

# Triptych

## The Coal Sea

It didn't just happen yesterday anymore. In its rapture, everything  
Was thought nothing of. And between them is the unmeasured distance. The when. Which now  
Is just molecular objects in stasis, born only by synapse flare—like a real one, bursting  
White trailing tracers in the night, spectacular melancholy shining over coal sea, the tensile  
Surface rippling mosaic dark angles pitched between paling brief glitter. Everything can be  
Lit for a moment, fundamental to sadness.

~

It was in your coffee, the coal sea, burnt into the blackness, but you lift your  
Head from it and everything in the world is the same. The mountain has been like nothing else  
This summer, certain and alive in its shape against the azure sky. I come into its  
View differently now, having been changed by it without knowing. They will ask for  
A better explanation, but only you are far away from them, in no place for voices.

~

Have our locations worn themselves away from us? They must have. They are,  
After all, destinations—the only thing that makes them true. And so the sea was the color of coal, even  
When it was not. That these places are born in us makes no difference.

When you arrive, the only thing in the salty air is permanence.

## The Consumption

It was always about fruit. Those plums. Our green apple, oranges. Seeing the world through  
The objects we inhabit. Later begins the consumption. And the quantum promises: we will  
Change the thing we see, merely through the looking. Don't try to believe it; it will still  
Remain true. I sliced the orange and rotted it, both. The apple stayed half unpeeled

And bore the other half naked above the sink.

~

We never ate the bananas—they always went dark and into the bread. We used the  
Toaster oven like a shelf, resting mugs and letting fruit linger. It's the life of a small kitchen—that  
Everything happens together inside it. You might be told about something left behind and when  
You look for it, you will begin there. You're certain, but it's too late  
Anyway for finding. Always went dark and into the bread.

~

Strawberry tastes of what you wish could remain, but does not. This will be  
Told to you, but you will forget. Even now, each tiny seed succumbs to becoming  
Unseen.  
Each sweetness finds its way into the air.

## Night Island

We are in the haze of stars, he'd said. Meaning actual/physical, more than anything, to say: *we are Only part of it.* Oceanside, craning the dark for misty glint-specked Milky Way dragged across  
A penetrated, fathomless sky—our own tentacle self uninterrupted into oblivion,  
Beyond. No journey for the faint, but momentum will take

All things to their end.

~

I said the air was dead still in the night. Not moving an inch. And nothing could keep  
Us there. We'd left this place so many times before. Ruins need not be visible. That the stillness  
Of the deep night is a calculation of infinity, for its presence is manifest, for it requires  
Nothing. When later the ponies began to lose themselves in the sanctuary of the dark island—gallop  
And whinny, hoofing scattershot and stampeding under the barely-hued blackness—you knew  
They felt it.  
The way the night air must be broken out of.

~

You didn't think it meant anything, the last time, when we were the only ones left.  
That no one will understand what I mean when I say that. On the shore—the lightning was orchestral, bruised  
Florescence charging night sky. Clouds in nebula; ocean of electric conduction. Visions  
To become perpetual. That the echo follows where the voice ends. You don't remember what  
You said and the stormed, burst-open sky can be seen when you close your eyes.

## **The Deep Blue**

She is on the other side. Unfindable, like I would have to breathe underwater. It is not what we think. Like in *The Abyss*, where they drown for each other to prove. Of these things we will do to survive, the most dangerous—descent, breath.

~

Far down the water. That way in the deep blue—like the dream of the ocean to become your life. Somewhere, the unquenchable. She is below you. A place you remember now, hollowed into earth, filled by ocean, vast in present tense; no telling where.

~

There is no world here but water in the bottomless sea. It came to you one night: uncanny, she is the one place where from inside water hides nothing, naked

In a way we are not possible—helix, gravity.

## Entropy

Light dissolves trees, autumn into the leavened  
Reds and evening. Everything is walked into softly, nothing  
Here will hold it. That you will believe you know this again—season, almost  
Perpetual. All sirens demand faith. Even  
Innocence will not bind you away from them.

~

In the panic you said it will all burn  
Out—black to black to black to  
Nothing to know this again. Time is pure entropy. We are without  
Context, subversion and dissonance, like what we are: a protrusion  
Of being into the fabric—  
Mere  
Emergence, remnants.

~

What we will find waiting when the day ends. It is on  
The mind. That she is afraid to say my name, that there is in everything  
An admission. A reason to tell you—go  
Home—if it wasn't burdened with so much  
Proof. You do not want to know this again. It will haunt

And stray into everything.

## Presence

When the end of time has come, what should we have said about this? That we are a ghost  
Ship—haunted by blank helm and souls fuel. It is that we think it forward/propels/or we are  
In tow. Nothing for  
Ballast,  
The only wish.

~

It is that you feel it. Nothing else. Living with the end of time is madness/entered  
Universe/colors what you see in presence. Grab here. Even stale words scream it, realizing—once,  
These were not until just now.

~

Of this magnificence molten/stone/wet/green every ever. Conglomerate super-hot cosmic  
Amassed—undulating unseen distance into contemplating itself. Unlikely as any fact, as  
Inevitable. You would want to wait; for the end of time to come, so you could see/watch for it all to be  
Returned, to witness the light escape—like Hawking says, now certain: it will be

Transformed in darkness, but survive, *unrecognizable*.

