them. it was a structural, institutional concern. or it was identity.

is it acceptable to name with ambiguity?

AUTOORNITHOGRAPHY

to name you is intimacy. it directs the center of a poem away from abstraction or self towards another. in some poems, you is the reader. more often, you is a beloved, a singular person for whom the poem was written. but you know this. i am telling you that when I speaks, you is not you, but both a beloved and a friend, the person cared for most in a moment.

to name he or she redirects attention from abstraction to the embodiment of another person. it is limiting. he/she objectifies the other by giving them defined yet fictional properties. they assert caricatures of love and focus the poem back to I. I has no distance, only eyes, unless it wants to.

when pronouns appear beside I, hes/shes serve to name the others central to each poem while refuting sustained intimacy. pronouns suggest that the importance of these poems is in the change that happens to I. I does not need to speak directly to the other, only about them. when pronouns appear without I, they still signify distance, not from another but from a disembodied variation of self.

AUTOOSCILLOGRAPHY

in *a pale view of hills*, kazuo ishaguro writes of a woman who has two daughters with different childhoods. she describes the first daughter and her suicide to the second daughter through a narrative of deferred responsibility. in her story, etsuko creates both an I and a she. the she has a daughter though the I does not. the I does kind things for the she's daughter. the she enacts kindness too but also cruelty and negligence. the she serves as a confession to actions etsuko cannot claim.

at least that is what i think happened in the story. the fragments never fully fit together.

AUTOOTOLOGY

graphite and diamonds are composed of the same molecule, an allotrope of carbon. for a diamond to form, the carbon must settle under intense heat and pressure creating a stable crystalline complex. graphite coalesces at more standard temperature and pressure. a layered planar structure, it shears when pressed against paper. as children, we are told not to write on our skin with pencil because lead is poisonous. we do not write with pencils because the planes do not attach color to our skin. we are told ink is poisonous too. we are told not to write on our hands with ink. sometimes our mothers keep notes this way. we like our mothers. we copy them. we used to write in black pens with carbon ink that destroyed the nervous system when diffused through blood. for a while, we used iron ink, but its corrosion to paper made the product unsustainable.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY XIII

i learned to cook from a chef during his unemployment. we strained soy milk into tofu two weeks before his father died. i learned to love because: he needs you too. i learned how need undoes us anything. i learned to drink in movies theatres. i learned to repeat what is forgotten. a pretty girl stood behind the microphone when he proposed. i asked him to stand up. i learned to defer to family. i learned you survive without me, but if i stay i am everything. i learned nietzschian survival. i learned not everyone knows that word. i learned to love him beside my friend and mother asking why. i learned who is right. i learned it's okay. it is okay. we say a word we meant to feel but could never learn beneath need.

AUTOPEDOLOGY

i first read jeanette winterson *a summer i was not in love*. she made me want to be. she first made me wish to tell stories: to speak not write them. her repeated phrases *tell me*

a story make each romance appear only a step to a tale. every tale is a narrative towards artist. she grew up in a small town and evangelical faith, with an identity distinct from the ideals that her family valued. it makes sense that she learned a dialect of self-explanation like those of oral traditions.

i once had an older friend who spoke faster than i could follow, one tangent to another: digital sounds, concertos, action films, then always love. it seemed that the fragments of his life each crystallized around a woman. his years alone sounded as schizophrenic offshoots. the way he described his lovers was so well shaped and preciousized. when they left him, the women became others, somehow demons, but in his arms they fell pristine. he made me want love for stories and formation. he made me not want to be loved as i am a woman and precious and small. in such hands i could only ever fall apart.

jeanette's stories crystallize around love and yet the plots never fully form. her chapters begin tightly then dwindle away. her paragraphs are tangential. some never weave together. her images feel strange, romantic, and still accurate. her view of passion is not of one hand holding another's body, not of one body victimized or decomposing, unbecoming, but a lyric. her love is more a poem than a narrative, though, *tell me a story*, she calls it a tale.

AUTOMONOLOGY II

when dick higgins named intermedia he also named its antonym, multimedia. the term multimedia allows for the juxtaposition of mediums in such a way that neither object loses its individuality through alignment. sometimes multimedia allows one piece to overwhelm the other: the images of the film merely illustrate the narrator's language. the subordinate can disappear without leaving absence.

intermedia creates equality by forcing each half to lose some self. what do you give up without categories, divisions? i purged my body.

intermedia works best when the artist imagines the two objects in tandem: lyrics and melody born in one breath: you and I created to be whole together. but i do not believe in god.

multimedia preserves the original but never forms a solid object.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY XIV

i liked a girl from berkley. i kissed her and she told me to slow. she asked how many men i had kissed. her count was zero. mine grew each time we met. we kissed once. beside her i learned how the past crystallizes present. i learned the body hates the

head. i took someone to her concert the week before i left. i just wanted to see her sing
and his hand was on my hip. i left. and it felt

AUTOPRONOGRAPHY

leaving characters without names allows them to be read as one or multiple people. memory converges beloveds into a single image, not through erasure of physical details, but through the role they claim in the lover's relationship to self. for I, the only recurring named character is someone. truly loved beloveds cannot blur with others. by never being fully depicted through narrative, never heard through dialogue, never a center of a poem, someone is continually important yet held at a distance, made ghost by an incapacity to speak of the missing for fear of turning them into a byproduct of self.

AUTOPSEUDOEPIGRAPHY

large animals assert dominance through body languages and small forms of aggression. with the bodies to support minor infractions, they argue with their limbs. song birds have fragile frames. in the air, a peck could result in both individual's death. they evolved language in place of physicality, using patterned forms of song to claim lovers and territory.

AUTOMUSICOLOGY III

I learned to want with someone. he did not need me. we felt like draped fingers letting go the sweater, the first time you kiss smarter together than alone. he was older and i was leaving. he was louder and i slid beneath. he spoke when i could not. i fought in poems. we were slow body and touch. i said when i left that i loved him. he said so too. i believed we did but we barely knew the other, so long motion with no language. i think we wanted away since we began. what is love without need? an expansion outward. when i moved across the country, when i forgot his skin and remembered only infrequencies, i wrote him poems:

*i have stranded myself here call it
western windswept the same picture at
every window we look maybe our
presence pushes others sideways maybe
we're not all good like western forests
damaged without fires a word is a word
is small exchange for feeling tired and
awkward and small beneath you scares a
whisper in the dark cutting through
silent stale whisper it say it when
there's a chance you'll forget when the*

duckling's head fell off she slid her brain
 into her stomach realigned the nerves
 cauterized her wounds with a
 magnifying glass where the treasure is
 hidden: somewhere behind you pinned
 where the corner store is located: at the
 ulcerated stomach board a ferry for the
 buzz saw finger island a history of these
 fingers: a king once ticketed us for our
 intentions which were mostly good
 though he couldn't see them behind
 chain saw lenses I can't give directions
 well when I am standing up the kitchen
 smells like pears a green bug waits to
 mate because that's all animals want so
 I don't scrub the floors though my hair
 keeps falling from the core he sent fire
 through the skull to warm the lives he
 couldn't see but he couldn't see and so
 his lava burned their homes we're all
 recycled crushed cans carved into people
 when the ocean eats it spits us out as
 fish habituated too easily to the water
 front landscape and the rain which drips
 like air now what if the cell pumped
 paper instead of water motion is
 barbiturated too easily so smile a word is
 a word is a word it's not love it's the
 desire to sleep.

AUTOPTERIDOLOGY

marguerite duras rewrote her stories multiple times through different narrative lenses. we relive ourselves in spirals. in *the war*, she speaks of her prisoner husband first in nonfiction, nearly chronologically, then as disrupted lyrics and fiction. in *the lover* and *the north china lover*, she tells of her childhood relationship and family fragmented and spun, recalling facts in each story differently. logic disrupts and turns on itself. she depicts her body childlike then strong. she depicts herself beloved and lover. she does not know what other people see in her if not eyes and hair. in a way, her uncertainty causes a distance that protects her. in a way, it deceives and keeps us from judgment for never fully knowing her. in a way, it offers honesty and strength, attempts at truth with no seizure of fact, like she is trying to look, like saying she knows her life meant something and we need to know, but she does not know where to find the sentences that might pull us close.

*in the books i've written about my
 childhood, i can't remember, suddenly,*

what i left out, what i said...i've never written, though i thought i wrote, never loved, though i thought i loved, never done anything but wait outside the closed door.

AUTOMUSICOLOGY IV

i learned to be friends without love and still sex with my last boyfriend. i learned the domestic house from his son. i learned motherhood as a pattern i had not learned. we give what we have and still stand short. there are words and words and never once does one say you are kind, but incomplete, inadequate. we did not want because we did not love but need and like. domestic is a tide of longing, someone crying, slow repeated processes. i bored inside the house. there is a dim way the ceiling appears to shrink above the sounds of television and motion with no action, routine with no wanting.

words take shape and hold pace but cease meaning more than a request, a sound for the sake of a voice. we need revision not elongation. i wish love unbounded. i wished to be what i could not be. i tried. i tried mothering. i loved him. it hurts when we leave. again and again. i am sorry.

