

# Rage

Poems by R. Salvador Reyes

# Rage

I.

The Room Is So Quiet Now That You Can Hear Everything Ending

II.

Art In The Time Of Virus & Ignorance

III.

Rage, Rage

The Room Is So  
Quiet Now That  
You Can Hear  
Everything  
Ending

To murder us.

Shh. It's here. There are & Silent. And ready  
No words to hide Beneath now. Naked

**Corrupted By All The Hungers To Varying  
Degrees Of Absurdity & Malice & Fahrenheit**

Maybe it was when  
Paradise got cindered  
To sticks. Or the ice

Shelfs abandoning  
Their continents. They say, based  
On the past, when oceans  
Acidify, that's when  
You wish you'd done

## **Avalanche**

It all differently.

Places are beginning to end. There will be a lot  
Of this. Ocracoke  
Is trying to put a clock on  
The island's permanent  
Immersion. Last  
Summer, just north of  
That near-memory on the sliver  
Of pre-sunken Hatteras, we watched  
Old home movies from the 70s & reminded my parents  
How that half century of mornings had  
Gone so unbearably fast. In the coming  
Weeks, Ocracoke would be nearly  
Buried to death by hurricane  
& Sea, and my mother would nearly  
Succumb to a shower  
Of blood clots while I slept 10 nights in the ICU and watched  
How things end in every  
Fashion of the most matter-  
Of-factly & all-hollowing ways. But each  
Of our reprieves will not outlive  
This century & its unrepentant  
Truth. Now it happens. Is  
Happening. All the burning & drowning  
Is coming home.

**Ocracoke**

Here begin  
The childhoods growing  
Into less than. They're all full  
Of tomorrows minus  
This. Less  
Bees, less fruit, less  
Fish in the rising seas.  
Less freedom from  
The machine that ate  
Everything in the service of the myth  
Of profit. Minus hope.  
I do not exaggerate. The future  
Has no purpose  
For hyperbole. **Born**

### **If We Could Cleave The Disease From a Beating Heart**

Every box you put the anger in doesn't fit. It all  
Falls out the holes & you have it again in your  
Hands & your brain melts. There were so many  
Ways for this not to happen & they all died en  
Route. Bludgeoned by the greed in the ditch: come  
Hither and let him smash your mind out your eyes. You want  
To go back in time and strangle every Myron Ebell  
With the taut flesh of their own bowel. But it would  
Not be enough. Nothing was. And so we'll shove our  
Offspring into the canals where the corpses pile. The future  
Will feed on the bodies we give them to devour.



**You Can Wear The Disguise For As Long As You Want But It's Not Your Face**

False gods, false gods, false  
Gods. Dear fucking lord, all  
Their false  
Gods.

Topple, topple, topple. Either  
We didn't realize or completely

Forgot this was

Entirely & consequentially an act

Of construction. A tower  
Extraordinaire cum fatale.

Things on things  
On things on

Things on all

The most fragile intricacies

Of dependence on every

Part that stayed

Invisible until the part below

It caved and adjacence  
Brought parallel &

Vertical catastrophe.

It all fell down.

**We Were A Skyscraper**

You can measure carbon in pounds.  
You can think of it in death. Each ton

Will kill something else. Then it will

Really get going. Everything that's killed

Will starve something that eats it. Everything  
That starves will die. Starfish will die here & humans

Will starve there. Fish will starve & drift

To the bottom of the dying sea. Stars

Will steady themselves with the stories

Of how many times this happened everywhere. None  
Of the starving humans will find solace  
In this when they drop

To the dirt. And the starfish on the coast  
Are already mostly gone, or emaciated.

Of all the things these webs  
Of soft tissue cannot bear.

