

THERE IS NO SUCH WORD AS CAN

by

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The following individuals read and discussed the thesis submitted by student Kyle Crawford, and they evaluated his presentation and response to questions during the final oral examination. They found that the student passed the final oral examination.

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to the memory of my grandmother, Velma Reiman.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The line, “*Pompeii has nothing to teach us,*” found within “A Joy Mine,” was taken from the first poem of H.D.’s *Trilogy*. The poems “oh” and “uh” draw their language from *Nebraska Folklore* by Louise Pound. Some of these poems have appeared in *Jellyfish*, *Back Room Live*, *Thermos* and *SP CE*. Thanks to my teachers Greg Kuzma, Anthony Hawley, Benjamin Vogt, Martin Corless-Smith, and Janet Holmes. Thanks to my friends Paul Clark and Justin Fyfe for their eyes, and to Matt Nagel for his lies.

ABSTRACT

The poems within *There Is No Such Word As Can* trouble themselves with the seemingly impossible task of interacting with a generational incapacity for conviction, or any sort of variable of truth outside of the traditional means of understanding. How does one align oneself with any sort of truth without dogma, for instance? How does one choose from the infinite possibilities provided to generations raised under the shadow of deconstruction?

The answer may come in the form of reimagining what an answer could actually be. The poems presented in this collection eschew any sort of conviction by undercutting themselves so consistently that their questions inevitably become their own kind of answer. This is a work in ambivalence. This is a work in “fence-sitting.” The poems seem to interact with the history of their creation within the procedural space of their own becoming. A variety of rural vernacular is often times juxtaposed with academic, theoretical-based language, for instance, as a way to explore what is understood and what is misunderstood. The conclusion these poems seem to come to is that these two terms are often interchangeable. Where you sit depends on where you stand.

Often times, these poems address realities that they themselves have created, where time, space, communication, and understanding are altered in an attempt to establish a new sort of perspective. The inevitable failure and shortcomings within this collection, then, are the product of the poems own becoming, their own reality. The

failure to comprehend one's own identity, to fix oneself to any sort of truth, therefore, happens within the poems' reality—a failed experiment to skew the real to possibly see the real as it actually could be.

There Is No Such Word As Can articulates the answers that a lot of people outside of the author's own generation may not have the stomach to swallow. That is, sometimes not knowing is actually more worthwhile than actually knowing. And that the difference between the two is something that is worth considering. At least here in these poems, anyway.

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THERE WAS EARTH IN THEM, and they dug.

*They dug and dug, so passed
their day away, their night. And they praised not God,
who, as they heard, wished all this,
who, as they heard, knew all this.*

*They dug and heard no more;
they became not wise, made up no song, devised no kind of tongue
for themselves. They dug.*

*There came a stillness, and there came a storm, there came the
oceans all. I dig, you dig, and so too digs the worm, and the
singing there means: They dig.*

*O one, O none, O nobody, you:
Where to go, with nowhere to go?
O you dig and I dig, and I dig unto you,
and a-finger awakens us the ring.*

—Paul Celan

*Oh, nothing ripens to reality that is not rooted in memory, nothing can be grasped in the
human being that has not been bestowed on him from the very beginning, overshadowed
by the faces of his youth.*

—From *The Death of Virgil* by Hermann Broch

Greener

A wind half expects enjoyment here
with or without wind—a falling in

or out of favor. Depends on intake for
burning. Or breath. Depends. How

many times you really want to die out
for one word to make sad. Sometimes

a poem only wants a tongue to tongue.
Look at the lock if it's picking at a piece

you're after—but the door. Maybe mahogany,
blue spruce, an inconvenient steel. Lick it
if lonely. *You*, a tongue to tongue, sometimes, too.

1 Mile North

Then everything wasn't. Your disappointment delayed launch countdown. The au pair's financial security was in serious jeopardy. The blade you bent back into shape halved its potential for tilling. That soil is only one way to break apart the ground. Fixing shit through others means theft. *I need* consists of nothing and money and space/time and nothing. How does *it* mean? Living on the Oregon trail is the same as living in the middle of the Atlantic ocean because they are both dead. Being bit by a pit bull is even less meaningful if the dog is rabid. Let it lie. Don't suck its poison. Now I'm hanging onto less than the last poem. One poem burgles capacity. This poem. That poem. No poem. I'm only trying to tell you I love you in a way that persuades that last branch to bloom again. If you would let me hover over your chest I would drop each fingertip into the mountain top's blown mountain top tip by tip by inch by my own hand. Its hole like the one in none. Poor poem. Believe in rain's work. Or don't. Pain renders your faith irrelevant.

oh

The Virginia reel or how much can a red dull? Again you fix the swather. Hear a virgule there albeit a ladies saddle / alfalfa bale anyhow / dainty sate. How you realized it was wrenched wrong. See this nail is an unclassifiable penny nail. It builds / a bluff's pride in 1854. Quench .03". Some snakes are supposed to be able to enter a hen house and suck eggs. That's a Jesus made of mule hair. Sometimes I think / I think she lacked me colostrum. It's takes its too slow. That mason's name was Mike Horn but you called him Horn Dog.

