

Reductions

The Insect Makes Itself A Leaf, over time
In those places in the world where it can hide.
This is a dispatch from
Another
Universe where
Nothing visible
Matters.

And here it is lovely, all angles of green
Basins and veined, crepuscular
Ridges that deny
Our sight for what
Is there. A foundling of the vision
Into our beginning
As nothing
As
Calculations
Of the randomness
And inevitable.

**Time In Those Places
In The World Where
It Can Hide**

It is a kind
Of blinding, these
Paper-edged fronds wide
Of wing and
Thorax, narrow-leafed
Limbs that descend
And taper into
Delicate,
Verdurous, deceitful
Twigs.

Do you see
What it's saying—how it
Wounds its believer?

I heard sirens, saw
The corpses. An ambulance, a pick-up
Loaded with a back-hoe.

On the other side

Of the island

*He joined me, the foreigner, in the fresh water. I had been
Gone for days already. Neither of us knew*

*Their words for it, but there
Was talking, right until the end. And someone wishing*

Called out our name

And heard nothing back.

~

*He was more beautiful than I could have ever been. Even the way they found him, a dark greyed white scarf
Wrapped around of salted flesh exposed, inviting heaviness of water, all the
Ballast he ever wanted for all the dark places too dark to ever go.*

Island Dying

Night island brought it out in the day, the lunar, the water

Swallowing & sloughing

Off the dead—human sunken
In bay reeds like drown dolphin & dolphin
Spewn on shore

Sand like suffocated human.

In one place near the surface
They were exactly the same. Intransigent. He said,
There is the moon now, now
It's fully visible.

It is all this rage against the nothingness. The empty
Hopes of here, catastrophe chasing anything
Away from the vanish. Holiness is blasphemy, and marauding and ends
Up as limbs.

You can always take apart the parts and get nothing. Subtraction is exactly. Some of the limbs
Get carried, packed
On ice, driven, arrived, and thrown away. You can't give it back—there's some mistake
In understanding this, but Humpty Dumpty is horror, and we kept
Saying it, over and over.

Some of them are
Chopped off. The limbs. They must feel
Strange on their own, without
The weight of a body, needing
Someone to hold it, all the suffering left behind, excruciating somewhere else, but to it,

There is no way of knowing what it thinks of itself now.

They are, of course, cutting
Off heads. Old standard for the species. It's all done by proxy. Jesus tried
To point this out. He would've said *genetics*, but didn't have the word for it. It's the real message: the head is not
A limb. Nothing
Can be removed from itself.

Baghdad

Spiders start small and grew.

Now they're in everything
Like vines, webbed
Conquest into the landscape. All
The necessary entanglements, the laws
Of grasp.

This cloth yields
Constriction and lattice. Silk
Is like all things mistaken
For beauty and meant as
The fabric, waiting
Until its moment to prove. The thread
 Will wind that way if you let it.
Circles insist, and there's all
 That centrifugal force.

In Everything Like Vines

Spiders are anything
You want to be.
Webs are museums of what gets left.
That one terrified me. That one
 I loved. Spiders are robots. You're a robot. Don't argue. That's
 What was meant for you.

When she says goodbye to her cat, who
She has not been with for many years, she says
It is like

Falling into the sky, returning
To that place you've missed for so long but never
Have been.

The cat was going
To die. *Am I dreaming? Is that how I am
Here?* She knew of the past, the burrowing
Of loss, but did not understand
Why she had been away
So long.

Green apple. Abundant

Orange. Deep taut chilly
Plum. Supple

Radiant peach. Rich glistening

Strawberry. Tropic-curves, parrot-hued
Mango. And

The World Is All I've Ever Known

The darkly-rotten clutch of bananas that he wanders
About, the cat. You want to know
What he's doing with the fruit. But that's where they are one day. What else

Was going on came over the fruit. Each piece

Grew eyes like potatoes.

In the end, she'll unfurl into crying. She'll clutch the cat and wish for it all back. The cat will know that this is what
She is thinking. He will not understand it at all, but he will know.

When the water in the fruit went to ice, we
Assumed it was the cold, but it could
Have been
The time. When frost
Struck the orchard, it was like that. Because you
Said there is no cause, just the motions that
Surround them. And so he leapt out
The cold tree.