## **The Weight Of Carbon**



# Art In The Time Of Virus & Ignorance

All The Screens Shine With The Pre-  
Recorded Stories Told Of Somewhere More  
Real Than Here. Here Asks—Is That An Esophageal  
Flare? Did I Touch Too Many  
Tomatoes Yesterday At The Store? Were There  
Lingering Droplets In The Empty  
Bread Aisle? How Long Should We Stay  
Alone? None Of The Stories Are  
About This Yet—They Are Still Kind Lies Of Righteous Vengeance.  
Out Here The Indignities Of Suffering & Servitude  
Remain Unanswered. They Said He Was A Reality Star, But He Made  
Our Lives Pretend.

## **How To Die From Vanity**

Lie. Obfuscate. Cover Your Ass. Tell Us  
You're Great. He Was A Tiny Man Yanking  
On All The Huge Levers. The Machine Spattered  
Gunk & Drooled Bile; It Shuddered & Excreted  
Another Batch Of Dead. The Tiny Man Recedes In A Bitter  
Glass Trinket, Hollering All The Things That Say  
The Same Thing: I Am So Afraid. In Brooklyn, Her Young Husband  
Crumbled Beside Her Bed, In Their  
Driveway, The EMT Crumbled In His Truck, In The Rear View  
Mirror, His Face Is All Disassembled Tears, No Mask.

## **How To Die From Cowardice**

The Collected Pleas & Gasps Come Out  
As Numbers. Dominance & Terror  
Arrive By Quantities. Infected, Intubated,  
Indigent, Ignored, Dead, Masks, Weeks, Vendettas,  
Ventilators, Beds & Containers For  
The Corpse Piles. The Bludgeoned Truth  
Of America Unveils Its Grotesqueness, Torn  
Down Naked & Siphoned. The Monster  
Of Stupid & Lust Finally Let From Its Cage To Eat  
What Fed It. Hedge Fund, Shareholder, Merger, Leverage,  
Privitize, Outsource, Offshore, Downsize, Maximize  
Margins, Infiltrate & Pillage. The First Century Of The Future  
Shall Swallow Its Tongue.

## **How To Die From Greed**



These Nights We Wait—Nested In  
Our Catapults, Wondering How  
Far. And What Will It Look Like Where  
We Land? Which Of Us  
Will Be Lost Traversing  
The Arc? Is There A Category  
For The Nightmares That Might Find You  
In The Air? Your Heart Is In Your Throat And You  
Won't Know If You Can Breathe.

### **How To Die From Hope**

The Strangeness Came So Fast. Just  
Before, We Were Riding On A Field  
Trip To The Mission In Sonoma. We Were  
Buying Tickets For Wilco At Fox Theater. Now  
We Listen To The Tweedys Live In Isolation, He Plucks  
Strings In Chicago Across The Glass And You  
Want To Know It's A Salve. You Want To Compare This  
To Something, You Don't Want To Let It  
Get Too Dark. At The Mission, Our Guide Asked  
The Students—Standing Rows Clustered In The Chapel Where  
New Settlers Brought God & Disease To The Natives—“And Why  
Were They Dying?”

## **How To Die From Suddenness**

It's So David & Goliath, Trojan Horse, Pick  
Your Myth. Its Conquering Smallness  
& Absence Of Self Asserted  
On Leviathans That Know They  
Live, Until They Don't, And The Smallness  
Moves On In Its Multiplicitousness. For No  
Reason, This Speck From A Speck Will  
Stop You From Being. You Seek  
Transcendence And It Desires  
Nothing; The Hands Of A Bodiless  
Locksmith Solving The Code Of Your Existence. You Are  
New Here, But The Conscription  
Is Older Than Everything.

## **How To Die From Evolution**

There's Lots Of Chanting  
From The Idiots These Days. Vive La  
Dumbocracy! Give Me Liberty And  
Give Me Death! Let Us Eat Cake! Don't Tread  
On Meat! Dopey Ducklings Waddling, A Parade  
Of Floppy Feet Trailing The Tiny Man, Trying  
To Catch Tongue To Testicle, To Taste  
The Swank Sweat Of Their Little Lord. Foment  
Ignorance, Bathe In The Vacuity, Rinse  
With Hubris, Repeat. Meanwhile, It  
Lurks, Hungry  
For New Flesh. Our Hunter Knows  
Its Feast Awaits In The Street.

