

Martin  
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*The Melancholy  
of Anatomy*

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*for*  
T.C. Corless-Smith  
(1930–2020)

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I too feel the vast and shapeless melancholy of having been created.  
I'd rather have stayed in the immanescence of the sacred Nothing.

—Clarice Lispector, *A Breath of Life*

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## *To the Muses*

Hey qwerty I hear you  
hoped to be important  
turned out ordinary  
thas ok. Wasn even kind  
or do my best  
those days when I lean out  
and feel the passing truck  
society is full of kids  
who didn't ever get the balloon  
see you on tv and hate myself

Oh qwerty can we count  
ourselves into oblivion  
she doesn't love me as I hoped  
I can't seem to convince her  
how the dogs are in a swoon  
for god knows what reason  
chewed the shoes and sausages  
gave up myself a century ago  
hilarious the vanity this jacket shows

When mother died  
her open mouth had nothing fit to say  
because there's nothing but the rattle  
of the curtain beads to show our passage  
from the nylon sheets  
into the ether over recent  
duck ponds where the invalids  
are wheeled out for fresh air

Oh qwerty hear the cars  
on Highway number whatever  
and hear the geese ridiculous  
on top of multi-storey buildings

honking incongruously  
just like me is why the passing stranger  
smiles because we both know we are dead  
and no one loves us and the goose  
has nothing quite as wrong as we do  
stacking unassailable anxieties  
with fervor borrowed from lost  
histories abandoned half way through.

Oh qwerty under ice  
The whalers cannot find the whales  
nor can the eskimos  
I'm tired against your face  
we care about the future  
out of superstition  
that a moral tale might find us out

qwerty with your azure plastic cover  
like the earth  
from outerspace  
the semi blackness of our sphere

I cried into a cup  
How's that for performed sincerity  
She wanted to break up with me  
So thrilling I forgot to breathe.

Oh qwerty quiet on your bed  
With pious disregard for my solicitations  
how is a voice to wander  
on this empty plane  
unless you guide his wanton  
hope. Scroll as we might  
the future cannot raise an ear  
until you call to her  
faithless and immune  
I like an accident



that gathers all these lines  
am of no consequence  
except for happening to register  
a mere impression on the matter

qwerty in paris cairo rome  
alone with the impossible  
and infinite I'm bound  
why I recall the names of schoolyard bullies  
rather than the title of a favourite book  
hold out your hand to strangers  
just to feel rejection as a common bond  
hail to the passing citi-cab  
thrill in my anonymity  
the Russians dream of mother Rus  
the Danish with their haughty frowns  
the Germans like a plate of wurst  
the English fumble under eiderdowns.

qwerty curves in space and time  
collapsing in synaptic voids  
all alligators facing east  
all litter coloured orange, red & green

what a mean is that we're alone  
alive and thas impossible,  
the subject organized  
to make the most of this  
which for some years has seemed  
as if it were a trial I failed?  
Are we afraid to no longer bee  
To not hold out an arm to touch  
The passing tree burns  
as there's no  
tomorrow  
just a day (this one)  
along the way to none

I sin a wasp  
Size off my fingre  
Sitting top a yellow fleur  
It says to me tomorrow morning  
I'm gone be dead  
And you still here

One thousand *Götternamen*  
crawling on the weedy stamen  
*totamque infusa per artus*  
*mens agitat molem et magno se corpore miscet*

There may be fire dancing on the screen  
Dear qwerty fifty crews outmuscled by a spark  
There is a drone that hovers over every noun  
and when we smile we see ourselves on television  
When I loved last century I had a bicycle to get me there  
and now I'm sitting in the airport lounge,  
trying not to see the daytime tv host ejaculate his praise  
repeated every thirty minutes on a loop  
until some other element is added to refresh the tape.

Hey qwerty it's impossible to say  
to speak at all. I called the other day and heard myself  
half a second afterwards, and knew it wasn't me.

