

Tender Geometries

Mark Dickinson

*Tender
Geometries*

Shearsman Books

First published in the United Kingdom in 2015 by
Shearsman Books
50 Westons Hill Drive
Emersons Green
BRISTOL
BS16 7DF

Shearsman Books Ltd Registered Office
30–31 St. James Place, Mangotsfield, Bristol BS16 9JB
(this address not for correspondence)

www.shearsman.com

ISBN 978-1-84861-335-5

Copyright © Mark Dickinson, 2015.

The right of Mark Dickinson to be identified as the author
of this work has been asserted by him in accordance with the
Copyrights, Designs and Patents Act of 1988.
All rights reserved.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My grateful thanks to *Tears in the Fence* for presenting
an extract from ‘The Tangles’.

Peter Larkin for his guidance, support & friendship. Edric
Mesmer for his patience & friendship. And these individuals
which along the way I’ve needed more than they might
otherwise know” Matthew Hall, Wendy Mulford, Harriet Tarlo,
Amy Cutler, Candice Ward & O. T. Banks. To Eiza, Nemina,
Sally & Ann x. And of course to Tony Frazer for all his
fabulous work

Contents

Sentinel-Stone	7
The Tangles	25
Nylonase	45
(i) (Sp K172)	47
(ii) (Flavobacterium)	59
Sen Pens Pastoral Net	65
microsleeplessbyclay	79

Sentinel-Stone

‘But what does it mean to live with the fantasy of commitment, to refuse to receive it according to the prescription of your local lyric poet, and how is *living with it* felt and experienced in language, and what has living with the fantasy and not the reality of commitment meant for a political culture remarkable for mass ‘public’ opposition to the wars prosecuted by their states, and how does duration find its place in poetic language, and can it, like momentariness, be thrilling?’

—Daniel Hayward

‘My poems are my Northern salt, left by a common river, only a gesture rather than a barter because obviously insufficient.’

—Douglas Oliver

The poets here may be accused of betraying their class in adopting a “higher” manner, but they also served the dual purpose of bringing “polite” poetry within the grasp of their own native public by relating it to their own places and experience, and of showing that this kind of poetry was not a prerogative of the upper classes, but that the underlings were perfectly capable of grasping its technique and content, and employing it for their own purposes.

—Peter Riley

‘I am going to replace the subject of ‘cow’ with ‘child’, in order to reply to your statement/question that: ‘it’s better to wear the skin off a dead child than to go and kill the child yourself.’”

—Coral Hull

‘It begged for a sentry at that crossing, an honourable
Dissembler standing between civic disgrace and a tithe
Gone white in the sun’

—Andrea Brady

A Raven bundled itself into air from midfield
And slid away under hard glistenings, low and guilty

—Ted Hughes

For E M

Open between the strings of language rivulets of the gift horizon where
we are not written to the letter between this state & that open-ness the
vague estuaries leafing through remembrance strands of a living

Seated beneath the stars relinquishing dreams of a memory
to breathe the changing light or seal before distinctions
approach derive the natural & settle within

the amphitheatre of a superstructure applying the solution of time
to the morning hid/den within the harmony of imperfect
constitution waiting passively for regularities

as the sun pleats the byres Never fully reconciled this human
that natural centripetal faith breaking apart the earth for a
fresh field of the sky linked by day

spent in the slightly nestled footings of faith
wild desolate influence recuperating in the mid
day sun /dark

emblem Raven personifies totemic god scarce upon the open sky the
categories of language fed fleeting felt of lovers
in the narrows of contact

on field & sea in towns & parks an open stick with a vertical crown
O' corvus Centrifugal from the reasoning mind
(resident in pairs of life) the mythic tread of earth seeding

the ground in the delicate approach where the conflict of dialogue
within the coherent scheme of a visible body becomes sensually draped
within the curves Where a hand tenders the button the small cogs

turn at the time of conversion the close of palms fingers the folding
sky nests defines a house of risen earth to the upper vaults
horizontal from the body the ground to the surface of the sea

& the daily variations of the innumerable sketch where symptomatic
intellect abstracts a copy faint within the strata of cloud like an on-going
bridge between relations of the habitable visible