AUTOMUSICOLOGY V

there is a role we each cannot fulfill. i tired on the sundays we spun in the grass. i liked them. i did not love. i tired in the kitchen washing dish after dish. i tired behind the kiss. we enact it. in the family, sex is the moment you stop being grown and few bodies wish themselves grown. passion is no more than an action, a switch turned on then off. i did not leave, but i wrote myself out long before he left.

do you want my hand i can give you my hand who speaks of us do you want my wrist i can give you my wrist do you want my i never felt the fairy's touch what if the penis were long and thin like the long intestine what if engagement required innovation origami bends do you want my wrist i can give you my wrist i do not know how i arrived at a house with a dog to pick up after i asked of them the happiness in the trees hang relatives who never were content here do you want my mother i can give you my mother do you want my kidney i can

*give you my kidney do you want my
lungs i can give you my lungs in the
house a girl is anyone's mother do you
want my foot i can give you my foot do
you want my teeth i can give you just to
feel what passion meant un-let-go-able
dog kitten denning do you want my
nails i can give you my nails i want to
go back to the black box.*

only way the past collapses.

AUTOPYROLOGY

to reform a tree from paper, first all the ink is removed using an alcohol bath. the paper is shredded and watered back into pulp. through reverse hydrolysis, the cellulose fibers recombine with the lignin. the new solution is poured into a mold, along with veins from cadavers coated with putnam to allow them to uptake water instead of blood, then set under sun to dry for six to eighteen days, depending on humidity and latitude. when sticky but not hardened, the roots are buried and the tree is stood up. within a year, leaves bud. after eighteen months, the symbiotic growths are returned to the trunk.

AUTOELEGY

literature provides consolation to readers through letters that tell us someone else once felt this. i do not like books with open endings of unresolved longing, finding equivalency with no resolution. i look to books to tell me what to do, but no one has answered yet, and i have no resolution to transcribe.

i write to steal the reader's role: tell me that you agree with me but found a way out.

if i woke up with her, with I, you. if i see some other step. if i
 take a step, a path, an I, if i write. if you hear, if we speak. if I
 speak, if we listen, if I listen, if I heard, if I am, i am here
 here
 hear

AUTOREFLEXOLOGY

the first time i spoke in tongues, leaning my head beneath the hands of a pastor, i did not believe in church. i mimicked his voice because i wanted to, wanted sanctuary. it took two sundays for the church to reshape me. it took six months for me to stop believing in jesus. i think belief in anything sustains itself this way: not immediate adoption, but a gradual incision that grows us around an ideology. the rationality comes later, the decision.

i believe in poetry to believe in something. i believe in love the same. we feel like floating and make children for reason. we reason the reason not to slip away. the world does not grow on tectonic plates. or it does, but people do not grow without permanence. or we do, but without crux we cannot make sense of spinning.

we disperse.

AUTORHEOLOGY

1. notes on the limits in learning phonics from the alphabet song
2. notes on dissecting individuality from snowflakes
3. notes on the limits of kind music in making a sapling grow well upwards
4. notes on a materialistic attitude towards body
5. notes on the exclusivity principle
6. notes on negligible female choice observed in kanyawara's records
7. notes on the bounded properties of flatness
8. notes towards a symptomology of displaneting
9. notes on extinguished signals and conjunctions
10. notes towards a symptomology of agoraphobia in black paint
11. notes for normal distributions, a weighted average
12. notes on luteal phase progesterone deficiency
13. notes on obscured relations through second-order-logic
14. notes on multiple refractions through a scratched lens
15. notes for an eventual conclusion

NOTES ON THE LIMITS IN LEARNING PHONICS FROM THE ALPHABET SONG

mothers radio:
gradual twirl from
static melody to
punctuated thought
as words take shape

(this is my brain)

fathers stories:
plodding color into
simple progressions

(the fables form)

an in between:
where words spoke
lovely rhythm

(more tune than meaning)

(the lilt of depth)

before distance drew
breath

between
our breaths

NOTES ON THE LIMITS IN DISSECTING INDIVIDUALITY FROM
SNOWFLAKES

can you count them
my letters

all directives
then imperatives

thought must have been a landscape first
shrunk wrapped
flat to words

the sounds I sing
resound
some meanings

yes but I don't mean them

just I

stole your voice
your time
a shape
in house's ears

NOTES ON THE LIMITS OF KIND MUSIC IN MAKING A SAPLING GROW
WELL UPWARDS

& sounds only
a wave
if you crack
the surface

beat the seedling down

& songs only
a sound
if you whisk
the words
meringue up

I sang to her
soft planes

(reverberation)

& waves only
a song
if you accumulate
inscriptions

I turned the sidewalk
into elegies
the ceiling into
stories

in droughts I felt
her telling:

fingerprints hum soundtracks if the needle first deciphers

NOTES ON A MATERIALISTIC ATTITUDE TOWARDS BODY

if mother said a brain were just a brain
if mother said a hand were just a hand
if mother said an eye were just a sight
if mother said a frame were just a frame
if mother said a house were just a house
if mother said the grass was just the grass
if mother said the song sang just a song

if mother said a brain were just a brain
if mother said a word was just a word

mother says child is child no matter the source

if mother said a tear were just a tare
if mother said a day were just a day
if we lost a few to sleep

if mother said a string were just a string
if mother said a color was just a color
if mother said the world was just an earth
if mother said the words were just their words

if mother said a body were just a body
if pretty

if mother said books were just books
if mother said voice was just symbol
if mother said a brain were just a frame
if mother said letters were letters
if mother said numbers were only numbers

the ruler does the math

if mother said a walk were just a walk
if mother said pronouncement were just pronouncement
and grammar only evidence

if mother said evidence were only evidence

if memory were let to fade
if mother fades

if mother and dance were dance
if song

if mother said a voice were just a voice
if mother said letters were only letters
if mother said numbers were tales were only tales were
just tales just the world is just a tale just a tale a just tale

NOTES ON THE EXCLUSIVITY PRINCIPLE

& what of weight:

their voices dead skin
shoved between
finger and nails

dug into lovers' backs

soft ways about the past:

not to tag
the carcass you paint
in the songs
speak our names instead

I asked of them
the happiness
just to feel
what passion meant
(un-let-go-able)

& what of want not need:

but was this either
the quiet giving in

I swam in splinters

NOTES ON NEGLIGIBLE FEMALE CHOICE OBSERVED IN KANYAWARA'S RECORDS

she says

others love
 love for
 the single touch
 a once the only
 once touch of
 magic

love is not to write home
 of

or

I
 we never found
 the fairy's lips or
 never admitted

magic is facts
 & words
 & histories
 graphics our
 depictions
 our
 misrepresentations my

NOTES TOWARDS A THEORY ON THE BOUNDED PROPERTIES OF FLATNESS

it's after the excite returned to land
 it's the ash already convolved
 it's listening to the innate
 after theories of mind
 (a slow erupting world)
 it's the shrinking of infinites to points
 on a string
 it's speaking of love
 when love is an instant
 it's finding a body in a sea
 it's caring of body in sea
 it's consolidating magnitude
 to intentional, language
 it's writing through rational, reason
 it's seeing a day from a bridge
 it's seeing a body from an ecosystem
 it's separating history from now
 it's everything happening
 now it's why we could not soothe
 appease her
 it's the dropped class
 (the nerves begging the mouth inside)
 it's talking to your arm on the train
 it's asking to speak what can't be formed
 changed
 it's theories & theories
 & moneys & moneys
 it's family's or families
 it's baby babble
 it's the fence
 it's the grass
 it's the reason no one stayed

it's discontent
perpetual motion
it's singing songs
our avid distractions
it's the reason no one stayed
transcendence is faith & is fact
it's fate & its pact
it's writing these pages
it's the reason I never stayed
it's the split
it's the rift
the brain lets up
& lets go
& then