Saw a sparrow didn't need  
me drinking tea & eating lemon slice  
Getting high and disappearing  
Like old times and mother dear

Saying I never knew what  
It felt like to be alive  
The birds hop in the sapling &  
I walk by and die *im Abendrot*

\*

If you were raised as a girl  
qwerty where is your body now?  
if love was dropped from the basinet  
onto the shining boards of the *salle à manger*

even an atom can find no home  
its name around it like a satellite  
who should a self pretend to find  
craning in her cot, her toes entwined

\*

cousin qwerty plays the Sybil cards  
address the morning as you would a friend  
a relative as such it is (of course)  
she can't help but suffer true to type  
and miserable we say and do in fragments  
miserly withdrawn from common intercourse

If I had a table qwerty I would bend  
you over it you nonexistent muse  
and gingerly accuse you of my own desire  
which muscled you out of the air

if I has a voice it is an echo  
of your reckoning  
and swallows spit to punctuate  
the exhalations of my sobbing aria

\*

reported missing Thursday night  
we continue to follow  
all leads and enquiries if the public  
spectacle of loss and rhetoric that ends all hope

we ask the muse to help us answer  
questions we have never asked  
please don't hesitate in coming forward  
a dedicated line has been set up

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# The Melancholy of Anatomy

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## The Melancholy of Anatomy

To analyse this motionary carcass thus:  
I can't help noticing  
the swayback dog's  
caducous wandering

as my father regularly falls  
conscious of his failed anatomy but  
subject to a daily constitutional  
wondering when he'll hit his limit or the floor.

The German word "*gefallen*"  
indicates how beauty falls  
upon the aesthete  
irrespective of his will

feet might function  
in our hero's quest  
where moral strength ignores  
the benefits of sensible retreat

(a fundamental paradox prevails  
until resolved by its inevitable collapse).

## The object observed (sn\*w)

Whether to establish it as found  
Or made—I crater to a fault  
The intention to support a place  
From which to look out from.  
Flurried in the storm we might  
Project our future home as recompense  
But are we capable of making snow  
In infinite variety as if to show  
Uniqueness is the quality of now?  
Conscious of the revelation  
Of an-always-happening—such as  
A snowstorm that reveals whilst covering  
A pathless route part me part pathless route.

(Imagine a still lake reflecting snow  
exactly at the instant that the snow  
touched to its surface—there is no  
need to make another place to hold  
events like this—the snow, the lake,  
and seeing it, reflecting if you like  
upon this show is still this show.)

(A snow globe held at home  
upon the mantelpiece—ironic purchase  
to ironically memorialize a trip  
where tourist feels apart from self  
and from the destination both—so  
shake the globe as if to register intentionality  
contained in an exemplary universe in miniature  
with still unique white plastic chips  
that swirl and eddy over the now golden  
*Tour d'Eiffel*, monument to industry  
Outliving its initial task to mark the centre  
Of a temporary festival—snow and the



Empty streets—not even made to resemble  
But to replace ironically a memory  
Made in another country by a company  
Employing workers' memories bent toward assembly).

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## The Knight Adventurer

We must think of a weightless mobility  
Peculiar to the knight errant  
A bodiless doll in crinoline  
Held up by a bodiless doll

And upon us a horse with a whisper  
That opens the gate of our stall  
A warmth from the mumbling lips  
That breathes on the neck of the doll

Mince and roar, mince and roar  
Across the dark tableau  
A bat in a glass-fronted cabinet  
pinned over the watermeadow

Christ in his moment of glory  
Flies over the houses and wells  
In a tunic resembling Christmas  
Festooned with baubles and bells

The dolls and the bat and the Jesus  
Put away in a drawer for the night  
As the parrots and monkeys and persons  
Collect what they can of themselves

Horrendous adventures await us  
As stories we tell to the wall  
A lover is shaving her arm pits  
In a globe of gold light down the hall

Sitting around the round table  
And speaking the names of themselves  
The venturous heroes of selfhood  
Trade tokens of meaningful tales

At last comes the time of the blackbird  
Stood highest of all on his bough  
And lifting his heart to the tip of his beak  
He begins once again to recall

With no words to suggest it has meaning  
The knights are perplexed by his song  
But the longer he sings his anthem  
The less they remember themselves

The moon has been present all evening  
A face at once poignant and dull  
As the last of the gold and the last of the blue  
Disappear in the notes of his tune

He sings to the end of our history  
In absolute bliss and disdain  
A day when the world has stopped meaning  
And returned to itself in a dream.

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