

*Landscape from a Dream*

*Also by Elisabeth Bletsoe*

The Regardians: a book of angels

Portraits of the Artist's Sister

Pharmacopoeia

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**Landscape from a Dream**

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For my Mother and Father  
and Ian





## LANDSCAPE FROM A DREAM

*After Paul Nash*

*I dreamed about you, baby / it was just the other night  
and most of you was naked / but some of you was light*  
(Leonard Cohen)

### I

intelligence        lies  
at the edge of the body  
    in the skin  
along the littoral  
feeling:  
the weight of the cumulux  
    hearing:  
your tidal breath  
filling my cavities  
in liquid carbonic interchange

fissility of shale, its  
    slaking,  
plasticising when wet;  
relict textures of petechial haemorrhage,

spermatozoa,  
    saliva,  
        oil  
foliaceous, split-  
layered like fingernails, revealing  
the stem-ossicles of a crinoid  
        ghosting

*shattering*  
    *with equinox*

the black sand  
how it eats up light,  
abrades our flesh  
        falls,  
each separate grain  
    in scratching atonals

marginalia:  
    red & blond weeds  
        sway at the shoreline  
anastomose in a tholian  
    web

a small boat  
carrying the sound of your  
    heart's engine

## II

walled up inside  
translute bricks of water  
your hands make  
    white shapes,  
make a caress within  
    an elliptical orbit of  
        wave particles

making a slip,  
    slipping in  
grafting on a limb  
to a limb, fused  
    & drifting  
        through the amnion  
in marbrine light

above our bodies,  
the underneath of the surface envelope  
    is an ametrine laminate  
        skin  
now so rare & histamine  
becomes palimpsest;  
we write stories on each other

with our fingernails,  
red lines & white lines  
dermographics  
*my name, Greek words,*  
*ciphers &c. on my thigh*

dream of the stone  
*lapis*  
the indissoluble self,  
dream of the bull  
*tauromachia*  
fear of incest with the father

initiations  
& a paring away:  
we reach the chromosome body  
in the nucleus of the organism

across the bay  
activity without end  
but no volition  
the machine pumps silently  
pumping blood & oil

### III

we expectorate the fluid  
through which we have been breathing:  
                    the sea,  
left to its volumetrics

we must suppress  
the notions of childhood, that  
                    the hill  
lives somewhere in memory:  
when it appears before us  
                    climb it  
but not to lose ourselves  
                    among the genealogies of dispossession

become avatars  
put on animal masks  
                    falcon-headed  
you are shadow-shooter, can  
wound me & kill  
                    with a cast shadow  
your manifold eyes, its  
rutile threads vanish in  
suddenly-expanding-black pupil:  
                    how it eats up light

in raptorous solar flight  
through my nocturnal body,  
    star-cell crammed;  
proximity of blood and dung to  
the interpenetrative organs,  
    boli  
carried on peristaltic waves  
towards the horizon  
    incandesce in the chromosphere

we must make it through the membrane  
before the thing implodes, *AND*  
    *the fire that breaks from thee then &c.*  
red-red the sunrise  
bleeds from my lips  
    *o my chevalier*

#### IV

*even the simplicity of light  
creates a choice*

there being two types of loneliness, and  
the second is that of  
    lines & symbols  
an absence of gulls' tongues  
    de Chirico

spectral bays  
plague-entrances the sea  
    frays tenderly,  
dark perplexities of seepage  
from a loosely-knotted wound

and love a state of grace we are in  
    its globes  
tangle the uphill roots  
in the vortex gardens of  
the small coastal town, where  
    we wait  
among the architectures of barbarism  
for the invasion of the horses

★

the town is a lie, but  
not a lie that can cause  
any damage

*Purbeck coast from Swanage to Kimmeridge*