NOTES TOWARDS A SYMPTOMOLOGY OF DISPLANETING

hail king
of the under world

belt strung me up

stood still
on the kuiper

tongue out: pray

stolen debris
make me worth
a name

could it be
a new convention
to not reexamine
but to stay
as once we were
as first we were

for memory's sake I am as huge as all
as possible

gravity stung
heat stuck

all of stone
is set in stone
icy sere so wide
surpass me

my very eager mutters

wrapped this net
around me:
I am a dwarf a dwarf a dwarf dwarf dwarf

NOTES ON A SYMPTOMOLOGY OF AGORAPHOBIA IN BLACK PAINT

he is in the deaf house
we are on the mute walls

what if they moved in
did not know his name

what if we move in
do not remember our own

what if the light detests the dark:
paint soft green for baby's sleep

the best part
that he danced alone

the best art
does not to care to see

cares who sees

maybe he did & all was scene
& there were viewing parties for plaster
maybe they were silent

maybe this was all he had:
a room and a hand
and nowhere left
to grow

I left you on a sunday
(because the brick and the hides)

we were becoming so important
(soon we would be skinned)

don't let beauty rest untouched

when we die
scrape the walls
and hang us high
, museo

NOTES FOR NORMAL DISTRIBUTIONS: A WEIGHTED AVERAGE

inside convolution
the will of normalization:

if the past
were the past

if fact were frame
not meaning

if the kiss
was this kiss
now
& first
was not first
but last
or middle

if middle meant
like book ends

if you asked me to house
I would stand you

if you asked for this myth
I would draw you

a frame
in which
to place us

: despite motion
I wanted my feet to still

NOTES ON LUTEAL PHASE PROGESTERONE DEFICIENCY

will have visions of a life
had the body not
defeated

will write letters to cells
who never had
hands

we name any imitation
of the form human

will sing to the grave
of nails
to the grace of
inaccuracy
to unsafe means damage
never eyes

a poet I drive to the ocean
describes the spirit of my daughter
floating star a future
soon to descend

will not sustain sound
will not reject self
for a new

logic negates production
post-instinct
post-keepings

will know what will
will hold him with care
will never feel more
sacrificial

we were not made
but found
remember the
body is not
inadequacy

a still open ending

NOTES ON OBSCURED RELATIONS THROUGH SECOND-ORDER-LOGIC

equations linger in the frame of the paint
a view inescapable

the wood is not wood
strands once seen
now misunderstood

logic shears a memory
pencil scratched on axes

write words on graph paper
make concave with your chest

these my ways of
saying

say
improbable
impractical

naming

name the ending
with intention

believing in parallels
gives locks a second
pick

at night we sleep in numbers past possibles

if the walls were less green
where would we live?

we have not stopped
running
since the first slit
in frog ribs

if the walls
are this
green

until the mechanism's learned
a key in pins is profound

NOTES ON MULTIPLE REFRACTIONS THROUGH A SCRATCHED LENS

on the porch at sun rise
by the lake at sun rise
feet in the grass of sun light:
with you felt warmer
than alone
alone feels as
the possibility of leaving
I always had it still do
lives later

in the house at sun set
by the dawn of family
hands clasping down:
feathers looked softer
through
a stranger's window
I always liked the look
the warmth
of inside even then
even now

so stay tonight

NOTES FOR AN EVENTUAL CONCLUSION

compile data
 mold to skin
 follow through
 spin until
 the answers solve

we made this world so lovely for all who stood & waited
 for her by the bath & sang for her on the stream &
 bridge & buried books & thought & all
 & once & held & now
 unstirred

to follow through is to love
 to mold to skin is to care
 to see reason to obsess is to spin
 is to pick is a point to
 a key is to solve

this morning we awoke adrift
 & when asked to what
 were tongued incomplete
 so logic rolls in difference

to follow you is to
 to mold to me is to see
 skin enough to reason
 worth obsession to spin
 is to love is to point
 to a tongue
 in the mirror we
 point to our own

first draft of the world was built only to drown & we
buried & so stood to wait to reason
did she wake us frozen
just to thaw until our skin melted
ruddy in rust

we want to see
enough
on the tongue
to warrant
the world
exhumed

compile data
mold to skin
spin until
the answer's
solved

& if you
with possibility
with perfect past
with free
open lisp
could not find
in the spins
reason worth
revolving:

BOOK IV [REPRO- to TERAT-]

AUTOREPROGRAPHY

conventions of language and grammar aid comprehension, depict academic knowledge, or trigger expectations of form and content. habituation is a learning process in which animals tune out routine signals. when a noise, scent or behavior always precedes the same event, we stop responding. sensitization is an act of recovery from habituation in which the signal does not result in an expected event. if a page does not follow convention, it reads as a new object. we no longer ignore margins, titles, spacing, notes, details. we use tricks of form for recognition:

I want to be read as a person, more than symbol, more than noise.

AUTOSCENOGRAPHY I

the july love leaves, i hide away, beside a window looking towards lake sunlight, reading dorothy allison. imagine history: somewhere where she lives, extended family and all its legacies burn a core of individuality.

the july life opens, i feel isolated, purposeless. i want to exist like legacy, like dorothy, but not as fiction, as myself. i want to write like her. i try to write like her.

i digress.

AUTOSCINTOGRAPHY I

children learn language through sound as well as sight. they watch adults' mouths and mimic forms. multiple senses collide to make whole. when a person who knows language loses the capacity to hear, they overcome barriers by leaning close to speakers and pairing the trace of voice with the shapes of lips. most adults do not know how to lip read though as children we must have had the skill. some people refuse to watch movies dubbed incorrectly because the imprecision makes them motion sick.

AUTOSEDEMENTOLOGY

we rewrite fairy tales to rewrite convention. from the time we are children, families present us with godmothers and magic beside dreams of riches and marriage. we blame them for our faulty expectations. we blame history for its inaccuracy. yet we still keep their structures. they wanted something we quickly learn we cannot accommodate. writing into the traditional names of stories and their patterns allows us an easy opening for reformed ideology.

AUTOSCINTOGRAPHY II

i work with a girl who knows few words. i speak exaggeratedly to help her like language. she prefers reading books with bright pictures and stories she long ago memorized. her mother reads a new study that says autistic brains may not register voice and vision equally. she may hear our words before she sees the movement of our lips, a reverb, a misalignment. she prefers language loud and piercing. she prefers my face when my eyes are wide. we measure attention span in half to six minutes. when she hides, does she reprocess the signals dispersed from outside? or are we ignored, less important, than some place imagined separate from us.

AUTOSEISMOGRAPHY I

while breaking the magic spell and renaming tales as mythology, jack zipes lists the names of the women who wrote the french fairies alongside charles perrault.

before fairy tales, humans passed folk tales directly from lips to ears. the oral tradition altered with the morals of the speaker, refigured as they grew. written fairy tales adopted oral narratives to the whims of the elite, those with paper and pens. these tales were only shared with the literate. men wrote them, but women, the bourgeois women, wrote them too. they were as guilty as the men. jack explains this is important.

we play kingdom with his son. i play the king. he plays the queen. his son plays the dragon. we all transfigure speech. none of us want our given roles.

the men and the bourgeois women wrote only the dreams they could best imagine for themselves. we only see the possibilities we are given. someone else sets the scenes. jack says orality was malleable, in the mouths of the peasants, the wanting, the rebellious. i imagine the dreams peasant parents told their children sounded oppressive too. i imagine the children told them differently. i imagine they knew what they were doing, altering and mystifying established words.

AUTOSEISMOLOGY

chimpanzees live in groups of fifteen to thirty individuals who all range, groom, sleep and mate together. when females reach adolescence, they wander to other tribes, leaving their families to seek new males with whom to reproduce. this is called male philopatry and it is believed to have evolved in order to prevent inbreeding in small closed societies.

i once read a story of a young female who left at the proper age from a group being observed. no one knows what happened to her in her new tribe. she returned several months later bearing scars, reunited with her mother and never left again. though females typically aggress intruders to maintain the social system, they let this particular one back in. rather than having children, she lived out her years with her mother, helping care for her relatives. she spent one summer eating other tribe members' babies. it is the only recorded case of cannibalism in chimpanzees.

AUTOSCENOGRAPHY II

the october i first write, my teacher says he cannot help me find structure. he says i have lyric and evaporation, dense language, more poetry than narrative. we read *the anchor book of new american short stories*. i read aimee bender because of her name though he does not assign her. i find myself in her plot, a reality slipped into a knot.

nothing really changes though it does. there are symbols, miscomprehensions, aloneness with a tint but no real love.

the october language opens, i write myself without meaning to. i am unaware of my scripts, the way they were given. i learn them, recite them, then twist. i do not have the name fairy tale to place on my lyrics. i do not arch them the way i should. i do not have a critical view to describe what aimee does. i just like her. i like that a girl hides a friend in an attic. i like that she reads the paper. i try to read the paper. i set my skirt on fire so she can write about me.

before she knew it was the candle did she think she had done it to herself? with the turns of her hips and the warmth of the music inside, did she think, even for one glorious moment, that her passion had arrived?

AUTOSELENOLOGY I

i ask someone to explain computers to me. he reads a list of numbers, signals a circuit, some lights. he says technology makes sense until it does not and then there is magic. from the monkeys' brains we drew charts of axons, structured the signals to name disorders, but we only discovered codes. we wanted the magic, a structure we cannot ever see long enough to reproduce.

AUTOSEISMOGRAPHY II

cristina bacchilege describes the postmodern fairy tale narrative as an attempt to break from the cohesive structures which allowed traditional stories to adhere so easily to us. conventions such as third person, of *once upon a time*, of using magic without drawing attention to its unreality, of repeating phrases and incantations, create an illusion. we believe in these fantasies because we see no cracks. the perfected arcs lull us into someone else's wants. by speaking in first person, contemporary fairy tales make evident the role of individuality in desires. their nonlinearity and self-aware strangeness makes giving into the dreams a choice.