Greener

The trembling foot (or claw) seems to happen
for it more easily than the bird's eye actually

becoming a bird's eye. What it takes out
of impossibility isn't impossible, it's just when

things that could be are. There is a big one
feeding or trying to. A bigger one napping

or watching the big one miss. Miss. Miss.
Miss. His grandpa told him, "Try to drink a

glass of water without tilting your head back."
You, not a bird, but I'll name the fattest one, Ever
-est.

Still, a Garden.

No one told me about a bell
pepper's need for coolness at

the edge of winter. I never heard
about sex, I just knew about it

's not all that gay to kiss you on
the mouth if I love you. No it's

really happening when you water
a cucumber, but we're not just

going to sit here all day! We just
happen to care about dignity &

allow the tomato another day or
so without water. This dirt is sick

as shit of David & will, of course,
die too. Worth isn't, yield isn't

worth it when it comes down to it
's worth while to hurry along their

dying. I'd like to accept drowning
as in a way of saying "yes" to a death

supposed to be saying "this can't
really be happening to me," but is

& is alright sometimes it's ok &
could actually laugh about it about dying

or deathing out for once is better than
being better or feeling ok for once in

awhile growing out a real fine beard
with hair & a nice smile to smile

about tilling or digging or dying or
deathing out for once I'm supposed to

be feeling & finding eyes to taste
a body without under-standing

responsibility for skin & bones &
shadows of muscles & fat hung up

on a hip, not like a hip bone but a hip
pocket to keep your & god just in case

I break a nose don't look out for you or
don't look at you or don't look at or don't

look or don't build nothing any-more just
an empire & harvest gotchya nothin.'

Fuck the sun or what I mean is you always
get my sadness even if you get it.

Velma

Building a reservoir, the world
yawns.

You can't even breathe
out of that nose! But then the in
is in the out is in the up and up is
in her own words.

She never actually said
it doesn't work that way
like gravity. Sometimes I can't even
remember what I don't not
look like
or what language isn't
to a syllable.

The first line of every one of her one
unwritten one
line stories was, She was already
pregnant when they arrived in Albuquerque.

A
plot concerning the mystery of back
hair's awareness. I guess it's all just
programmed in.

Could you please
tell me who Jack Nicklaus is and who
is Jack Nicholson? You'll stand
corrected.

It's Rim-bow not Rim-
bod. And you'll understand French
is spoken to(o). I remembered you
after I remember you

believe me
I torture myself not to torture
myself, rather to torture
myself.

My Father

After Foust

A border's bruised clarity, an ocean an ocean.

My singular tongue gone silver tongue to click it to
listen to understand the *over there* over there, I
thread daily. A boot sat simply, unraveled.

Listen, to understand the *over there* over there I
waltzed to a sleight of hand's rhythm,
milked, to feign contradiction of
her account of it; the tear of some sad hem—

milked, to feign contradiction of
the vane. Town a town, head west or stumble a tether
dressed right, but the kid is not my son.
Unbearably neon—

dressed right, but the kid is not my son.
Certain changes change, look out
-side, it was actually windy yesterday.
Air does not care where it is, look in

-side, it was actually windy yesterday.
I'm limiting my blindness with audio,
we've thousands of teeth in our mouths,
smiled the woman. Bend Hell, a mirror, and see

we've thousands of teeth in our mouths,
talk to your lips into being your quiet.
Wash the car, wash the car wash, the car.
Get dizzy sitting down. Don't spin.

Calf Air

Forget me after the dirt's worthless in your eyes
 Forget me after the dirt's worthless in your eyes
 Devastated. Taste bitter tin tongue dug up past the roots
 Devastated taste, bitter tin tongue dug up past the roots
 Forget the dirt's worth -less helpless to take hold, your eyes
 Your hands dug up past the roots devastated bitter

Swing 'round the cattle-guard with a swaggering disregard
 Swing 'round the cattle-guard with swaggering Disregard
 My thick stink. You understand my dust isn't just mud.
 My thick stink, you understand my dust isn't just mud
 Understands my stink: *swaggering-cattle* My dust,
 my mud swings 'round me with an oblivious disregard

What are you to me? with those balls screaming in the bucket:
 What you are to me With those balls screaming in the bucket
 Blood held you down on the ground pollutes an air with burning
 Blood held you down on the ground pollutes an air with burning—
 The air screaming air polluted with balls in the bucket to you
 I are what you are: blood held down, a burning bucket

You understand eyes devastated in a bucket
 Stink past the roots swing burning cattle
 Forget me after screaming air pollutes worthless
 Dirt You are the helpless tongue in the mud swaggering
 To taste my thick balls 'round your hands dug up an on-guard
 Oblivious ground with disregard bitter isn't tin, hold on just held what blood

I, a Giant

Call out, "Nine hundred feet tall!"

for no one to listen.

Call out, "A lonesome fog up here!"

for no one to listen.

There is something about a bug's making its way into being a bird—it can finally miss me. But a bird is so small too, to you

and I haven't stopped listening to the rain just yet. The ghost tells me I will make it faster than you make it

somewhere with tailored suits tightly tailored, two ocean liners as shoes. But I've seen wool snakes eat wool snakes, and nakedness is not yet nude—so I will follow the rung of its necks and pickle the

sun not yet set down behind the curve of my lip to chin where I can still lick.

