



The Putterer's Notebook

Akilah Oliver

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by Akilah Oliver

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Belladonna Books



Unforgivable violence

something dropped
, more plural

Un touch/ inhabit a queered

I'm here, sickness face. Theresa Hotel, that collapse
[a trace]

Shinning, a prince Castro, all of us fatigued, this century I as in
Not Freudian mistranslation

When is the "tipping point"

New York I've been been back many times sacred heart been back been back
Many times

Eluding best time then, conquered, then hairdressers remembering smell
Burnt alterity I'll never leave you no matter what when I saw you your sad
architecture I shook
I architecture shook, house a dangerous weave, house a dagger a dagger a
minimal yes,
yes, it mimics

Why when I say “outside of history” I mean anything I mean to reconstitute an Other

Why when I say “belated beloved” I infer a politic, I reference a street sign on the bad side of town

So when I say “strangers find me sexy” I am not an absent erotic seeking refusal

So when I say “we haven’t talked for a minute” I mean code for “strawberry letter twenty-two” or
hello Richard goodbye Boulder

If when I steal “you can’t fall down in this town” I have discovered human bones in the landfill

If when I say “and all the little denunciations” I’ve solved a puzzle

Therefore when I say “now that I’m done with being dead” I have declared an alternative self

Furthermore when I say “a red flatbed truck just drifted past my window” I am documenting
how pleasure

As if lateral lines and neo-nationalism were essentials, the world
tipped around an image of you I create on the train

collecting ruins. This is an epistemology of forget, or then,
curiously I am a system of relations, later

Devotion. Los Angeles, treacherous, a surface recedes.
A narrative of whoever collects shorelines,

a disassociation between forms You, my ongoing query,
what do you dream, we who are at opposite ends
Of a myth of lineage, requiring negotiation.

All these abstractions in my teeth, I could tell you stories, you skiver.
I'll talk while we work.

For example: I am seduced, or, I offer me as a proposal.
We don't recognize ourselves as vulnerable, landing here in the airport, I hide at a newsstand for
hours, waiting for the terror to fade.

My raw sexuality watches horses sleep in Jersey I attempt I, to
de-gender violence, to know God. I remember your body asleep in aspersions,
you told me about a childhood in Minnesota and I thought of the movies.

And I thought of how tough it is to learn to read
knowing ultimately I would betray you. And I thought of death, again, as a
way to look through funny mirrors.

Or the tightrope and the angelic failure to catch you.
But even now, when it's all sad and done,
I miss the momentary
frail vision, the chaotic bodies in hip black shimmering down
Bedford, like apparitions, like liars. I had expected to find allies there.

Then I command the stage again, as embodied activism this time a gone time from a before then
if so therefore without pretense nothing or used, this phrase, this constituent, this color lily I've
never seen before, a calculated blue,

I was considered a last resort I was considering going there, over by the Lost Boys, but I didn't now how to speak of a genocide that wears my face, a calm, & then temple, anyone please, we used to pray like desperados then silence as charade to lay upon,

I as navigator fail her petrochemical beauty on both sides of the threshold a light, a city, an
artifice in relation to other species failing always as if waiting were choice or desire, a badge to
wear, to dress up in, to spit out again I, a result of my own resistance,

The dream itself becomes commodity, & how should I live, decomposing [as I am] & irretrievable, how should I live, dreaming like Jimi Hendrix in red suede, homesick, this body a serial topography laughing drunkenly in grandmother's robes,

in the looking glass,
Who reflects the dead?

I disrupt my imaginary My marketable language receives you, tattered one. Is this
ending good, to be
Good. To be unknown
To be broken to be
Sentry to be just to
Be good earth I've been back back been back many times been back been back here

This body, a public adornment to speak of in relation to scale.

in the charlatan's clothes I collect epigraphs to mark this form as urgent,
sinking, replicable & twisting like nightmares seeking solitude,
nostalgic in postcolonial light I am not seeking
more than an indicant of our love that broken umbilicus left
ungrounded for so many refused seasons,
a bargaining chip between us.

This body,

Who we are when we are not love has always caused us shame. Not love I scarred narrative
I gave away a plot a plot I as spectatorial gaze posit a stripped subject, a migratory Other to
eroticize my loneliness.

There are few precautions we can take to protect our hearts,
those overdetermined biographies from where I construct an enemy of my broken fingers
that rehearse “forget” “retraction” “messianic” “thinking” “punitive” “I love”

In other words, leave me alone motherfuckas cause I'm in a position of trust and responsibility then besides, I can't afford to be off my ass. And then to sea. The underlying violence of Love, sticking its pubescent head out.

It's Sunday. What happened to Saturday. Is the vague discovery of a 'missing' Saturday a real thing if there will just be a next Saturday?

Was I ever something to believe in?

