

on words & up words

SAMPLER

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Anamaría Crowe Serrano

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for Mark

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Claro está, Platero, que tú no eres un burro en el sentido vulgar de la palabra, ni con arreglo a la definición del *Diccionario de la Academia Española*. Lo eres, sí, como yo lo sé y lo entiendo. Tú tienes tu idioma y no el mío, como no tengo yo el de la rosa ni ésta el del ruiseñor.

Juan Ramón Jiménez, *Platero y yo*

SAMPLER

I

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SAMPLER

frontiers

words falling apart the legs of broken branches no simile or
similitude no language a rebellion of phonemes biding their
time in the confines of structure the confines of *your space or mine*
hoping there will be another place

a past /tense preferably more relaxed what is the word for
future the word for
word for

darkness that does not exist

words hold you back whereas objects breach your border
you look under your skin for an explanation sometimes there's
i.d. a pen a sugar sachet surreptitiously sneaked into your pocket
other debris but the lights are out and there's a smell of must a
line you must not cross femicide human sacrifice a line
beyond which

you are dust and few care

colour clings to you as a safeguard seven waves of the spectrum
translated as *who you are* short wave/long and that might be
who you are someone patterned oblong in the plural the
gama of colours disperses is not good enough you shrink
to an idea fumbling with consciousness absence
being

the destination you were aiming for is within and without
reach like trying to become a crustacean or a chimney pot
on one level yes multiple other levels lack stability

what's the word for reaching your dream but when you get
there it's unrecognisable arrived-arrivederci you will never know if
you made it crossed the border or if this is a phase a phrase

that includes the concept of reaching
there's always the sniggering doubt that the frontier
beyond which you cannot go and behind which you cannot stay
contains all of your dna

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up the hill

up the hill stars point pentagonal
in a language of their own so you say
though I'm lost in minor variations of jasmine
lady of the night distracted
by mythologies in the sky

ursa could be prowling in the shadows
cicadas screaming in her throat
and I'd never know not unless
you spelled it out for me

I can only hear the glass
of air along the road Onion
breathing as he draws his sword
heroic the why rippling
towards Cadiz eventually

he'll hit true north leaving a hole
where meaning

was

an elephant

I don't remember holding your hand
or being held love becomes
some yardstick that warrants
standards shouting screaming threats

your face red peony puffed and frenzied
blowing a blizzard through
this house of straw this house of fear
wrong answers snowballed stuttering

in the old cortina rumbley radio talk fills
the hour's ride home fills the sky
the trees the sun anywhere the eye
will wander melting into tar on summer roads
fills the water shortage and the terror
of my tartan skirt my hideous home-knit
cardigan uncool and fat the grief of error
stuffy fills the smell of sweat
the stench of conversation strangled in my throat

back home I hide behind the silver knives and forks
drown in their mr/mrs fiction dancing on the table
set with flowers and candles napkins
and my head freefalling
through barbed comment and contempt
crash landing sustaining
minor injuries I shortfall

stonewall the silence, murderous air
spoon packet mash and meatballs
some impoverished sense
of self recede and shrink
chewing quietly chewing no god comes

no good or meaning just the words
forced sweet amidst the mockery
words of grace and blessing good
virtuous words robust sound pillars bastions
of failure farce amen

all the truths invisible
as that enormous elephant still lingering over there
in the middle of the room

SAMPLER

the stress clinic

it's ok no one need know only negligible
impending threat i'm going to leave you
 let healing happen
i'm turning left into the coffee shop it's easy
 like this one step
 one more
comforting to sit
 even on seats slashed by spooks

i can wait learn patience is learnt on the edge
 other worlds where others wait
for the breath something that "presents"
 a hiatus between one distress and
the nest you're reluctant to leave

it's ok the world is out there still the density
you love suspended in space preparing
the next problem for you to solve you're good
at that talented
 are you ok? me too it's just
the acid sprung on a tensile in my stomach

without

without

reading because words make no sense
wanting
everything
all at once so it stays blistering with the sting
of 5 a.m. through my eyes through the bullet hole
in your bedroom wall

my head is empty

a pot punctured
wanting away again from your fire
my shell is slouched
towards
this chair wood
where a painter's hand articulated age
took the shape of implements horse-hair
scraping the retina

with

irony pity his joints swollen
deaf like my tongue when i bite it
bite it and you perfect the art of *no no no*
your mind working
over
time

Boosterstown

there I am
in the bend
of a swan's neck

under it
arching towards
limbo mud ballet

a nerve
stretched taut
across the marsh

muscle molecule
ready to rip
the tension of water

vertebrae
twisted between the bars
of trolleys

dumped in the cold
and the silt
patiently gaping

at syllables
the mutterings
of a cloud

my mind's eye
walled
as the train pulls away

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