"But where are your legs?"

"Hidden in dark barns."

"And where are your legs?"

"Taken with lights of harvests."

"Then where are your legs?"

"See

the."

Or

what of the water?

—there really isn't any at all

for roughage. Think of something nice to look at and eat it up some. think of all your liquid and lagged clocks to talk of the weather

to talk of the weather to talk of the weather is so nice now and I think the ocean is on time.

A fright of an anything

nearly keeled me clean over

that night. Nearly fell into the bonfire
for you.

No blind man is a blind man until his eyes burn
up. When long-eared-dogs
make their way into the cat food can, be
sure of where you are in the family. *I consider you.*
You said, “Uh,
did he have a big red
birth mark on his
face?—then yes,
it was my father,” I laughed at that
too.

uh

Whisker vogue. Can you imagine red? A face swathing / sweat and fit on the seat / work with it. He'd spin over and rake. Dryin'em. To bale. To know all that. I can't believe a cowboy had to follow trails all the way to Arizona oh-oh-oh. Do you climb? Do you / you die / shingling? Pitch of the pole shed / rained before rain. Say you say and me sound the seven real loud. Buck and stock'd recoil and be done / with it. All in an acre's name. It's north and it is east lined. Stink thick. Goosed / she was laughing and I was ci-yi-yip-yip-pe-ya-ing.

Greener

Sandburs. Or the incredible fairness
of baseball. A goat head here, or the

lack of all sincere saloon doors this side
o' some side o' something. A foothill

makes the idea of gravity's work on
identical twins who no longer look

identical seem sad. But I can see absolutely
something down here. Don't think you realize

how to puncture anything, silly. Be in Vegas
this weekend—yeah, going to be riding bulls
down in Vegas this weekend. *I misses you.*

Clementine

Ride its to the sea, do not own
its body, say, *lefter*, say, *righter right*
-er, *whoa*. Mule-ly name it. Clementine.

Say, *vlue river*, again say
vlue river, again. Say, *wavy*
rapid, or say say *tidal-ly*.

Say, *paper paper*, otherwise say
paper. Say, *loc-a-mo-tive*, after
say, *loc-a-mo-tive* before *train-ly* say.

Fashioned to call me, call me
old fashioned to call me say *call*
me beast of, say, *beast*.

You say, *vertical-ly-bone*, & boats
floats a(ny) way(s) unde-flated, a
-filled say, *afloat*, sing, *song sing*, sad-ly.

Open her up some, say, *wild wild*
to hear air hear hair on a tail
go, *whacky whacky*, and turn its. It is.

By and by some come see the
racket go, *racket racket*, crash or favor
the gimp side more to get it more, gimp.

Sometimes thinks of some time sailors
living in Wyoming posting poles in
holes, barbed to their telling of.

Sometimes thinks, *cock-eyed*, think
cock-eyed, cock eye. Brave me, winter
river snake, go *cobra*, *no cobra*, *no cobras*.

But and or rain none-ed, your brother
logs a bunch up there. See
huge body, see a neck is, say, *neck is*

neck is neck is neck. Just do to do
get it like you get it to. Feel like, *I'm*
out of here there, when you hear her

scream

, mount misplaced, rugged-ly
sigh, *trodding mountain*, wishfully up a hill.

Forget her love was sandy love.
Forget her love was—and love.
Forget her sandy love love love.

But what is what is is, say, *that*
that that, over there is hunger than.
A face tastes. A fence to mend tighter than.

Never gotten. Never there. Never won't.
Never ocean. Never dust. Never kettle.
Never bluff. Never need. Never need.

Several, say, *sev-er-al several*, view
you and stand in the saddle, call it your
saddle swagger—left, right, left, right.

Bathe once or rinse off your body once
say, *fresh water*, say, *trust*, say, *nude-y nude-y*,
naked nude, and chop it up

like you said you said, she said, *take*
my legs away. *Take them one by one by*
one by one by.

Notes on a Savage

for Zach Savich

Unsure of the origins of your
honky-tonk, you breed breath.
A swagger no more a pole's
sway in wind in no trees in no
land in water.

You could say, in a diamond
fight, a diamond can cut
a diamond. A mirror's
glass on wax or so to speak
you speak.

The sky, your inking mind, a
photograph of not you but of
you. A blue bulb of, a darkened
exposure of, a nothing of.
Are you, you oblivious to rain

damage? Making hands softer
than hands, than their wearing can
stand or give. Then there was the
you in salt water. Then there
was the you in ocean—the ruins

of civilized aqua, floats you. Didn't
have to say, *breeze*, to move, but
the pine stood up to it. You didn't
have to say, *like life*, I mean,
you guess.