## **How To Die From A Clown Show**

You Want To Stop  
Talking About The Tiny  
Man, But Every Day Another  
Flabbergast Of Unfettered  
Foolishness. The Destiny of Metastasized  
Disaster Left To Spill From The Little Hands  
Of The Grand Imbecile, The Archetype  
Chump. Of All The  
Ways That Consequence Could Fester  
Into A Wound Immeasurable, This  
Is The Mother of Dark  
Fates & Tragic Causal Intersections. The Bad Page  
In The *Choose Your Own Adventure*—Your Quantum  
Childhood Nightmare Found  
Real Here In Our Incessant  
Now. What-If-Cum-What-Is. This  
Is The Wrong  
Timeline. Why Must It  
Feel So Easy To Imagine The Other  
Place Of The Undoomed?

## **How To Die From A Temporal Anomaly**

That Scene In *Jaws* Where  
All The People Hungry  
For Summer Clamber  
To The Beaches Because  
The Mayor Pretended With  
All His Heart That  
There Were No More Sharks. But The Truth  
Is: The People  
Didn't Really Give  
A Shit Either Way. It's In  
The Script. That's Just  
A Movie, You  
Say. True  
Enough. In Reality  
Tonight: Happenstanced Across  
More Tweedy In Front Of His Gidget Polka  
Dot Curtains Playing Gorgeous  
Melancholy With Remote  
Wilco On Colbert. Fate Or Fairy  
Tale? It's Getting  
Harder To Tell.

## **How To Die From Ignoring Roy Scheider**

Not Very Long Ago  
I Found The Random  
Spates Of Open-Air  
Tom-Tom Beats From Our  
Hippie Drummer Lockdown Neighbor  
On The Other Ridge  
Consoling, Communal Feels Across  
The Canyon. Last Week, Still Cloistered,  
I Hollered Back Cowardly  
Agitated & Anonymous From My Hidden Yard:  
*You're Deciding For All*  
*Of Us!* These Nights Riots  
Fill Streets. Gung-ho Shield-  
Wielder Thuggery Against  
The Angry Weary. Everything  
Is Kindling  
Now—Knees On Necks, Unmasked  
Throngs, Storefronts & Cop Cars, Cannisters,  
The Tiny Man's Wicked  
Words. Songs  
Of Fury Unleashed  
In A Time Of Dirges.

**How To Die From Unmooring America**

The Tiny Man Is Poison  
Now. A Venomous Ignorance Shot Straight  
Into The Vein. Flatulence As Suffocant. The Dimmer  
Of Hope, A Shadow  
Bullying The Light. Darker  
Is All He Knows, And He  
Knows Almost Nothing.  
It's July, The Dead  
Pile Again.

**How To Die From Choking On The Stupidity Of The President**



It's Falling  
Apart Now. Whatever Spider's  
Threads Were Keeping  
Together An Idea  
Of The Future, That Trap  
Of Communal  
Ambition—It's Going Ghost On Its Way  
To Gone. You Can't Even  
Believe Anymore  
That It Ever Held. How Did We  
Keep The Madness  
Strung? It's Clear The Lunacy  
Was Woven Deeply  
In America's Blood. They Feathered  
With Ink *All Men Are Created*  
*Equal*, Then Went Home And Fed Their Slaves  
After Filling The Pig Troughs. We Slaughtered All The Buffalo  
For More Freedom, Piled Their Carcasses  
Into Mountains Of Ancient  
Fur & Flesh. Drug Our Boots Across  
A Glorious Continent  
In Balance, Murdered  
Its Shepherds, And Tipped  
Over The Table To Suck Every Hidden  
Dick In The Dirt. Then Ford Or Oppenheimer Whispered: *This*  
*Is How We'll End The World*. Sure, Our Boys Burned  
Some Japs & Beat Down The Nazis, But Their Sons Still Crowned  
A Sympathizer 3 Score & 11 Years After. And When  
The Future's Virus Finally  
Came To Roam  
Our White-Washed  
Lands Just Before All The Ice  
Melted, We Said "Cloth?!"  
On My Face?! I'd Rather  
We Died!" And So We Did.