AUTOSELENOLOGY II

i watched a girl on the chalkboard perpetually stuck on simple statistics because she did not think she should study genetics if she did not understand neutrinos. she did not think we should study the body if we did not understand genetics. she did not think we should study the world if we did not understand the body. she could not

understand the smallest, and i could not explain. we made lists of all the reasons we could spend our lives together. we both left because we saw no need to stay.

AUTOSEISMOGRAPHY III

cristina describes the traditional fairy tale's structural difficulties as a necessity of their time periods. the narratives sought to resolve their own contradictions. their authors grew up in a time when people needed to believe in endings, but we can break them now. in the postmodern world of inconsistencies, we fragment and recreate classic tales to impart new political ideologies and changing social tides. yet if we write novel thought into old forms, do we promote individuality and deference? or are we simply creating new conventions for future generations to fall asleep under.

AUTOSCENOGRAPHY III

the january i do not speak, i read all well plotted novels. i read them for lessons. i read them to learn. i stop when i analyze sense to miscomprehension. i rename tales with no holes fallible, too directive.

i like darting eyes and lips, noncomputable distractions.

AUTOSEMASIOGRAPHY

my fairy tales are not fairy tales. my myths are not myths. i write poems instead of narrative. the peasants likely also spoke in verse, and the french men, and italo calvino, and the bourgeois ladies. anne sexton wrote the fairy tales as poems. half our parlor games have always been fragmented nonsense. if my fragments look opaque, i hope they read: i have no script to follow: do not follow me. expression through poetic dispersion is an act of unresolved confession.

i is not a lesson, but a net to climb. I is not a fairy tale. I is not a myth, or she is. she writes without creation, but she is still a creation, a fabrication, a tradition, a tale. the traditions we write and the forms we imitate are no more important than what we naturally say or accidentally invent. tradition imports a naming scheme, a hierarchy.

names deceive as much as they describe.

AUTOSERIGRAPHY

octave uzanne's writing predated handheld electronics by imagining portable cylinders that we could carry around like boom boxes. in his dream, we did not use our magic to listen to melodies but to pass around audiobooks, so we could always be reading. he imagined literature as accessible apart from literacy, and restaurants filled not with banter but the voices of james and dickens. all those books would drown out living. no evolution but the past.

AUTOSCENOGRAPHY IV

the january i do not speak, i read poems beneath the window watching snow and a stranger smoking on her front porch. i pretend a friend in her. i pretend a friend in them. the january i do not leave, i write poems on my wall. inside becomes outside and all the world looks small. i want life. i want plot, tale. but also i do not. i try to write image. i try to name what the body feels, not aloneness, loneliness, but yes

i digress.

AUTOSEROLOGY

my favorite art is a video by brent green showing his aunt dying of diabetes in the attic of his childhood home. he wants things and sings for them in poetry set to *hallelujah* and a repeating strumming guitar. he has no form i have watched before.

when he was a child he read lots of beginner science books. he learned buoyancy. he learned matter cannot be created or destroyed. he learned energy is rolling or waiting to be rolled, degrees in a triangle, in a book, the bulge at the world's belly, fulcrums supporting the weight. i learn the way birds and clay and his voice allow me to evaporate, pull science off the cross and pass it in my hands until the room glows and tradition breaks.

i watch for some liquid through my stem into my leaves. i watch him for a sound when no one speaks.

AUTOMONOLOGY III

combining two unrelated but seemingly direct art objects produces ambiguity. the awkward pairing suggests alternate readings to what at first seemed clear. combining text with abstract imagery can make abstract writing accessible by asking us to draw lines between separate objects. while drawing lines, we see into new details and interact with something we originally saw as opaque.

AUTOSHADOWGRAPHY I

surrealist imagery elicits a feeling of being trapped in another's head and having to either sit still or crawl out. surrealist speech sounds the most honest to me. to say directly we loved someone gone away is to lie. direct language relies on historical input and cultural meaning. it strays from the self, seeking conformity to expectations. if we speak certainly, i want to know we know we lie. proofs need contradiction, vibrato.

AUTOSHADOWGRAPHY II

to say you felt diffuse and blown on, that the ground grabbed your feet to unscrew your knees, or that all the flies ate your muscles and you lay limp, is to tell the truth. such descriptions promise no action, no normalized response, so any adaptation is both specific and individual. the specificity makes it universal.

though i never would have described snails sucking on my nerves, when aase berg writes this, i know that i have felt them before. i take the path she outlines in images. i wind and wind up where she stands, which is nowhere or some place.

AUTOSTENOGRAPHY

multiple reflections on semi-transparent surfaces interfere and reflect rainbows of color. we call the scattered bands iridescence. we see iridescence on gasoline and soap bubbles, butterfly wings and beetle skin. we cannot always see them, but all rainbows are iridescent. beneath the bismuth crystal there is an iridescent layer of oxide. some marine invertebrates have iridescent muscles. gratings on their skin striate as if they were petals.

AUTOSTEREOGRAPHY

stephen burt named susan wheeler's poems elliptical. i heard the term before i read his article and adapted his construction to my own visual: we describe the orbiting planets that inscribe the sun so no one has to measure the star's absolute proportions. i prefer to understand stephen's word not by his definition but by the one i wrote: to speak in circles with gaps and pauses that elicit a central idea which can be pointed to but never named.

I leave pauses. I inscribe where i cannot stand.

AUTOSHADOWGRAPHY III

in collected works and nonthematic books of poetry, without narrative or verbal repetition to focus on, i tie texts together through an individual, the speaker. even when I is absent, i put her in. i like opaque poems best, when the person behind never appears completely.

michael dickman's *flies* leads through the turmoil of losing his older brother, of love and motherhood, of siblings and poverty and fathers, and i do not know everything else. i read it again and again. i think i have lived inside him. he is gory and strange, fragmented and soft. i settle in his scalp, feel the wake of the world on a young boy's hair. i hide inside his shoes, strain under the weight of his body pressing.

i never hear his detached view of the world in words directly from lips. i heard his brother once. off page his taste made no sense. the abstraction of poetry is easier to attach to than the clarity of real people's wants, memories and speech.

AUTOSYMBOLY

we have nothing to hide but they suggest what might be underneath. he asked why i cried every time he kissed me. he asked if i was leaving. my friend used to cry without explanation. she would be speaking in the hallway and then just fall. years later i learned she was raped her summer abroad. it might be an explanation, but the timeline does not align. i remember place but never time. in *the secret life of bees*, may cries every time she reads the newspaper. we inherit sadness tangential to our lives. but maybe hers had reason. i do not remember. she drowned in the lake after reading of the riots, a child dead. in a movie, the mother tells the girl she was raped by her grandfather, but she bleeds the first time she has sex. i try to remember if i bled. i do not remember the night. i remember the boy. i make up a chronology, an explanation, some hole to unbury and bury these limbs in.

ambiguous language crafts a wall to grow a vine upon, writes intention without definition, feeling without sound reason.

AUTOTELEOLOGY

contemporary mathematics teaches its language through minimal abstraction, only quantifying the variables that differ across individuals. the antiquated language of second order logic quantifies over relations and functions and ranges of sets as well. once taught to all mathematicians, the language is now rarely studied. to truly understand it, students would have to learn the forms in elementary school. that seems unnecessary if programs can translate when its nuances are needed for progress.

the mathematician who cannot make sense except in second order writes unreadable proofs. he lies on the floor and imagines the walls under new domains. he tries to convert his sense into others' sense but cannot reconcile the professor's language. he detaches. he leaves. and no one knows what he wrote in abstraction, so who knows what we lost and gained in his absence.

AUTOTELEPATHY

we have hidden something here. i have nothing to hide. my high school english teacher wrote sad poetry. i scoured her books for reason. a speaker who visited the school remembered her but not her name. he remembered a ghost of her skinny in a black hooded sweatshirt. he recited her sad poem to the audience not knowing she was in the auditorium. he wanted to express his empathy, if only late, if only to others. she left school so we did not watch her acting like who she once was. we speak circles around what we cannot explain. my mother retrieves her past slowly, a rupture for each memory long forgotten. we inscribe the memories never received, inherited but not hidden. i tried to tell him how we say yes when we mean no, of the destruction we enact on ourselves. i tried to tell him there are some things lost that were never taken. there was a script I wrote that no one read to me. we reframe, refract, rewrite, reenact. I am not hiding beneath the images. a plot deciphers what a poem does not. a poem depicts what a plot cannot. the images are the manifestation, more honest than explanation. a fairy tale is just a myth is just a tale we tell hoping someone will repeat. any tale is a life we hope someone will repeat once they see.

AUTOSCENOGRAPHY V

the april skies break, the clouds condense too closely and the pressure changes water from vapor into rain. the april rain falls the roots of the tree absorbs the streams into their veins. half of water has partial positive charge. half of water has partial negative charge. the molecules adhere this way, creating hydrophobic and hydrophilic shields. the hydrophobic edge crawls along the inside of the bark, diffusing up to feed the leaves.