Greener

A polished rowel's difference from a rusted one is just that. Or a speeding train's collision with a big, fuck-off

pile of glitter on the track. This mess can't go anywhere without going somewhere swept. And a whir sound

doesn't actually point to anything past its own, busted hinge. But what if *I* left the door ajar for *you* a bit more

this time? This poem—something like a gold or god damn silver mine. Blown top of ground accidentally filled its

capacity with pearls. Like saying everything was opalescent but not really. Like saying I was never actually a part of this here dig. Like this, say, “I was her, but as a man.”

Catchya a Carp

Never actually do.
 Stupid lily pad's
 stupid. Or
 the accuracy in
 the baiting. What
 of it—worms and
 creamed kernels
 of corn musked by
 all the tackle's plastic
 flies off
 the hook's *anyhow*.
 But I forget I'm sick
 of fishing. And I
 forget I'm always sick
 fishing.
 Of what—we are grateful
 for life? A snap
 (save) of the swivel
 (me)—damn
 bass stole the hard
 hope of inadequate
 tess. All's control,
 supposing to be my
 Canada, is minimal.
 Supposing to be my own
 great luff—a following
 of an other's will.
 The world allows us
 to move: the catching of
 a whale
 in a lake. The fight
 of it—but look! Two
 red lighters on the floor
 over there.

Greener

When water swells past their marked
points, the buoy's, of course, a bit higher

than. The one head left in the wet. The clang
of sound on mast. The smell of ten heads less.

His in the sand sad, "bout the closest thing
to a brother I got." Talk would've saved

my life—less me. Or take this spade and dig
up the absolute last patch of prairie and see:

no wagon, no wheel. From inside the ground
the parts are all busted up. From outside
a pioneer bone.

Nu(m)b

Take this piece and stop feeling
 aware—so so salted—affected rise the
 atlas pushers always pushing puke and fuck
 making every day's everything only day.
 And I've never not forgotten night,
 then, but night then comes again,
 once again, at the false dusked day.
 Bear to bare bone holds: the weight of this lifted frame
 —to think how these bricks were borne
 the mortar behind between makes
 a little silo's form a little more silo formed.
 My my mason lacks sincere—work
 for nothing work for more: me, now. My me
 zoos me into field work, then, and I give out nothing less than
 less than, then.

First Date Sonnet Sober (abridged)

lightning story involving close death
spilled the water said *sorry*

i'm sorry too

so

Dancing is Fucking

easy under water.
Sort of like imagining
your gait
after an accident
fills your pants
with shit.
To break apart
from the floor
is to move in
anyway. How my
shaved face is
all you. Still
mine. But not
exactly a tree
farm's symmetry.
Whatever saw
first light
destroyed first
were bigger than
everything then,
—giants, mostly—
men. A peaking myth
divides the river
reed more, Pan,
for not one pipe
but two, exposed
that finger
banger envy
of children
—*is this death,*
they'll whisper.
No, he'll say—it's love.

Greener

Hold your leg with your hand to remember
your bones are your bones. A moment of

movement within the movement beneath or
over a blank, black screen. Something fancy.

A concerto. A send off. A smiling. The building
of some new, old mountain home. There, a fawn.

There, a frame. unwilling to say anything outside
some timber. Unable to lift *it* enough for *it* to mean

it. How can she construct the entire jib herself?
There are no sails here where there are no sails.
A builder builds what a builder builds. The yes in the no.

Scandinavia

1.

I've delayed my writing you, you
land. Of dreams filled with allergy
's extension to eye irritation. I haven't
eaten in three days because of my
courage—the gift of suffering for even
more vomit. It's always one eye.
The right one. My right one.

2.

That single fucking bird isn't really blue but
is about to die.

3.

Its final call. Its death song's enormity
emitted through a minor chirp. A peep,
perhaps.

4.

The final knowledge of *true* language.
Dying. The inevitable, hesitated melody
of life's sustained, droned rhythm. The
kill, then, song, ripped from the body,
pulled through the throat, and out into
the air.

5.

Miss as in error. A failed attempt at
failing. A woman, a yell, wearing exactly
what you wanted. Give me your hand
to speak through. To lick your palm.

6.

Thunderheadless for approximately
two years. Abandon one shoe once
in your life. Sleep in the other one
for thirteen years.

7.

A missing letter, then,
I am a friend to one of you.

8.

It was raining walking inside you someday.

9.

“This is getting insane,” you said in your
 text. “I love you,” I didn't reply.

10.

I never saw your hand
 -writing.

11.

To remember you before ever sitting in you.
 To forget so many things that have never actually
 happened.
 To disguise my face with my own face in your
 winter mouths.
 To exist in your breath to steal you away.
 To bury a lock of your hair on Lesbos.
 To grow you back to where you were you.
 To fill a desert with ice picks.
 To insist on paying the bill.
 To open a container containing.
 To fall down again and again.
 To disappoint you on a day like any other.
 To whistle.
 To walk home in you.
 To hang myself with a wire.
 To fail. To fall and fall.

12.

Corrected teeth uncorrecting. A gap
 made from too much space. A tooth
 or two extracted. You, still,
 smiling when I smile like
 like this.

13.

I forgive you, shamed head. Scandinavia doesn't
forgive you. It forgets you were never really there.

Karaoke Nightlight

Rejoice isn't for the falling
down. When you told me
to someone your girlfriend
had an abortion, I laughed.