& measurable number of the world A Raven
struck to the totem of god drilling the whole of origin with a dark edge of
wildness beneath the steel hull of an arc swerving the desolate

breach of un calculable horror settling within the geometrics of
disseminated images in the form of a forklift cleft under the anvil
with all the fetish fingers onslaught in a choice of form cast as

expiration ends meta passage opens they call across so not to close
upon to bridge with in-
finitely many scanning the source of what floats on by the sea trailing

behind its mystery for invisible structures petrified as the fearful course
these are the currents of sound the close of water horizoning hauled
before arrangement below the threshold prior to all

this fuss between boredom and confusion measuring and counting
between one and two the sensually given object
between the tread of thought the serial growth uncertain

linked by day the field in its rush to be completed as if
this box a portion of happiness or a riot of what we miss the dialogue
waning not remembering which as if this matters falling

upon the ground staging breath staging expiration before a small haloed
sunset flattening horizon in a long reach toward the con-vex form of a
cloud in the brilliant curve of colour shaping radius

folding a mirror the surface baptismal by what folds into the act
as registers of epoch or dance by way of a dream against
the out-world holding the steer which bolts

from the very thing we came for which is we are remembering
together beside the track beside the seaside this cone the
architect the number & geometry primed to the whole small

fingers wrapped around staring intent at the loss of flavour declaring
a truth of luxury functioning a song of loss & remembrance
sticky like toffee apples tree clumps in farms & parks

all these bind neglect tethered to history salt fields & sea fingers
around a purpose of class dis/ located declaring
less Raven you are the god among

the rabble of pebbles I need you picking among the bones
I supply a ticket I have a purpose this fork lift truck and all the naked
bodies Raven you are mythic like a paper-

weight you're legitimate black with feint metal figuring me
among the stony cast of walls Can I speak anymore "Krahh Krahh"
crying the desolate or the folds of yellow

Can I say with a centre and draw an arc forming a moon
in the square root of progression do I know or should I settle
in up lands or coastal cliffs singing my territory?

Helping my rioting friends because we feel like nothing so fight to feel like
something Raven is it here now is this the morning or just
another mornings flight into the plastic universe where I

would have to Disagree mining the natural with abandoned
forms still forming folding into each fold of willing choice still
measuring the cut of each fault in the unity of fold upon fold how

many types settle around this place you whisper your whisper & that
laugh so solemn shall we press into each other's otherness
twisting types shall we ripple across our own exactitude enacting

the fraying rights this pass of age transfigures this passage so many
times a square in a circle the I and the N of the dwelling I am not sure
about the stars but that's the milky Way & that's a home

the flower so delicate & I know it's strong the wind opening up
each passage of wings exfoliating mnemonic how these tern so many
ways of going over each scarce trails belonging stitch

where we are folding in to pockets of warmth spoons into the fold of
each other fed beneath these beds of stone and is this love calling through
the seams pressing avenues of slight sealing the earth into

cell the truth marks form within the veil of a radius
sprung to strike heaven this avenue that root before what's taken
embodying minerals embalming skin to breath and breathe

the strain of song each stitch folding the story remember
how it opened the song and how each note pleased your ears where you
listening Raven high above the pylon

did the song I sung reach or no is this the penultimate hour before the act
of this forklift truck piles high some bones is this the excavated tomb or
just some

earth mound or tumulus under the heavy swell of cumulous foraging
shells heaven between the culpable and the responsible god so close
beside the blushing act beside the coil inserted

in the dark flow of a quadrant the facets of all these di-
mentions of facts but what are you the seer before this act and the next
gravity is not weak it holds together your numbers

the prime origin the odd word spreading out
recalling a stone and an
ancient dyke with boundaries that can't be seen

from space Raven will you return this song to the
under/ world is the mantle open or does it have a code elicit me to
carry forth the joy of lapping where the birds will not be still

enough where the camera is not good enough I dream of a lens
so that I too can see into your eyes Raven do
you recognise me in the corridor between seas

oceans rise is this the swell of dreaming or so many seconds
of time and the intervals of space should I whittle down the mythic lay
cold anti or gaudily wrap myself in the skin of muslin titillating

my feminine wiles in the wild anal &
free in this the cover of earth a shallow hole of lying & all those
sheep the dead and swelling /small keys beside the intervals