AUTOSHADOWGRAPHY IV

we tie together thematic and deceptively plot driven books of poetry because of suggested narratives. i love the unclear ones. the writers try to tell me something, but i have no idea what so i read again and again.

i become them.

once jessica bozek told me of a war on an imaginary planet, but then she told me how our country isolates. once joshua marie wilkinson told me the woman he loved died by falling through a window above the apartment francis bacon fucked his burglar in. she died because she heard of their love. joshua saw her blood. once genevieve kaplan told me a figure raped her so she did not leave the house. another time she did not want to be a mother or a wife or a house. i have read these books eighteen times, but i do not think any of the poets meant to tell me any of these stories. still, i know the rhythms of their voices. i know their images. i do not understand but i know them.

i do not want you to understand. i want you to know.

AUTOTERATOLOGY

1. proof of the quantum mind theory
2. fairies tell of the critical period of filial imprinting
3. a lesson on the cold war that made the sky
4. the myth of object permanence
5. a lesson on brittle deformation in the shallow crust
6. fairies tell the modes of variability
7. a lesson on nanoskeletons refitted with bullets
8. the myth of ionizing words and ulcerated spleens
9. a lesson on celestial navigation through stellar wind
10. the hypothesis of easy confinement in semiconductor ladders

PROOF OF THE QUANTUM MIND THEORY

1. to convolve := to breathe ash through another's lips
2. convolution allows alteration of association if you can stand so close to let in
3. thought breathes ash as { paper, figure, sound, fact }
4. our breaths first formed a cloud

∴ to be convolved is to let your lips open to the mass

5. once mixed ash cannot separate
6. to be invariant := to manipulate the same infinitely
7. the paper could not integrate but time took it in
8. to convolve does not create new but connection

∴ once convolved, lungs forever change

9. to convolve := to integrate the outer in your chest
10. all ash from bodies is hues
11. all ash from facts is shades
12. her lungs were a map of tones
13. when she exhaled the sky turned gray

∴ we are the vessels of mottled ash

14. to overlap := to understand
15. to convolve := to overlap + to integrate + to skid time
16. to convolve := to define
17. there is an inverse element of nonsense

∴ if I breathe on you holding her
I breathe on you I breathe on her

18. to be linear := to output a scaled authenticity

19. linearity approximates electricity
20. I wanted not to be this way but kept speaking the same sentence
21. echoes breathe reverberation

∴ my chest is ash of many lies

22. frequently the place transformed the pauses
23. frequently her lips were tied
24. nonlinearity necessitates complex analysis

∴ time directs our narratives straight

25. to convolve := to add blur to pristine
26. open your lips to the mass

∴ there breathe
 breathe ash
 back into fact

FAIRIES TELL OF THE CRITICAL PERIOD OF FILIAL IMPRINTING

before we were us we lived in a mossy house by a web of
gray water.

you lived on the peach pink porch, and I behind a
salamander blue door. you ate grids and I ate ghosts. in
our house were both. outside grew cattails and a
swimming sun, ripples pink on the grey facade.

for many lives there was only us, but once, when we were
white hair and leather skin, she arrived: feathers perched
on top a fence, splinters splitting rubber feet.

did you like it when she came inside, littered eggs across
the carpet?

before we were us we lived in a green house filled with
gray eggs.

I let you off the porch to count her eggs. we cracked the
shells to feed the fetuses, lavender leaves and duckweed.

at night, I slept outside to escape the sound of wings.
wooden steps indented to cradle my body in lattice lace.

you awoke before me to warm and feed the injured shells.
you were there the morning they hatched. you named
them. I slept.

amniotic rushed the porch to fill my lips to wake me up.
the first sight is the first love: you were mother and I, the
fabled step.

did I mention I was not a girl, not a man, but a trout?
in the house a fish is anyone's friend.

before we were us, we lived in a tadpole who grew up in a gray sac.

when first given eggs, few imagine the squawk. I pictured soft feathers, small eyes, sweet touch, the grown up, the barely born, but the sound in transition is unending.

I took my lace underneath the porch and tatted while you led them to the lake.

every morning I entered the house and tried to feed. every morning you stayed when I could not. you kissed me once before dark, said the silence settles, said: one day, dear, you make it to the river. always so full with potential.

did I mention I was not a trout, not a girl, but a sapling, cut and brought to furniture unsteady?

before we were us, we lived in a tree house overlooking
the storm.

the year they turned into goslings, I returned inside to
sleep in bed. you stayed on the floor beside them.

the oldest woke me with a tap on my knee and worms in
his beak. to mate, they feed their lovers. I closed my lips,
the baby tried my nose. I closed my nose, the baby tried
my ear. I took the food.

so I was loved.

did I mention I was not a goose, not a trout, but a girl.
in the house, a girl is anyone's mother.

before we were us, we lived in a mossy house by a noose
of gray lake.

you did not kiss their beaks. there was no need to speak
love to geese, but it was in their eyes. they looked to you
as you walked them to the river, just before their last
squawk to say good-bye, just as their rubber toes touched
water and they remembered air. it was in your eyes as
you waved with your limbs.

I tied mine to the floor so I could not to leave when you
walked home to state our new possibilities.

did I mention I was not a sapling, not a mother, but a
goose who always wished to wade to sea?

A LESSON ON THE COLD WAR THAT MADE THE SKY

why name the stars if the language never sticks? why
dissect the moon unless to go there, unless to lie on backs
and imagine cascading no breathable aether?

I could without.

maybe the sky was a black sheet and maybe I jumped
high enough to slip through the slits into the world.

why raid the ocean if not to fill encyclopedias?
dank luminescence.

we know more of the moon than the ocean. we need to.
we know more of the moon than the mind. we know
more of the moon than reaction. we spent more on the
moon than the child. we need.

she says we seek sky to know god, where we came from.

we know more of the moon than grace. we know more of
the moon than sleeping beside the canal. we know more
of the moon than pavement than penance.

she says when we know god we will be calm. could we be
without?

she says she found the ocean.

maybe the ocean was a break in the sand and maybe she
tunneled to wake under fish. maybe she slipped. and
maybe there was no name, no word, no meaning: a sleep
to bob, a ceaseless deep.

THE MYTH OF OBJECT PERMANENCE

split level-houses on five acre lands east of portland are nice. I do not know how to live in them. I never cooked a turkey. when I cook I invite alarms and firemen. the firemen are kind. I think they go home to clean women reading books under blankets. I think they share accounts, write wills, shop together in spring. I think they visit one another's families. I know how to fly to visit family. at night, the airplane lights dim and everyone sleeps but you can turn on the overhead to illuminate a book, spend all night reading to arrive in an old city thinking of mermaids and superimpose romantic visions over taxi drivers.¹

someone once told me he owns only two suitcases of objects. I do not know how to weed myself of mine. I know how to carry clothes in paper bags to new white rooms.¹⁸closets are pretty. the clothes hang neatly. you iron dresses and hang them straight. the dress stays unwrinkled until you take it down to wear at dinner with a person where you light a candle and drink red wine without getting drunk.⁰

¹in the first month's eyes we are short attention spans, blurred vision, a preference for face.

¹⁸in the eighteenth month's eyes we are solving new problems, limited to perceptual lines.

⁰in the newborn's eyes we dissolve out of sight.

the silver car parked at the edge of the driveway is quiet. I sit there when the child cries. I do not know how I arrived at a house with a yard, a dog to pick up after, a shed to keep tools in, a family playing games. I do not know how to. I know how to drive. at midnight the lights are dim, but highway 2 has antique shops and old motels. I brought someone here the first night I met washington, so sick of the car and his presence. I threw up as he walked down the dirt road for air thick with smog.⁸ the highway is far from everyone. I follow erased steps with my new feet. I like the turns where no one can see. I know how to drive off. I know how to climb in the dark and yell. I yell. I am sole adventurer of the rocks of the scenic overpass.⁴

geologists are nice. they name with more than color. I do not know the names of colors. I know the feel of things. I feel the rocks I step over. I feel the door as I open the car. I do not know how to stay awake to drive home. the backseat is soft in felt. at the grandparent's house there is a picture of the family over the fireplace. the mother has on a black shirt and short hair. I am wearing a black shirt and short hair as I sleep on the felt. she holds the child. I build a blanket of the unwashed clothes I will change into before work.¹²

⁸in the eight month's eyes we are repetitive motion, imitating gestures for small objects who exist unhidden.

⁴in the fourth month's eyes we are the first intentionality, familiarity.

¹²in the first year's eyes we are directed goals, emerging permanence, responsive to partial concealment.

coffeehouses with elderly customers and glass mugs are nice. I know how to speak in them. coffeehouses hide phrases, tales never repeated because no one hears enough to remember. I order a london fog from a short haired barista in a black shirt when she asks what I would like. getting going, I say, or a gray morning.²⁴

so yes, the winter is wet here. it is okay because warm coffee and a car and a house that houses when I part.