Says here, begin from the
beginning. Says here to say
you say. When you move
your head to the rhythm of

my song, sing and smile some.
Belief in me isn't believing in
me. But if everything is ice, I
am. If I tell you to breathe

under water, breathe under
water. If I tell you to miss
this. You would have never
told her your boring dream

was boring if it was your first
dream. If I could remember
when the granary stored grain
or when the world wasn't

just me, or I am alone here.
Every trombonist I've ever
seen was getting out of a
black limousine. Share me

with me, me. I, a maze or me
a rug left set up set here, you
shut up you shut up you shut
up you. Talk to me about your

worthless mouth. Talked to me
with your worthless mouth. Talk
-ing to me is your worthless mouth's
worthless mouth. Death still happens

when you live forever. Death still
happens when you die. Boring death.
Funny baby deaths. We deserve nothing
more than than.

aka Judah Caster

Back lit you stood there,
dandelion tongue in full bloom,
to kiss me properly.
I called you a child's name, then,
I called you Roary only
to be corrected to call you Kyle.
You told me everything you would
ever know about ice and women,
and then I was as good as *you-there*
standing over there alone.
That's not to say I've ever learned
the proper French pronunciation
for the words I'll never use in English,
but to know those things may prove
useful as I begin to dig a tunnel
under the same water mane that feeds my house
and the no vacancy motel.
You told me to try free sex
with women I could find on Craigslist,
but that sex would never help me
run circles in a cornfield.
To find a sort of freedom
that ends with the right to burden
a friend on their death bed
when your mouth doesn't work
when your blood has been let out
when your feet have been lopped off
by the stable hands and their rusted fingers
for forgetting to do something that has never mattered
when careless about worth
when your face is wrapped in tar paper
stapled with the lost staple hammer
you've covered roofs with shingling
only to have it pinned in
a smashed face to correct your nose look
and covered with a blue tarp
that's used for camping
set under the tent
a woman's request to test her sex
A flush or two cleaner continues
its maintenance, the dirtiest bathroom
you've ever seen in your life.
Don't be afraid of anything,
you don't even know my real last name.

Greener

I'll be naming my daughter
California for the hair she will

eventually have—the certainty of
it being there. She told me she said,

“I enjoy your atlas more than my
atlas.” Wasn't the gist of my saying,

“Jesus Christ, I can't believe I peed
my pants.” Flushed by Idaho's being

closer to Hawaii than never in
ever or her closing the atlas door. Can't
say coal to dig ore from iron. No—a joy mine.

A Joy Mine

At the very bottom was Judah,
in name only—boiled past the bareness of its frame.

A heat which does not scald.

A heat which does not mar.

Sand pouring out of a nostril.

Sand pouring out a hill.

If I write a letter to a burning bowl, a burning kettle, a burning pot
will the water slip back into its spillage? Seep into the root of
a poem's becoming for blossoms? For blooms?

The poem's effigy speaks:

Barely a ship's wreck. A leaky boat's fortune its
future. Built a sleep safe
holding bone stacks of bone.
One simple tongue helps
mouth this name, cramped up
and staggered—the give in
quit. Watch *this* never end.

If I hurt you,

if I sent you too far.

Boredom

fronts this face a change,

a load bearing wall

buckles a sound,

an open song stripped its veneer

exposing the stains of

a freed child fed among hogs.

This, she calls immemorial,

certainty's twin,

mistaken,

vicar of any name, blinks

a shamed,

disease-ridden word. List this competence

lag

without a brained-in-moment lasting

there, a nudeness of song from the new diva shown.

Glimpsed a-churning or the churn in hand

worn down
 work
 the land the mass actually
 moving. Sated, hawk
 a loogie
 across the face of the inhumane
 for impression
 and scaffold a laugh
 to build a century-stood machine.
 Parched.
 Cracked.
 A fallen stump falls again.
 Bruised.
 Bled.
 Suffer the hoot of its bend
 —eagle faced
 the hunt's loss for
 only more loss.

(The drinks continued their consuming.)
 (The cabs continued their flagging.)

Calamity cannot save us,
 it is simply all we have.

If I hurt you,

if I sent you too far.

When *I* falls in love with *you*,
 consider my absence. Resigned
 love before the word *sun*, that light, but
 to face you.

When you say there is something wrong
 with *fluoride*, what I hear is there is something wrong with
 the word *me*.

Will *this* last an hour? Sex tends
 occasion.
 Watching the moment become its
 sound, the image of a father's
 chuckle seen right there in his face,
 behind youth's posture of the young.
 This bozo you've never actually met
 turns girl.

love—returned
to sender and receiver, the gutter of *me*.

If I hurt you,

if I sent you too far.

That span chant of my Judah-heart by heart

whispers,

Pompeii has nothing to teach us

Labor might

just be our extended attempt at exterminating it,
ourselves,

work in words of

ten ties dug, ten ties put in

to move

the empty, then, man's work,

exhausted a broken sonnet's definition of mud

from the mud—

Eyes open machines inside morning
—men boots *is* day no light—
Earth's cliffs sun strand
whose hair stringing along. a-tugging,
tease. Stripped vanity down darkness,
isn't fancy? why argue
you argue? no word *can*.

high noon cowboy filling horse's
neck gravel. "Cut tongue first,"
nods, smiling. Worry more where you're
going here, ring dinner bell
time. Aphasia's bright light bright light. So
see nothing . Vision language unspoken.