Nothing Could Get Out From The Night

In the woods they were no one but the woods. They were
Sticks in the wrinkle of water. They were always
Young, because the woods are only in that place
Where they were. The gargantuan
Trees were always ancient, the stars
Permanent, and night held
Everything in place, a darkness
Meant for everyone, the substance between all things
That is everywhere.

They were in the woods with each other. They brought
Coffee and food and a place to sleep in the night. And they left behind
Almost nothing, cleared space in the dirt, made fires, walked, the days
Each had their shape. But where were they in all
Of this? Hunt for them—if the woods are frozen, look for movement. They are
All evidence of themselves. Invisible, except in their presence.

It's what we come around to, in the end, not being
Alone. They went into the woods together. It was nothing, all of it, none of it
Mattered. Not the gnashing creeks swelled with spring, not the meadows and snow, not
An inch of unwitnessed green. He held her. She bathed in the river. It was meaningless.
All of these places and the two things that were.

They were in the woods together. Because it was there that you would see them. Against the still, giant, skyward
Fir he wrapped his arms and she photographed him. The moon moved through sky
Above them along the edges of night. There was all this silence in their place on the earth. They spoke in it.

In August Of The 21st Century Already, This Late In The History Of Man

Being a sphere
Was not enough. Pluto
Has been sent into the debris. Are you
Out there? Those who never believed in it; those
In the world of one less apparition at night? Do you know
What it was we saw out there?

It is not enough to orbit
The sun. We wish to be more
Than arbitrary, although nothing
Is so everything is. It is not enough
To be a circle. The facts speak for
Themselves. Their conversation needs
No listener.

Pluto came to us as a far off vision, which is what we were
Looking for. A place on the edge of everything
We know. To believe all that out there
Kept going on.

In reality, nothing has changed. We can still see Pluto in the night even though it is not true. It remains
Adrift, now proof of nothing, so grand has the universe grown since we first met. Our edges

Go beyond. In its last days, Pluto was the comfort of home, the nearest far away thing we ever knew.

It is our destiny in the 21st century to be tortured by the scope
Of places we will never be. Pluto is merely the sound
Of another unreachable lost, the same abyss
You came from, an old emptiness
Revealed and impaled.

One addendum
from the 20th
century. You
should know what
it was like before
the end of time.
History was still
a calculation we
were adding up.
Someone always
talked about the
future. We
preferred it not
be infinite,
resources being
what they were.
Can you imagine
what it was like
when they told us:
the universe will
go on in its
emptiness for-
ever. You are used
to it there now,
I'm sure, but there
was a time when
we did not even
know that the
world had ended.

Two skeletons

In

The

Mantua dirt, an embrace as fabric buried

Six millennia. Ancient youth Sewn into earth and entwined, lovers' clutch, nearness
Last in view that we all hope for.

Seen hidden in each mind, our tomb Romeo passes toward Verona, succulent desperation.

*If it were that we were
One idea, then this might
Say it, and if that idea was us and now
It's said, are we
Recurring? Are those your bones
And mine, are they
Ours, is it us?*

**We Have Been
So Old, My Love**

If the birds return as something else, the dinosaurs will be
In them too. Which is to say, they never went
Anywhere, either of them, just
Accumulated, receded, sought
What was perpetual, expressed and accumulated in multiplicity ad infinitum. Except not
Ad infinitum, because it all gets hot and goes, that's the future here.

But that's so far away now, let's let it be, and about the birds anyway. Find
Your margins in them—so you know what is outside you, know your floating
Place in that center for the moment it *does* hold, for *will not* is not *doesn't*, and we
Get that which is ours and is nothing if it didn't hold, which it does, and will not be undone for its
Finiteness. It's where you live, so it's everything.

What Is Before Is Gone

Where they lived—and I'll tell you, I knew them, so you'll know this is all real—where they lived
You could sit outside on the steps that led up into the sunroom. The ocean was beyond a forest over
The ridge, and it spread from there across the world. And salt from the ocean attached
To the world drifted in on the breeze that swept out of the cool mist. And in the yard the salt
Fell into the air beside the steps where they could sit.
In the time that they were there when it happened, they could inhale that air. And sometimes
A bird is in the small tree. Having returned
Only as itself this time. For no other reason than this moment is
Simply what is before is gone. So lost are we to all the unseen world.

R. Salvador Reyes · 530 Ethel Ave. #B, Mill Valley, CA 94941 · 415-383-7106 · rsalvadorreyes@mac.com · www.rsalvador.com