## **Remembering How To Die**

It Is Time  
For The Fires Again, They Come  
Every Year Now. Today  
The Light Was Tinted & My Daughters  
Pointed To The Billows  
Of Smoke On The Far Horizon, Piling  
Air Like New Mountains  
Curdled In Heat. A Plague Still Skitters  
Below, Undulating Until Some  
Tangent Of The Future  
Brings It To Pale. But These  
Flames Will Only  
Ascend. We're Driving Through  
A Firestorm On Our Way  
To The Apocalypse, You Can Smell The Tires Melt.  
This Is Art In The Time Of Virus & Ignorance.  
This Is Us Imbibing What's To Be.

Rage, Rage

O, collect me not  
From the hours. So many have gone into  
Their retreat. Even this morning so much  
Birdsong leapt from **Full**  
The quiet night into  
Oblivion. Even late this Are not yet  
Afternoon when the sun stopped falling Older. All the day's fabric  
Into the canyon, our children Will snare. But there  
Remains. Everything  
Shed must be  
Worn.

The forests are inside  
You. The coast at its lowest  
Tides before the starfish died. The docile  
Way the mist relented to you in the woods, the trailing  
Sounds of needles  
Creased beneath. Fluttered

**Transit**

Through and perpetual. The paleontology of it  
Exceeds excavation. We lived  
In those bones. I find the direction of time  
Increasingly opposed  
To itself. The notion  
Is falling off a leaf. The redwood silence. I remember  
Her so small in pink leaning  
Out from the giant trunk. It's beyond  
The map. Your eyes  
Are almost there now.

Your only life  
Is happening. Each  
Imperfect expectation cast  
Into its surfaces, the holy  
Trail of existence. There is just one  
Way through here, no matter what  
You were told. Eras live  
Inside other eras, a cacaphony of parentheses. When  
We used to stop by the tiny park after  
Dropping off her sister, eating lunch at the tiny  
Plastic table inside a little pretend train  
Station. We couldn't stay

**Furrow**

There. You might think time  
Is the furrow, but the stroke is ahead  
Of the paint. A bridge manifesting  
Into fog, and if you knew  
Before how its towers were  
So grand. And if you play the right music, for a moment  
You can stab it in the heart.

## Shoal

This location is one  
For holding. How do you  
Live through it?  
The wind has the leaves on

The trees moving  
Like water. This street  
Is missing from time. Westward  
Light. All of us.

If you are always  
Feeling the space  
Around you, then  
You'll understand when you're underneath. It covers  
A certain place for a particular  
Period of time. It is keeping  
Away the other time headed  
Toward this place.  
In the middle, beneath  
The apex when the other time still looks  
Lumbering, the space around you  
Feels perfectly infinite.

**Dome**

And that's when  
You know, in a few more clicks the beast  
Will start to level its gait. The arc  
Will slope & the pace  
Swiften. Grab the air—  
You'll have to find  
A different way  
To breathe outside.



It was all  
Long really, even though  
It doesn't remember  
That way. I know  
From the calendars & requirements  
Of days that whole swaths  
Of the firmament had to be  
Filled with every  
Beautiful mundane gesture  
Of fatherhood. There were  
Minutes in the recess yard after  
School that lingered undestined. There was

So much it didn't matter  
What you spilled. What a glorious swim.

**Swim**

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