Everything happened.

Friend, you

hate

it all. I'll show you

my daughter

if you show me

your body—habeas

smoothly-rimmed horn blast and yours.

The difference between a bi-binary
and the di-
chotomy you live by.

That slice of
bitter tasted banjo noise
makes the not too threatening
mountainous

range plain
and plane once again.

To see the West
as if it weren't really all that
different than

a last good
-bye's chest swung song sang
and sung to, then. When I bury things
I rarely buy tools to dig at
the ground.

Why for? Wait
for some sleep some more and tell me
what that song couldn't actually be.

If I dug a three
thousand foot hole right there
over there for kin, you, I mean YOU
would still find
remnants of my daughter's skin in your air
-filled nostrils. Or going another way's heirloom,
an inheritance,
for slime. For kicks, kill someone
some day you'll eventually,
for most, snort the experience straight
up into yourself,
it(')s casual theater of
seriousness. Its pose.

You would
n't find me sleeping again. The worthlessness
of dreaming to talk about it. The worth
of this poem and its dream being talked about
means more to anyone but me.

I, and now you, beloved sea
stone, love
child never born out of the cast I

Greener

Where I'm going is weavy. It's not
her moving, crazier than herself.

It isn't hers. It is hers in a shallow.
Try to waken herself to her flesh warming

and see fingers do. Remind her with hands
some. Never talk. I think perfect things,

maybe something traditional. To stiffen
the quilt more, place one over another

one. Never a sensation outside of the
shivers. Place her into something heavy
and sad—"to see," you say.

Barton's Gin or Don't Steal Our Dog or I've Broken So Many Things

Sick of sticky
wickets, you've
eaten the last of.
How, "This bag
was full!" can shame
the hunger right
back in. Mention
what means again
to send my yawn
over to another's.
Just let me touch
that one part of
the party to thieve
my way into an inner.
Slave the sky into
your mouth more to say
say say. I take
up this spade to do any
-thing but work the
ground. my spade.
Folding the field
is our job, shepherds.
To be without.
To mean without.
To say without.
To love.
A dirty window's
apprentice. A broken
mirror still one
broken mirror.
Me, then,
or I, a door
without walls—child
of a rolling head.

Definitions for Lonely Atoms

To define we slouch that-a-way toward it. But not really *toward* but inside its body not wholly a part of our own. Define, *glass*. Define, *mud*. Define, *horrible -man*. Beauty isn't the water. Beauty isn't *inside* the water, its molecules, their atoms. The speed of a thing is the beauty of a thing. A river. A wave. A nothing.

Our movements are no speed. Suspending a moment to be drawn out through every mirror made by saying, *this* is a second, and *this* is a lifetime. The desire to be better is always better than actually being better. And *You* will change for *Me*? It hardly matters. And the poem, then? Hold our hands. Speak to me as if,

“Readers will or
will not eventually
understand that poetry
is life and death.
And neither of those
things are easy.”

Poor, chest brain. Slugs severed your ability to breathe. Go slower. Poor, chest brain. Slugs severed your ability to breathe. Go further. Poor, chest brain. The daemon allowing your movements, allowing yourself an open cavity to move has yet to abandon, but is simply in hiding so much further than you've ever gone into your

cavern. Go further. Define, *sinew*. Define, *tender*. Stop counting. Stop moving. There is an importance to certainty that you've placed ahead of being completely and totally unsure of your own home. Your own movements are liars and swindlers cheating your ability to breathe. Can we deny? To never live in a time without time. *I* deny.

Glass

In a word, yes. Although here it wasn't.
 The village square met in the middle there
 where all eyes were its focus—a steeple
 rising above the tree's shadows, above
 the bells sounding hymns for time keeping,
 keeping courage for tomorrow's waking,
 tomorrows ago remembered and today's
 days away.

This was before the water rose. Before
 the chunks of rock were heaved upon the
 water's way.

A single boat directed me, then.

Directions weren't actual directions, there, where
 my east wasn't east as west wasn't your west, too.
 Despair isn't ever despair without itself there,
 and it wasn't. Because rain makes want makes
 us listen to its coming on or stirring about. It
 considered us lucky, then, to live without it, or to
 live with our made rain as we did or do or are
 doing or have done now for days or days and days.

Still, it stood. Not a symbol but a steeple. All glass
 but not glass, a steeple.

And then came the sacrifice. A village a village of
 saturation for better days to come. To build higher.
 To build stronger and higher than. A bubble of glass
 swallowed it all up and up. The steeple not sad but
 sinking. Not so much sinking but rising with
 the water, then. Now look down to it, now look
 down. Its glass is still glass but a broken steeple's
 just that same broken steeple.

Village ghosts are the lucky last ones lucky. Sing it with
 them,

Words aren't glass but are. A boat is a boat and is.