²⁴in the second year's eyes we are mental maps, circuits of the past, reason more than perception.

A LESSON ON BRITTLE DEFORMATION IN THE SHALLOW CRUST

I learned enough to be a book.
 we learned enough to be bays.
 we was higher precision.
 linearity is the turns, clean
 locks. organic is imagination,
 inner eye rotates to see.

I learned enough to tune out and
 fold in. we learned enough to
 weight and heat and break. we
 were happiest on the cliff's edge.
 we were content soundless. smart
 is inversion, a cancelling out.

we were programmed for
 outside. we were dropped
 and left to work,
 forgotten, high, too
 forgotten, too high, we
 hide, so unsought, we
 tucked into black springs.

we were desert wind,
 some winter
 heaven, clear
 night, ember
 chatter.

I slept on a tarp to name the
 sky. we slept in the boards
 beneath my feet. did they pay
 us just to see? I spent the
 summer without windows
 shattering and scraping
 shattering and sifting
 shattering, shattering and
 shifting to microscopes
 to crystallize
 under tweezers.

we spent each morning purifying,
 hid in labs to be alone. windowless
 is soundless, and logic is the
 clearest purpose.

FAIRIES TELL THE MODES OF VARIABILITY

when we were clouds, you hung gray and I streaked.
shared shapes, we structured rains.

madden-julian oscillation before we
were clouds, he was a seahorse with a lover who was not
me. I call you he because you carried the babies. everyone
knows the male carries babies, but he also built the reef.
he worked the tides to find the grass they lived beneath.
he led the school and slept with both eyes open so she
could curl. seahorses keep such rolls.

when we were clouds, he still up-kept the sea.

some water the sky steals when it wants to remain ocean.
some water swims to the top of skin, waiting, waiting:
please heat, pick me.

north atlantic oscillation before we
were clouds, she was a baboon. I call me she because of
the swelling. baboons are known for biting and she was
high ranking, a juvenile, practicing. primate tribes enforce
polygamy. when she wandered no one wondered, no one
followed. the girl's role is to go.

pacific decadal oscillation before we
were clouds, you were a bird regurgitating old worms
into young beaks.

sometimes I said: *dear, these streaks are better than gray. roll
out, disperse.* but you condensed me. I agree the pressure is
alleviating. sorry that I once dictated stance.

el niño southern oscillation before we were clouds, she was a starfish who wanted to match the puffers. fish schools valued pointy limbs, but to be with the ovals, she curled her arms flat. no one likes a showoff. no one wants a pointy she.

northern pacific index before we were clouds, he was a turtle. I call me he because I never returned to the beach. he cracked the shell and followed light to find the ocean. he thought the light belonged to the sun, but his sun was a boardwalk.

in the sky no one knows whose atoms belong to who.
some are imprinted and radioactive but this is hidden.
mostly you blow out, and I suck in, and we never stop to
name.

artic oscillation before we were
clouds, we were great whales, sifting seaweed through
ribs. I call us we because our heads were only tool sheds,
vapor now. I wanted our limbs to take to sky. you said:
but earth

but earth
but earth.

interdecadel pacific oscillation before we
were clouds, I wounded swam. bubbles did not speak. I
thought to be meant to be she meant to let he stand above.
it was not spoken. the sense clouded air when I rose but

,

to

evaporate

& then we were

the drifted sky.

A LESSON ON NANOSKELETONS REFITTED WITH BULLETS

we stayed up late for medical specials, traced arms to taste what they were made of. I felt like bone. you felt like skin. we could learn to build, in case you lost it. you were made of wire and chemicals and so poor at taking care. you learnt the code and I the intention of things. we made diagrams in crayon: how to recover one day. we would have been good at it one day. we would have transformed the dead and the injured.

i heard you make meat from better cared for cows.
i am a recovered recluse, some letters of complaint.

the first step in physics is to learn vectors: draw a point from my toes to yours, to the future dispersing. to connect metal to a body one must understand the brain and action, potential. to understand the brain one must draw the chemicals. to draw the chemicals, one must know the electrons and circuits. to know the electrons, the paths and weight and waves, one must make sense of vectors. when I draw vectors I see feet pointing away, which is an imposition, an inability to focus.

so no, I never built a thing. but if you ask me, i lie:
i contributed.

THE MYTH OF IONIZING WORDS AND ULCERATED SPLEENS

to move so much a girl should be unwanted. I was my
 mother's, my father's. to move so much a girl should be
 unloved. I was a friend to anyone. tell me when we kiss: I
 never felt so close so fast, unending and wound. I was
 place. I said they heard so much because of silence. the
 town does not speak but listens. I was sound back. I was a
 voice then and distorted. I was distance, secluded in the
 house with words and music, rifts

once.¹

remember we loved so fast, so easy
 & I uprooted.²

¹they teach us with beads and strings before diagrams. the gene
 is four colors entwined. the cell is many organs and a brain
 made of letters. we made jewelry circles. they teach this way so
 we can picture it. scientists retain these images they unravel to
 make sense of.

²more than beads, dna is teeth clenched in a helix, four letters
 entwined. proteins are made by a cart that copies the letters into
 similar letters with extra molecules that flow through a machine
 that pieces together amino acids. amino acids are also letters,
 but more of them and different. the proteins are tangled chains
 of amino acids that direct replication and nervous systems and
 bodily growth and our brains by fitting into the correct crevices.

I was the facts that made no sense, distracted broken
tense. someone was the map to drive away. I taught him
how to work the engine then faltered. please

the other always holds the criminal stance.

I forgot each place will wind around.³

so we were, every flight, more malleable. we step in and
you stepped out. the essay spoke of tiring: we did so
without yelling, a slip to dissolve.

so I held another. we leave. I adapt. I kissed quick. you
kissed many. you kissed too many. I kissed too quick. I do
not know what it meant. we pretended nothing. still I

I was touch and no closeness
& a memory that is letting go.⁴

if someone wants distance, everything distances.
we keep growing
older and calloused.

³they teach us replication first with chalkboard drawings, then
on powerpoints in huge classrooms with excerpts at the end to
note variations in the real world. cells replicate by mitosis.
mitosis unravels the helix first. it copies the letters and makes
two of everything. mitosis synchs the cells second. all the fatty
membranes cleave to split. ideally when split, the two new cells
look the same as the first. sometimes they do not. sometimes
one letter of the helix alters. sometimes this change is silent
since dna becomes rna becomes amino acids in words with
three letters and there are more words than letters.

⁴change is more likely in cells replicating more often, like
intestines, like skin, like lungs. sometimes the amino acid is not
silent so the protein tangles differently. and sometimes the new
shape does not fit in the right place. sometimes uptakes slow.
sometimes the cell dies. sometimes replication is told to start
and never stops. when replicated now, the two new cells look
the same as the first, but the first was bad. the growth spreads
through the blood.

to move so much a girl should be calloused. I was soft
skin and mash. someone called to say something new. we
made plans. we resolved, never followed through.

I was soundboard. you played sound back.
someone was reading off projections.
my prediction was someone saying, please don't

never did. we never do. step back. we do not replicate the
same way each time. I promised I but we⁵

we will all wake up with threads across the map
knowing

& there is nowhere to live without leaving. there is no
place settled easily. the earth is no stability. there is
nowhere to live without

the memory's unwinding.⁶

I was afraid you might die while I was gone.⁷

⁵they teach us cancer by the effect, black lungs, big bulges and
torn out throats, grandmothers with no breasts, hairless
women, your mother's father you never met. they say it comes
from cigarettes and pepper and plastic, aspartame and bad
genetics. sometimes we inherit improper replication. sometimes
we send in chemicals that switch our letters. sometimes we
inhale them.

⁶someone who smokes must not care about death, or they must
not picture the mutations. I can picture the mutations. it was
important to learn the mutations not because we listened but
because we knew.

⁷every breath is a pinprick waiting on breakage.

I was women I liked who were discontent, handmade lists
of better possibilities, reforming. I was resolution now not
to leave.

I was I left.

you change but you are always the same beneath.

I called to say niceness too late. we cannot undo exhaust.⁸

reed: a thousand words on the impracticality of motion.
spin to dust on tiptoes.

I am, I was, I want consistency.
we loved so fast, so always.

I was afraid and leaving.
I am, I was, certain and still going.
I am images to impact.
I was to write of mountains. I was to sing of plains.
I heard mostly the click of mutation.
I am so posed to listen. you are, we were, soundboard.
you want to stay in bed beside any one.
I want to stay awake beside no one.
we will all resolve to be
the good ones.⁹

⁸to defeat the growths we use radiation and chemicals that kill the
bad cells but also the safe ones, those properly repeated. we are
not yet good at specificity, so slowly we deplete.

⁹somewhere someone holds the image of beads and chalkboard
sketches and the real world in her head. maybe she is making
better sense of them.