## **She Will Tolerate the Doom of It**

When I say this thing, this body is growing diffuse at its borders, then think it's the kind of use-  
Less pretend not worth telling and realize the uncomfot, the undoing self is worse than that—not  
Even a thing to be diffused—just a notion, my own, and infinitely dire. All the circles come back here  
These days like I want to be able to write it—manifest!—on the chalkboard: TO MAKE  
SOMETHING OF IT / teachable, benign, of

All the unfireables in the kiln.

~

To believe your self is worse, should be the condition you fear first, will always afflict  
Everything to come after it. For her, you'll *nightingale*—if she will tolerate the doom of it. It's  
Why. I'll wait for her now like we are the characters and can be watched knowing that  
Often these are told for the wonderful of it, and even in the sad you can use the same words,  
Because there's an irony in it or just that beauty that gathers on the sadness. I don't know if we're  
Any of that or not. But I can feel the watching, the page turning. And I will love her for it. The terror  
In the simplicity: that one of us will leave here from the other first. One of us will be alone.

~

On the mornings, you will want to hear about the ones when we slept in. And I've spent too long here  
Now and it is all falling apart. But I'm not talking about that. I'm saying that I've spent too long  
Here. Because I won't stop escaping into it, knowing which self is worse for surviving. And neither is.  
So you are in there now, where the sounds of the grass  
Are being made, and the sky is from when you are  
Young—  
All blue of it.

## Night Island

It smells like summer another time now. What does that mean to you? That you'll want  
All the girls again. That there was never enough of anything. Like evening on night  
Island. Clouds disappearing from themselves at the edges, wisps in the drift of  
Galaxies, evidence of what's left changing the light. How we are all,  
For a series of moments, bathed in it, emulsified—their small figures along shore, horizon  
Weighing tall grass in northward arc, incandescence brushing green  
Under breeze, transforming what will remain unchanged. It is  
The hour of the world that you will remember. When they take you  
There, you will say it:  
I was  
In the air that was.

~

The night began late, it is the hour of its exact beginning. Like the DNA and  
The genes that switch on and off—there is a time that all things cede themselves  
To the existence, discover the aperture, all learn our place from the darkness. All things  
Are all things, he said. But we are only what's *expressed*. So what became  
Of the night and its time? You wander in, tearing fabric of the universe.

~

The wind is a body kneading night into the tent, the last of its life, and it  
Rains. Harmless shallow waters in descent and only one more afterimage, burnt  
Shadows with lightning backed flash, how thunder stamped everything into  
The deep sand ground. There is something here. It keeps in a circle. It wanders in what you  
Hear in the rain outside. And when it's left—the air gone cool like more  
Nights in your memory, dark of the ocean near and its sounds: water folding  
Into echoes against the drinking sand, wind unresisting over dunes. She asks

You if it is the hour you miss or the time itself. Can you see her doing that?

## Where Else

That's where it's been hiding. In the back of that café, now gone—the one on  
The Avenue, the one with the patio outside all the way at the end and the bees in the spring  
And those tablecloths from some other time. There was nowhere else you would  
Ever want on Sunday morning—they baked everything and the cinnamon rolls  
Could be gone by ten. We divided the paper into those stacks we'd made, those slices  
That stake our space in the morning of ideas. And the ordering, I almost didn't  
Remember: Florentine with avocado on a croissant. Bacon. Sometimes she liked  
The tofu scramble. We were in California now. You go all that way to be  
Somewhere. All that forgetting to be done.

~

When you walk in, they are already eating peaches in the dark. Like waltzing star  
Corpses they dance in the window light of the lightless kitchen. Midnight  
In June. Have you been through that hour? This one hides until. In it here  
There are peaches and they will do to give the summer away, like fresh  
Produce commercials on those broadcast networks in those days of antennas.  
In Chicago, heat was the feast and you were easy to die for it under the sun. And the after  
Hours in the hot—go off into the farms for it now, deep into that Midwest and its  
Hovering low over all the night. You couldn't give anything for it. Nothing in the world  
Could take us there if we wanted. The trains don't sound like that anywhere  
Else. You  
Can't  
Get them out of your head.

~

The deer are coming out of the woods. You did not think they could last  
This long, moving from the shadows of all your driveways in all the years. Sanity  
Says they cannot be the same ones. But everywhere else you've walked by now.  
They are the same deer coming out of the woods. How they will not move for you. How they  
Will always mention the manifestations you do not believe—the one where your old,  
Gone and beautiful dog tracks the deer's blood in the snow in front of your parents' home. The way  
She walks there now alone in that familiar dark all through that late hour. Her  
Nose to the freezing earth, growing colder the way the dead always do. You will not spend one night  
Watching her haunt your abandoned woods.

The dead are coming out of the woods.

**Triptych**

R. Salvador Reyes • Mill Valley, CA • 415-515-7220 • [rsalvadorreyes@mac.com](mailto:rsalvadorreyes@mac.com) • [www.rsalvador.com](http://www.rsalvador.com)