Greener

I amn't a terrorized plot burning the field once
again. The impossibility of combine borrowing

or actually finding an ox to pull anything.

The smoke blows West or wherever. Downed

after botching the harvest—I can't do to even
live. A so-so soil. Sorrowed. So simple. The *sow*

in the *after the dig*. Never find it under. Never do. *I*
opens *you*. A single husk before the turn. Some

light here and over there feed the trees. But the
broadest leaves are never the first to fall. No light
is illness. Sometimes they are.

Horrible Man

I'm so sorry
weighs less
than a question
mark. To feel
better about ever
laughing again
live within industry
and eventually,
for everyone, a steam
roller will park in
your front yard for
weeks.

Horrible Man

That shouldn't
make you afraid
of floods, you just
always will be, up
in your above the
flood plane apartment,
whispering, "the
Soviets aren't coming."
But finally they will,
machetes nailed to a
river boat, men singing,
naked. Or nude, rather.

Horrible Man

Don't let anyone tell you
you can't discern the in-
-flection of a car horn.

Horrible Man

How long you leave
the spiders you've crushed
on the wall on the wall
determines something
about something about you.
If I said, "sorry for running,
sorry for not speaking, sorry
for talking, sorry for having
eyes," could you, could I
forgive forgiving?

Horrible Man

My poor logos. A single,
faint echo of what it wanted.
A blind man's eye material.
Sclera's worth: its frame for all
the color. *This*, an un-working
flesh. My mouth devours.
A song sank the plane as best
it could. "West," she points.
"I didn't hear her, my eyes do
not see."

Horrible Man

To be one

mean

what you say and don't

write it down.

Horrible Man

If I admit to you all of the horrible things I've never done, we would either talk for a very long time or a very short time. Depending who I is.

Horrible Man

If I fainted often,
chronically, you
would speak
to me medically.
And you would
teach me, literately,
the definition for
“syncope.” I would
teach you about
the word poetically.
And you would
n't hear me but smile
anyway.

Horrible Man

It will come to a point
where speaking won't be
necessary. For me. Where
writing poems will take
the place of saying nothing
again. I really meant what I
didn't say to you, which means
you'll hate me for it and I'll just
disappoint you again
as carefully as I've ever
done. I see you're wearing
mascara even after saying
you weren't wearing any
makeup. The color taken out.
Your face an awning of
sand-hill crane shit,
just beginning
their migration south.
But color is for the seeing
and the sound says we're
done with all that. Me, a
simple door fallen from
its jamb. If I were to actually
talk again, to tell you about
something in such detail
it becomes the detail instead
of the thing, I would first have
to show you my gun case.
The 7 mm has the most
impressive barrel you'd say
and I would nod and reply,
but look!, and I would raise
the bayonet on the Chinese SKS
and smile. You would be so
disappointed, again, and call
me bleach.

Greener

But not now. Or then, yes. *It* pursues *its*.
A thing or. *I* pursues *I* or *you*. An it. A thing.

Whatever I am not or am. So then it
begins. A sad drop in. A beginning. An

end. Three ducks. Three mallards in a
parking lot far far from the

water. A staring. A standing. A long
-ing. One empty car stall. A snow bank

blinks back. Two green, one brown.
When stillness isn't but. When I am worthy
of myself. When I am not.

Mud

Eyes open to machines inside the morning
—men wearing boots *is* the day in no light—
Earth's edge cliffs the sun with a single strand
of whose hair stringing it along. a-tugging,
a tease. Stripped its vanity down to darkness,
but what isn't fancy? And why for argue what
you argue for? There is no such word as *can*..

It's high noon and a cowboy is filling his horse's
entire neck with gravel. “Cut the tongue out first,”
he nods, smiling. Worry more about where you're
going here, then ring the dinner bell because it's
time. Aphasia's bright light too bright for light. So
see nothing, then. Vision is simply language unspoken.

Everything is already happened.

Sinew

And this was something
 we knew. The black sand
 mingles the eclipsed beach
 water's blueness for bubbles
 to gray.

Seeing for us touchers
 in the dark makes do. I love
 momentarily.

I
 can finally tell you something
 true inside the time of this moment
 is gone now. And again.
 If I want to smell inside of
 your body smells. The way I when.

What happened to logic is
 sound and the things are neat to be not
 true?

Fill a mouth
 with scratched off slate
 scrape of the chest brain's
 loopy heart. It sounds like
 a song.

There must be something to
 speak the words of our saying
 soon. Some machine to pick
 out the stuck image of the past
 posting notice of suffer,
 the gargle to gag and to soothe.
 I wonder the streets knowing the
 what of the when.

The sashay
 of the spool just sits there. This instant,
 a single strand of spider silk on
 the ceiling becomes our sharing of.
 You, the meaning's becoming ghosts
 off your now what is said

so say became.

Why apologize at all after the trick
if it's what you wanted? Why stare
into the base of my neck and not
my holes?

Greener

Quick work. Sometimes something traditional
is best left said traditionally. As in—this house

left set up / set after the flood (but was actually
under all the water). Quick work. But no one told

me a dollar could be used for a dollar (it most
certainly can). But what if things weren't. As in

—This house ins't even a house after a sprinkle
(no wood rot, just no damn good). give me

the word for a word with no synonym. That
isn't my name but I will take it from you easily. We
all make up words like *sun* and say it.

