

THEN BETELGEUSE REAPPEARS

Then I'm not sure

what time we're living.

Then I read fire on the lake

as a premonition of our

estrangement from place.

Then Betelgeuse vanishes.

Then Betelgeuse reappears.

Then Betelgeuse vanishes

and I know the face

of the merciless universe.

Then my eyes are inflamed

and I can't see; my lenses contain

a polymer that scrapes.

Then you hand me a tissue

to blot my fluorescent tears.

Then I know in the many

worlds theory we've met

and unmet across countless

collapsible card tables.

Then I fall into a Pitseleh

which means I can't stop

listening to Elliott Smith sing
“Pitseleh,” sing, “I’m not half
what I [breath] wish I was.”

Then I don’t want to be
touched. Then I want
to touch everything,
to consume everything
before me like fire,
to make everything possible
mine. Then I know I am
a pantophagist, eater
of worlds. Then I
spend the morning
throwing sticks to the river.

Then I imagine their end,
exposed as wood that’s
harbored water.

Then I think “today
is the last day of April.”

SUSPENSION BRIDGE

all this strata for minds asleep
bridges that don't exist
we're not sure if we remember
forest fires thick enough
we can't remember
we blot our minds
when danger moves

slabs of quarried limestone
we stare a long time
our eyes follow upward
I yell "trochee!"
roiling mutes my voice
until now
I've seen you only as reflected light

a sweater drapes the banister
the Nena record skips
neunundneunzig Luft...
neunundneunzig Luft...
neunundneunzig Luft...
from a depthless longing
and gesture wordless

I misplace words
in a synonym field
numerous times
the inscription reads *farm weeds*
the pharmacist says
you have to shake it"
tip the dropper

strange rooms we'll never enter again
absence leaving a mark
or not
we breathe smoke for weeks
smoke blots the sun
as we bar a door
behind us

stand monolithic
to discern the remnants
are pylons
but the river's
carved names relieve the rock
I realize
it's your shadow I want

but it's not yours
in the final chorus
neunundneunzig Luft...
on into eternity
I suffer
you give me a look that collapses
toward the door

~~in a cinnamon field~~
I've been accused
of writing unmoored poems
but I see *harm seeds*
"it's a suspension
I shake the bottle
and look into the sky

SHADE TREES

I translate the sway of shade trees into speech.

Would you believe geography halts weather : The fuchsia flowers that spray the freeway median are wild phlox.

Would you believe me if I spoke in abbreviations : Today's wind gusts will reach 20 mph.

Would you believe weather dissolves : I mimic wind thru marionetted birds' wings.

Would you believe weather revolves : The wind lifts up to agree.

Would you believe weather resolves itself : I bind knots.

Would you believe me if I said shorthand is a language : I regret most actions.

Would you believe me if I struck through each word upon its completion : I defoliate my face until my wrists ache.

Would you believe me if I pulled myself apart : There's ghost energy in your attic bedroom.

Would you believe I see three futures before me at all times : It isn't an exact science.

Would you believe I imagine you into multiple existences daily : I hear you moving through the white noise.

Would you believe most paranormal experiences can be attributed to elevated carbon monoxide and radon levels in old houses : There's ghost energy in your crawl space.

Would you believe the clouds move in a diagonal to announce the coming rain?