In which pocket did I leave that "I"?

Is "I" ever a thing to miss, a personage to mourn, if the "I" still lives in the physical body and is capable of re/articulation? If it desires mirrors? History? Or and then narrative sensibility.

If the mirror breaks one can buy another. Consume then recreate then resume an/other I.

History I curse thee, to not be borne in mid-twentieth century garb, a French feminist theorist laboring over 'new ideas' to bounce the vernacular mind.

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where is your embodiment? this small obsession of becoming and collapse. or the desire to be in the world as Image or as Voice. or a knowing or known clatter, prostration. the world:

in Madrid we made a mistake. unable to be big about & admit, we claim holy connection, drunk all the time, closer to thee, leaning towards Madagascar, dust mites, and i meant so many times to.
a laceration and drain just yesterday then by morning again suspicious and not reflecting a shine.

[note: place names, specific signifiers, play with make arbitrary: chance]

you send those comrade poems, coupled, crumbled.

and I should be but am not saying: just tell me what happened that night of the full moon, as if amnesiac and unable to sort. alternately then, how nice it is to sleep during a shared darkness, sieve. or wisely:

What is the primary duty of repair?

I could stay here, become fervent in the way I hold the coffee cup, one broken finger stuck straight. Lisa is in Queens growing fat with baby cats in masquerade underfoot. I don't see her this time or ever really but drunk, I remember one night with Jesus on the upper west side, trying on extensions. It is in part that desire to be fully engaged, performing against mirrors. Pretty pretenders crowding the streets. Blue shirts own the 1 line.

a/synch

Radiating around\-----she bathing him\-----one morning in the house of waking\-----
optional temple\-----who makes memory\-----taunting down smith st.\-----made get out
of the way play like a game\-----sense to mock\-----render stolen discourse\-----demons
fascinated much too soon\-----the very large animals were not other elephants\-----she's
going to borrow the car\-----abandoned place\-----in the familiar marketplace tables spread
with pastries\-----substitute\-----librettos in the bios\-----reaping season\-----blackmailing
the lie\-----you you you you too you\-----the squatter behind the hedges\-----this culture too
ashamed to name itself\-----present interior\-----condition of skeptical or uncertainty doubt
resulting from this\-----prelaptoparian\-----he articulated the break\-----it is misty jersey
outside today\-----what is the desecration of identity\-----at this point you smile\-----not
sure of how to say enough\-----ideological use of the woman\-----three generous enough
glass panes\-----lay down your vocabulary\-----simple slip on trampoline\-----not that
pronounced fantasy\-----nineteen fifty one and curious\-----men of the pink goose tribe\---
--one requires an object to say cho cho\-----chairs facing door as if expecting to squall hello
to guests\-----light glance on window hesitant look for spectacular else\-----lost passport in a
wild car chase involving dictions\-----

Hearing her own echoes & text as a galaxy of signifiers

_____ things catalogued: cross-referenced as ‘-_____’, ‘again’ ‘crime’ ‘maximus’:

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also, add to list:

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to pilot

(en passant) I am a voluntary capture

we were there, without the words, arrivals unto primal.

And would I be there again, upright in the midst, her face to see once more?

This inadequate gesture, to perform our lives for the grand old miscreant, History.
As in, what happens to a community, when centers of culture dissipate? Penny Lane is in my head. J is in India, I'm dreaming next to S. S is dreaming inside water, F is on an airplane, T is figuring it out today, how to blow this town's curse, V's getting nervous, I'm telling you stories. Stories more lush than when I was undead. [the best way to leave] to drive out without goodbye.

not as in love with [] as previous, though suspiciously like folly, this insistence on distinction.

In love with, not only this, but how we block mirrors, stage ourselves in reference to not, one another, or declarative subjects.

Situational emphasis, shadows, evacuated narrator: no closure, just this

Then
thinking
I had created metaphor when I said "I can't see" they thought I meant I can't see them thinking
again them thinking again to dream a portal through which to bow before walls, a little
mystery. Stare.

Then,
determining,
one is lonely in sleep, thus remedies. or then, fences. then questions for the Prime Minister.
What we expect, a paradigm of fall.
My kitten scratched.

not entirely arbitrary

lists:

of lovers
of lovers
of lovers
of lovers
of lovers
of lovers
of lovers
of common corruptions of
lovesick
lovability
lovable
loving
love-struck
lovingly
lovely
of lovers

I attempt history making.

Which begs the question: what is history?

And then to add, the vocabularies that come in sleep. Or to sit to stare. To stare.

Earlier and am thinking,

People commonly think of me as two.

That is the job then, to sit and contrive. The making of figment.

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Rachel Levitsky and Erica Kaufman, editors, Belladonna Books.

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* deadly nightshade, a cardiac and respiratory stimulant, having purplish-red flowers and black berries



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