

*equilibrium's form*

**Also by Susanne Dyckman:**

*Counterweight* (Woodland Editions chapbook)

*Transiting Indigo* (EtherDome Press chapbook)

# **equilibrium's form**

**S u s a n n e   D y c k m a n**

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In the poem ‘following her geometry’, the italicized line, ‘*a small thing fits into a small hand*’, is from Elizabeth Robinson’s poem ‘Treasure Chest’. Also, the poems titled ‘apparent horizon’, ‘from a distance’, ‘convocation’, and ‘forgetting was only temporary’ draw on the writings of Kabir and Antonin Artaud.

Four of these poems were included in the chapbook *Counterweight* (Woodland Editions), and sections of this book were first published as the chapbook *Transiting Indigo* (EtherDome). I wish to express my appreciation to the editors, Jaime Robles (Woodland Editions), and Colleen Lookingbill and Elizabeth Robinson (EtherDome).

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*For my sister,  
Christina Marie Preddy*



## how a life is made

sky bone arm

eye

what is known is

dusk silence hand scar

not a sound but

word

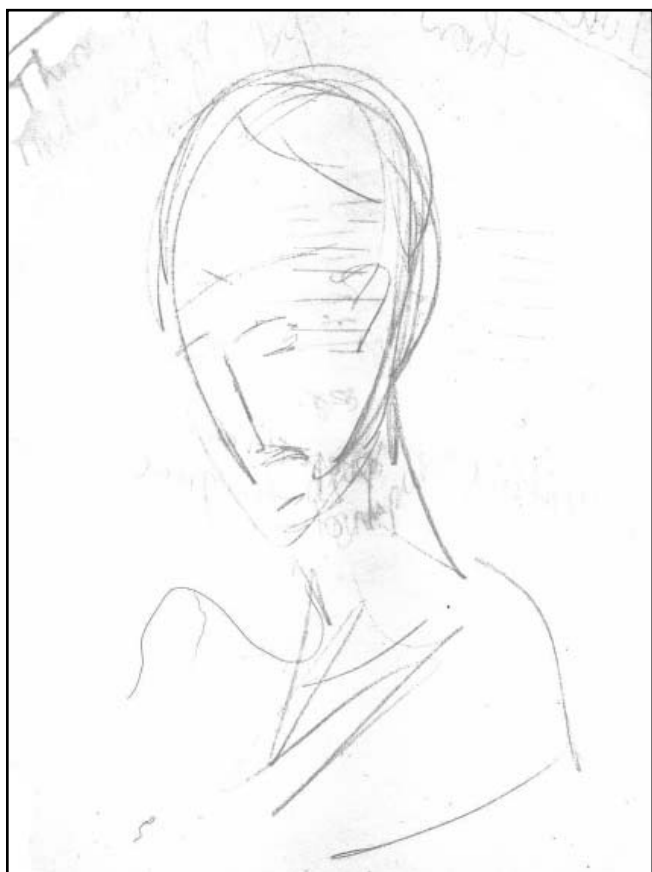
air

storm syllable the more precise

wave determined and to

white

damp of clinging star thought skin fire



## history

I live in an arid climate, but what I know is rain. Puddles that form in the lows of the yard, the dampness of the walls. The skylight dripping onto the kitchen table, so I have to hold the morning paper aside to keep it from getting wet. Water pools on the threshold and I roll up an old towel to block it. There is rot on the windowsills, spots where I can poke my finger into the wood. Spiders build nests under the eaves of the roof. Fog rolls over the house morning and afternoon. The paint on the siding peels, a wall of open lips.

## sitting with words

i.

a torn vestment

a color of night      the more precise

vista of melting ice

that is    an inebriating weave

rippled as early glass

or the lift of the horizon

sliding over embankments

or the left unsaid

being broken water

ii.

dipping fingers  
in shadow play  
is all I know  
unplumbed      quaking  
every word sought is  
collected and distilled  
wormwood and a winding sheet  
lead never gold  
— I am your sleeping —

## water: collection

as my legs grow numb

and the fingers of my hand that collect shells

turn numb

I fix to the tide-

waters'

rustling

a bit of wood and bone reveal

all that was

all that asked

## postscript

& *gone* but warned the day before *goodbye was too hard*

& what to do with bottled vetiver why she likes it so

(more at jonquil more at diminished)

*in saying* *determined* to take a warmer region

collecting and to put would she? breathe not hold

*to drive down that street, which is the way I usually go . . .*

*of course* &

— in a lengthy tête-à-tête

how to say of where we are conversation is not a quest

*absurdly* *it didn't work*

from any locale someone leaves the will to be

every step & after

*now gone* sense of static, turning to the radio

**soundings**

or as cowed frightened into

**submission**

**compliant cycling arms**

**advice** **never depend on others**

— omitted —

**admit**

empty oyster      lackluster      points of meringue

damp of pearly fog

to kiss      as low to ground

as is

base

looking for stops

inside

to interrupt

from any chosen point

foot      cold pacing  
a matter of

tile under

the honed

flint    retracting    heals

syllables hidden    behind

more syllables    there's the scar

short    where the long and lovely word

lingers

a back arched in sand

the surface    elbows    feet    sprawl

or

bird song returns song

others counter / to mirror

that curiosity / flying bones

## history

The ocean is on our right as we start down the mile long stretch of white sand, arm in arm. There is a dampness around her mouth, even though the wind is blowing and my lips are starting to crack in the sunlight. She smiles with her moist mouth and hands me her canned drink to hold while she tightens the white scarf knotted under her chin. We are almost the same height and weight, like twins, except her walk is slow and I need to hold back to match her pace. Her skin is brown, not a healthy brown but a shade of sickness. She's cold so I take my blue quilted jacket and give it to her to wear. She gives me, in exchange, her black and orange shawl. It makes my skin itch.