A LESSON ON CELESTIAL NAVIGATION THROUGH STELLAR WIND

I often felt myself slipping through my feet. I often was
wind funneled through the cracked floor. we light candles
in the forest: red blue read: the ocean, new beginning,
blood of the moon. it slips in the circle opened, not
restrung but reclaimed, quiet folly. that is, nameless. I
often believed without words. I often lived in my head,
not uniqueness, but it was. we dreamt and dreamt. we
webbed and went and dreamt and dreamt. make the
plates in the earth the quake is the shift. listless you, there
are lists for what you are meant to know: say goddess in
the dark. there are dogs and metal melted beyond the
fence. I often named without naming. I often was without
wanting. we fill the bowl with the earth. we give up and
lay down often. feel the cold in the mud. we take away
the black sheet. the candle is the sun. see. I often spoke.
you often see. see. you are the ocean. I am the blood. the
moon. new beginning takes.
& mote it be.

THE HYPOTHESIS FOR EASY CONFINEMENT IN SEMI-CONDUCTOR LADDERS

we first learn the atom as concentric spheres and rings.
like the planets atoms are perfectly round until they are
not. you are dense and surrounded by electric dust. you
are phosphorous, common and radioactive, having lost
small parts to the gravity of surroundings. it will require
wading to find your center. self so often loses self
between nets of carbon, silicon, oxygen, silicon, oxygen,
silicon.

she will meet you at an opening. you will be the gallery
beneath the building she composes, designs, researches,
paints, binds inside. you still have so much room to find.
you may not know you paint yet. she may not know she
sings. collaboration is a book of lovers. it reads: femininity
& stride & fight. I learn a machine from its makers. I, the
mimic, mime. she will share the clouds and language. you
will retain that black sphere strangled deep. she will look.
she will not much.

second we learn the complexity of shapes dictating the atom's design. a plane is not a place but an equation of probabilities. I picture a commune. we all live on one plot of land but keep separate homes. I imagine in some atoms there are more than two negatives to a plane though we have yet to observe this. I imagine there is no point to searching for it. two is mathematically efficient. two fit exact with separate spins. I was hydrogen with only one plane when born, so quickly bound, but each time detached, I steal more than I should.

s. p. d. f. g.

only one electron & all this space.

he will move to nevada and sell paint on the highways segmenting las vegas. here you will find him, bound for an other world. you will not live forever. you do not find past selves once reborn, unless famous, unless in a thrift store you uncover a dress once sewed by hand. I have been making so many maps for myself, there was no room for anyone else. the past divides distinctly into two shells: who we loved and who we wanted to be, so rarely engaged. to follow through on anything obscures.

third we learn the atom as a simplification. each piece divides further. when mapping an electron's hydrogen wave functions, we are also drawing the probable spaces of spinons and orbitons. you may know how to understand this.

I do not.

when I say you by mistake. when I mean him, or her, or her, her, him, I am not mimicking situational scripts. when I say you and do not mean you. when I mean her or him, her, her, him, him. someone. I also mean, in memory, silhouettes are convolved probabilities of who we have been, what we felt like. we have mirrors for eyes but not for hands. and wills to complicate: embed. carbon silicon carbon silicon carbon silicon oxygen silicon silicon silicon. I dreamt you were another life form, and every new eye, a better approximation of the original. I pretend we build a life that feels rounded, daysed. in all the clouds, in wills dispersed, in every microscopic inlet view, in every dream, in proof: we have loved only once.

BOOK V
[TERM- to XYLOT-]

AUTOTERMINOLOGY

we alphabetize a book of language to give communication structure and meaning. i like the dictionary fine. it prints out words in thin black lines. we dress in codes to help describe what we want people to see when they see us. i like my closet. it has no door. i stare at clothes while i sleep and plan my days in color. we follow paths so we can build an image, culture, country. the mass swallows the counter. the sentence eats the comma. what we see is a line, not a dot, hidden order. we become expectant, hidden under.

i want to communicate differently.

AUTOTETRALOGY I

aimee = beloved.

i did not feel lovable or i did but i did not want to. or i wanted to be loved and also left alone. i wanted the hidden and the compatible. i wanted my name. i want it. i quiet down and inward. to be loved is to sink, taken under, held and eased.

AUTOTHERMOGRAPHY

at the house, he introduced us by adjectives: mine, chameleon, a name adapted to slip in and under. they did not know i hated war films for empathy and flowers for boredom and fashion for its fabrics. i hate drugs for my flipped brain. they could not know. we did those things. they do those things without me. i do those things alone. i try it: the way what they liked slips into who we become. i once loved insects and out of tune voices, the color purple, bird documentaries, spinning.

we impose our own boundaries for want of comfort in a house.

AUTOTOMOGRAPHY

green was a color in isaac's rainbow. green describes light in the visible spectrum with frequencies between 495 and 570 nanometers, if you speak english. on some screens it is primary. on others it requires blue and yellow. it is always additive. green is the color of nature and youth, hope and money. and envy, we all envy. in greece, green only referred to 520 to 570 nanometers. green once traded roles with blue. in japan there is only one word for the two. the celtic combined it with gray. persia does not differentiate between it and black, but green does not symbolize ambiguity, only inexperience.

what is the riddle that ends in absence?

AUTOTOPOLOGY

we sit at a table to write. i watch her pause between sentences without lifting my hand. she closes her book and looks around the room, opens it to write a word, then closes it to think again. i write of her so i do not stop moving.

she is older than me, i think, and patient.

i produce a draft in a single gesture, then cut apart and rearrange to redirect intention. sometimes gestures fragment. sometimes they are tales. we read fiction before poetry but speak alone in verse. if i told you about her, the first part would be her body and face, the tones of her voice. second would be what we have said or done. the third

would be the facts of her. but fourth is just a splinter, the feeling, a severed thought. she happens like tides, ups and downs, more color, a glow, some same book told, retold, framed once and then un.

AUTOTETRALOGY II

i like openings: mine, yours. i wonder at living more obviously. i never came with anyone inside me. i never came out. i lie.

i loved.

i feel at home in my body. i still submit. i let him wash the dishes because i do them too slowly. i let him drive because i am wayward. i let her speak because i am tongue tied and young, and they know, and i know.

AUTOTRACHEOTOMY

i learned honesty as an option not necessity. she said I was obvious and not to worry about the wording of truths: the world expects divergence. i learned a body and no one mentioned my sounds. i wanted to be noticed, seen again. i wanted scene again. i learned my friends did not see details. i kissed her each night though she had another. i never knew until i did. i could bring who i wanted to the house. i could tell them i loved. he still always kissed me when i moved my face. i may have forgot to ask to stop. i turned around. i pretended to sleep to subdue his hand. i could not speak no. i learned sexuality as an open ending. i like openness. i like openings. i learned hidden prudence. i learned alone. i learned love is not important because it bores next to all the lights and sounds and others' lips. i remembered once i cared. i learned there are always other lips. i learned to cry is obsolete. i learned to cheat is irrelevant. consumed by grass, individuality collapses. i learned to want my calluses.

AUTOTRIBOLOGY

i learned poetry for secrecy. i learned to confess to the ways we relate. awake we were all everyone. the confessionals pride themselves on desperate relevancy, individual uncertain security. i wanted the pride, buried hidden, to find it.

i learned she once spoke of self. i learned she was insecure too. i learned we never know security even standing so tall in beauty. i learned in poems a shape real life never took.

AUTOTYPOGRAPHY

cis- and trans- molecules are opposites, right and left handed. they contain the same elements with the same ratios of single and double and triple bonds, but orientation of the bonds prevents rotation to view one as the other. as mirror images, they cause radically different reactions in the human body. when a teacher introduced

enantiomers to my class, she drew lsd as an example. one orientation creates euphoric disembodiment, the other, slow brain death. elaidinization is a process to transform double bonds and alter a molecule from cis- to trans-, but it usually only works in fatty acids. i tried to map the difference of the images in my hands. she always marked me wrong on tests.

i tell my sister a detail about me. she tells me it is not true. the problem with language is its memory, tradition, consistency: i am what i am because i have always been, just confused some days, just stuck.

AUTOVENOGRAPHY

i first heard of adrienne rich in a modern poetry class. we read her between t.s. elliot and william carlos williams, in a constellation of others that underwhelmed and overformalized her intentions. i memorized *diving into the wreck* and repurposed adrienne for content not aesthetics. i read her essays this spring, not for novelty but for necessity. i am down the ladder and crippled by flippers. we are a myth only written if we write it. i do not know who has followed her. i do not know my contemporaries. i am behind. we read dated texts for individuality, because no matter who has consumed her ideologies and expanded them, we need to hear adrienne unravel.

aversion to naming was not fear of the future but of the past. if i state a word of preference, what experience does it evoke that i do not have? what complicated life condenses into an expression. i have loved and felt powerless. we all love and fall powerless. i reduce this sentiment to a hand, my body, how we want what we cannot take, how i was without name. i name what i want and still look to the mirror, but my she is small. there was a spectrum in the past, a way of learning sentiment without expression but we want. i want. my hand trespassed the world and i was

and a wish.

