

*The Guide
to Being
Bear Aware*

SAMPLER

Previously published works by SJ Fowler

Poetry Collections :

{Enthusiasm}: Test Centre 2015

The Rottweiler's Guide to the Dog Owner: Eyewear Books 2014

Enemies: the selected collaborations of SJ Fowler: Penned in the Margins 2013

Minimum Security Prison Dentistry: Anything Anymore Anywhere press 2011

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Limited edition poetry publications :

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Art Gallery Bouncer w/ Patrick Coyle: Gauss PDF 2012

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And to Livia and my family, above all else.

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Fear the bear, the bear is real

I know they do not know.

George Seferis

In this universe there are free broken bones
for those who listen to their own songs
without headphones.

It's a better version of speaking
called singing,
which makes the state smooth,
and enters into worlds
of which you bourgeois audiences,
scratching your backs loudly,
remain blissfully unaware.

It's a version of emotions
but only appearing upon the surface,
needing just a glance to be felt.
It's like you pretending you can't be shocked,
just before you are shocked
at the first inexplicable
sound or forced gesture
upon a stage.

Really the state of yourself beyond surprise
is not accessible,
and as a car pours through your living room wall,
so the brickwork falls in,
like a sure sense of justice,
that has just nowhere to go.

It's all a palette after all,
a serious waste of considerable talent,
watching sounds like music
as though they were sights.

Truncatus Tractatus

*Everything there is hard on beauty
like a bee draining a flower.
Sa'id 'Aql*

Can someone provide a succinct summary of masterworks?

Your lips give warmth
otherwise denied
but if we get into it, get out.

You block the canal:
for you were born
between the underground
and the ground.

You are pink by volcano half-starts.
To what waters do you take your armour
and your darling?

In what pure spring do you bathe your nose?
You are a cup
full of clear water,
boring.

Rather the high red
with my own breasts like tangerines,
I'll compare myself to taste
and put some real thought into it.

Something stuffed with something dumped.

Flowers and meat,
requiring an expensive engagement ring
makes you an awful person.

This is the lowly tune of a beetle,
no regrets
and I would give life to such a person
if I could make people.

It serves me right to suffer

Duck
she waddles through the dust
in which no fish are smiling
Vasko Popa

From the trouble of the world
comes melting seas
which form land,
from which plants grow
and so I turn
supergrass,
sleeping curled, legs broken, in a cell,
calling for water,
retracting my politics
to eat in various houses
of disaster.
In the hours of troubled memory
before I fall asleep
I remember all those cruel comments online
and the smiling fish
I ate willingly,
descaling their backs
as though I were unwrapping a present.

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Bears won't attack me

A friendly history
of vegetarianism,
that which lurks in the shadows.

Livia says bread is in the nose and throat.
Beasts were tame,
when she said that,
tracing back the relationship between food and life,
we see that it stems from a chemical reaction;
sunlight builds up
complex compounds
within plants
which can be used by animals when consumed
and then stored by them;
an energy to grow and breed.

And that's not enough for you;
to see it become a component of fertile soil
the metabolic process by which a living organism
puts off the onset of decay?

Merely assimilating,
from the greek meaning change or exchange,
organisms consume food and exude waste.

Bears attacked me

They're so delicate,
that's why they're those above,
who can't be loved,
asking *why can no one love me?*
Like a blind bear biting my crotch
this evening is a letter of correction.
Sex follows water,
compulsion follows nature
into a magazine.

There have been two marathons to suffer.
One was running
the other a reading.

With two dogs, two female dogs,
I collaborate.
So if we could have quiet debate
for the letter of the sun
that burns permanently
into my brain,
I can say it was a bitch,
surrounded by the suffering
of museums.

Sometimes the story
 like the man who imagines
he is special
to the prostitute,
 like life,
 goes on and on and on and on so long
you wonder if it's a parody of its own length.

Quietly shown the door

in memory of Tomaž Šalamun

In beauty of awe is the furthest from history
a human can get. But if pressed,
until nobody is coming out from the little cans of the past,
there might be a shift. History is eroded into its friend,
Tomaž, who didn't propel weapons
and wouldn't go to fight.
He kneaded round moulds and inscribed them above the livestock,
like a brand, but not that word, as that word means not what it once did.
He was the one who doesn't pledge the jet (how would he pay for it?).
He bit at the serene health until the great deafness told him
use iodine, dress up, stay put – your double barrel is the clay
and on the hard sand grains grow.
Was he a little torn apart by a length of life?
Of course, lights fuss about everyone,
and each life will have at least one moment of justice between it.
Two dates, that is all it is.
This is him, he went to the store with his wife to buy water all the time.

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Grab that nettle

*The panther takes its name
from the Greek word for "all" (pan),
because the panther is the friend of all beasts*

Isidore of Seville

With the world's pounce,
a purple bruise.
Ask those that row
about physical pain?
Ask them, what does it look like?
It has the hooves to help others.
It has the teeth to bite the needy.
It has eyes to see misery.
It has the ears to hear the education
you haven't had.
Meanwhile,
I have had to time to reflect,
don my careful coat,
and claim no eulogy is due for duty.
Draw the dogs who smell the morning air.
Wear black eyes like crowns
in designer skin.
I ask, not for the first time,
make us chase.

It's a legion

*You are not the first one – of my women
o, there were many more
but this is the first time, believe me
I've been with such a whore*
Sergei Alexandrovich Esenin

I didn't write the epigraph so don't get angry,
it is not unfortunate that I am associated with lust.
Paramount is shamelessness in the cold,
where it can't and won't happen because it's not allowed.
Get off me too, it's not nice for both of us.
Protrusions become intrusions of course
and then, suddenly, it's a legion,
a friendly party that everyone is telling me they're enjoying
and that I'm spoiling,
by not enjoying.
Then they become forgetful
and in the sack, getting drunk
are like corpses.
As 'friends' speak of 'sleep'
I listen still.

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You'll find a bee and sting me with it

I'll book myself a bee-hunting bee
Peter Riley

The length of bodies, stacked end to end,
allows more room
for the numbers to be known by many.
Bodies become rides across the sand.
They get icy.
They become the brick in walls
splitting the lands of a baron,
dividing the museum from the living quarters.
In the court,
there are still those who kneel for mercy.
Still robes becoming entangled in stirrups.
Still people falling from horses.
They land in the mud,
into the ether, namely, that which is not
and need not be.
That which was once a vision and is now reality.
Knowing that, I tell you,
is a wholly untrustworthy path
for you cannot know what is not.
Our universe with no other purpose
than its own existence.