Our Wandering Chest Brain

Like a dog in a car, you are
 unsure of your own move
 -ments. *Do I ever actually get*
to possess my frictions? Worlds
 understand motion as if to say,

“You're either rushing toward
 something or nothing. I am a
 bore, forced to slam you into
 you. And your flopping tongue
 in my wind.”

Accepting your
 dying as to understand is to dis-
 -miss most known or unknown.
 Immediacy is a blood blister's
 pinched becoming is creative.

I was very drunk or could be or am.
 You, hating precisely.

Not you because I'm laughing.
 Not you because you hate me for it.
 Not me responding to entitlement
 born when mothers birthed it.

Haven't earned life it wasn't chosen.
 Haven't earned death it was chosen.

But it really is hard to kill yourself.

Do we deserve? Yes.
 Do we deserve? Nothing or everything.
 The anger inside the deserving. A choice
 of living before being babies.

All life attends hopes with their answers.

No one asked our permission.

Hoping for answers is their guise for their despair.

But I have seen hundreds of city
 deer and have *true* hopes for their

dangling tumors. Like the sound
of a cigarette butt's ending on
an empty, metal ashtray. A cold
cold heat. Hot like the give in
giving. Lying to people about the moon.
Say, "waxing," or say, "waning,"
without authority.

"Yes,"

the say-so's say of all's agreeing.

"Some day, all deer will be city deer."

We'll quickly or slowly forget everything and yawn and
yawn and yawn.

You have six miles to pretend.

Greener

The brightest of nothing is nothing.
“Or so they say,” you say. Dust isn't

too much to tear away if you can't
not bare it. A lucky touch still feels

lucky, but her ache wasn't that way.
Find me a cellar door to store birds

away. That infested October. Crows
a-cawing too often for the city to say,

live. An open season. A sounded shot
-gun. Didn't mean to bleach the bottom
of his black sweats. He didn't mean he.

Tender

This primary bit of body
to actually be body. Flesh
is secondary. I have tolerated
touch for *feeling's* sake forgetting
thought is necessary.

I can think of you fondly if after existed.
I can touch the thought of your touch if possibility were possible.
Refuse as in trash, and *refusal* as in self
rest inside the symbiosis of skin's priority.

To hate
one's self requires any
conviction.

I feel sadly lacks the appropriate signatures.

It's as if the dog you killed actually cared about its killing.

Like the one last lick of bottle to say hello to yourself again.

The boy playing a man explains his self by showing 8 x 10" photographs of his childhood
to the general public.

Inside this story
well past its beginning
went something like this:

“Or maybe he was too afraid
of fear to actually hold himself
accountable to anything. Including
suicide.”

To care too much or not at all are both really just the same person standing in the same
spot looking in different directions of the same circle.

My circle.

Or the other lesser known story of the man playing a boy shooting pool with the rest of
them knowing too much of himself to actually be his self,

“I've had enough,” he stretched
and patted his belly.

When I say, “uncle,” what I really mean
is *mercy*.

Greener

I put a tooth pick inside a single macaroni
to pass the experiment. Make this stick

sink to then float again. This is busy gravel
and needs graded more frequently than a

road. This is where my house sits then. This
is not my arm. This is funny to somebody

who is sitting in my house soon. If you wait
long enough and see. The world. But I have

-n't a thing to do. This is my house where it
sits then there. This is my hand in water. This
is dancing me.

Our Wandering Chest Brain (*alternate text*)

"I'm going to lose you to someone worse than me who gives you drugs." --Paul Hanson Clark

"I am a fisherman / from the great / fucking plains." --Justin Ryan Fyfe

Like a dog in a car, you are
 unsure of everything. We move

because we are sad. We are sad
 because we are moving. But what about

no speed? Mortared soul stuck up in the up
 spinning a spiral of mud around the lost-key lock,

you, with your big
 truck and your swaggering disregard while

swinging 'round its cattle-guard. Work for
 work's sake is dirty business is creative

means nothing. I look / to you, / iron bar
 to be and then are. Leverage me into me

for the time being in time with no speed.
 We can no longer walk with the use of

our legs and lungs. Breathing without
 actually breathing to see. Red oxygen

eyes and death without death. A few hours
 of splashing in a pool where being *us* isn't

us. Absconding is hiding in plain sight. Left
 with leaves of no season, I piss on piss to piss.

I speak in wizard words with no words
 using all words but words and am drunk most

of time's time now / or none. Love is nothing but
 losing lost things again. I never find, I never

do right after doing right with pens in lands
 with no poem. And another no season becomes

for the sake of. Sadness from the continual does
 not mean tongues will ever be perpetual.

Considering this,
I speak / to you / about smoking your spit

licked up on paper. Being the carriage bearer of
carriages. Sad selling sad is in the money game

now. But life isn't / for living long means
nothing but is here now. I am only trying

to dance with my limbs, spider-like. Every leg.
Every arm. Smiling. Silent or sounding. Moving or not.