AUTOVEXILLOLOGY

circuit diagrams are simplified schematics for electrical systems. rather than showing the physical layout of an object, they use basic symbols to show the connections necessary to calculate charge, amplification and resistance. though these schematics were originally unique to countries and fields, the global village updated and standardized to make sense internationally, an imagistic babel tongue.

AUTOTETRALOGY III

body = this, i, me, lady.

i watch my mother with my friends' children. she says girls do x and boys do y. i nod as my friend tells me she would date boys if she met any who were neat. my sister calls to tell me she needs martinis and girltalk, girl talk, not talk, talk girl. listen: i do not speak feelings. i drink on the phone as i listen. listen: just write yourself down. listen: he always cleaned more than me.

i like martinis, wide skirts, black heels and bloody lips. i dress up. i go out, clean the sink, sew for barbies. i hear. i react.

why dissect each moment we felt abstracted?

AUTOVOLCANOLOGY

the poem is only as responsible as i let it be. in its immediate applicability, codes and equations appear to be responsible as soon as they are born. this is a trick. we can hide in either one, write games in our bedroom, skew facts alone.

AUTOTETRALOGY IV

beloved = open = body to be cared for = aimee = me = not the name = I = i = the name is not a name but this place i take, the roles we fill, given, or taken, or either, or this, this is =

i like aloneness for capacity. i am capable alone. i play the baby in speech when they stand over me: I need. what is written is

i want to be lover not beloved. i write a memory differently. i could change my name or something else. I could twist the words they spoke to me.

we curate ourselves from lists of lies.

AUTOTHANOLOGY

at the institute i was given easy access to medical resources. i learned how our bodies worked then checked again and again that mine was correct. when i was thirteen i believed that skin was not an organ but a sheath that held insides together. i believed if i could cut a line all the way around my thigh, the sheath would fall and i could free my muscles. i made the line and everything still adhered. i learned that skin is many points of adhesion. i learned that women are more likely than men to die of a heart attack because our symptoms present subtly. instead of a shooting pain up and down the arm, we get the flu. unless we check our pulse, it is impossible to know we are having one. i learned if i can count a mississippi between each beat i am not dying. i learned a misconception: language alters with the tempo of the heart. i learned women must know the symptoms of their heart attacks so we can test for them. i thought i had

so many i did not. i had aneurysms and cancers and ms, arterial fibrillations, an ulcerated spleen. i funneled all the facts into myself. i had brain scans and chest x-rays. in washington, i have gone to one doctor. she said i had a pituitary tumor though the cat scan said i did not. without resources, we let anxieties slide. or we grow up and stop expecting to know how we will die. there are sores in my mouth spreading. a disease is a path, a prediction. i wait to see how they progress, explore them with my tongue. we grow up and let the body hide. i do not ask where mine is going. i no longer expect.

AUTOSCINTOGRAPHY III

behavioral therapy attempts to train autistic children out of repetitive behaviors by offering positive rewards for sustained periods of normalcy. in lower functioning children on the spectrum, repetitive behaviors comfort a mind out of sync with the traditional world. when words overwhelm, we all seek solitude and pause language to allow our brains to process what has been said. the difference is the extent to which we disconnect.

AUTOXENOGRAPHY

categories and labeled identities allow us to answer who we are without spiraling too deeply inward. they are artifice. no one expects us to be a name exactly. still i write myself a list of them. i shut them in a drawer and abbreviate, forge scripture on my chest just so you see it, just to move past.

AUTOXEROGRAPHY

i like *the characters* for its detachment from order. i like spiraling through tangential footnotes as jena osmond depicts selves buried inside the periodic table. i do not understand *public figures*. i cannot relate when she restates legal documents. i listen to her read relationalism and try but do not know how to attach. i ask about her first book. she does not want to talk about it. i think i understand why.

i am young.

we cannot continue our lives through perpetual descriptions of ourselves. one day i will relate when the spiral stops. because some day it will. i will. some day we will stop dissecting only our own arms. i will stop recreating this body. we wind up until we cannot.

we disperse.

AUTOXYLOTOMY

1. a history of mindblindness or only difference

A HISTORY OF MINDBLINDNESS, OR ONLY DIFFERENCE

the family was a red hallway with glass rooms.

the parents were talented hands.

the children were silk bodies, lace doilies and oak whittled limbs, made then hung to dry until they spoke.

supercooled amorphous glass exhibits neither liquid nor solid properties. with no crystalline regularity, glass shatters irregular splatters.¹

the family was glass rooms. in the rooms were many children and one child. the child was a peach carpet with four walls.

the child was a girl in the wooden box of her chest.

the child rolled her fingers over walls to cool the tips. she ran her nails across her skin, drew white stains across wood and lace.

the child stuck her tongue to the glass to make a sound. *sloop loop sluh sloo*. she heard it replayed again and again, in her head. *sloop loop sluh slooloop sloop sluu*.

glass is oxygen silicon oxygen silicon oxygen silicon oxygen silicon & little additions.²

¹ bleuler, 1911

² kanner, 1944

the child was a glass room with four walls all looking towards the mother.

the mother was a refrigerator.

the child put her palm to the crystalline and tilted her head, tracing the square. she searched for mother's eyes that never steadied. she called for mother's voice that only wavered. she reached for mother's hands, but through the glass she could not break.

in this way the child paced.

time does not flow glass steadily.³

the parents were once parents now doctors. the doctors were four men at each wall tectonic.

the child was a divergent split between two hemispheres. the child ate the lysergide slid beneath the glass.

the carpet was peach peach peach peach. soft ground swallowed her foot. the child sat and sat. glass flickered, dropping frames.

we used to believe in liquids and gravity, but glass does not sink. once set, amorphous nets of silicone remain still and clear. the sinking of time is just an illusion: blown and spun, old glass appears bunched and thinned.⁴

³ bettelheim, 1959

⁴ bender, 1959

the world warned the family the harms of medicines and vaccination.

the family was a pharmacy who threw out the bottles.

the family was a hall the other children left and entered the world through.

the other children left.

the parents watched the only child through the glass. they mentioned mind, the overwhelming instead of behavior.

adding soda makes glass soluble.
adding lime and magnesium
stabilizes it. adding iron infrareds.⁵

the child was a statue posed. she stood on toes and reached for the ceiling.

the child tongued her tongue, made sounds that sounded like meaning.

voices from the glass echoed through the room.

⁵ payton, 1988

the room was electricity conducted to rush the child.

the color of glass is ions
distributed.⁶

the ions came through the floor to the child's feet to her
brain and rearranged until the child lay.

if you cannot speak you cannot move.

look:

the room was a shock and a shock and a shock.
on tiptoes the child stood until she could not.

⁶ lichstein and schribman, 1976

the father was a doctor was a father was a doily with two arms that made tallies with embroidery.

the father made a tally of mind and mirrors.

the father made a tally of empathy and logic.

the father hung a wheel behind one wall of the child. he smashed his face against another, waited to see which way the child would look. the child did not look at the face or the wheel. the child smashed her eyes into the carpet blades. the father said this was interest in fibers, systematic.

the father made the child a blue mark, called her a him extreme.

without rigid formality or grids,
 glass disperses light
 nonuniformly.⁷

the child laughed and lay on the floor where there was a sea to press her arms deep. the fibers felt like hair extended. hair was made to wrap the child in. the child rolled across the sea and crashed into glass. a needle pressed through a crack to puncture the child's leg: a cold rush of estrogen: her brain unified: less divergent symmetry: more identifiable identity.

⁷ baron-cohen, 1997

the child saw herself in the reflections of sunlight on the glass. so many refractions, look:

the child saw distortion.

technically, in wider specificity,
glass is everything amorphous.⁸

the child was a room in which there were no others. the room was kaleidoscope irises.

the child was a room with a view outside. the child cocooned in the middle. the child saw colors with no tags. the child wrapped her hands in the carpet and refused the cool of crystalline.

the parents spoke and stepped to the wall. the words were a sound dispersed in echoes. *shoop shu uh*.

the oldest glass found is glazing beads, a byproduct.⁹

the parents sprayed water until the child stood.

the parents sang a song each time the child spoke.

the child cocooned.

⁸ greene, 1971

⁹ lovaas, 1965

the child was a glass wall was a work of art.

the child was the parents.

the child was a whittled thumb and linen lips. she
breathed out and she breathed in. in the glass room, the
child pushed away from the wall to center the square. the
child dug her heels in the carpet, let her toes toe the fibers.

mind engraved a circle. the child locked upon.

rome made the first intentional
glass. it was only craft then, now
windows and bulbs.¹⁰

the mother was a parent outside walking circles around
the glass.

the father was a parrot outside singing *shoop shuh shoo*.

did the child walk closer?

¹⁰ kaufman, 1976

i tell you poems not because they
are interesting, not because you
will remember. i tell you them to
make a point: the point is not that i
said anything, just this way i let
you in.

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