



A LATE SKETCH
OF FINAL DOVES

MATINA L. STAMATAKIS

A Late Sketch of Final Doves

Matina L. Stamatakis

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for my father
Demetrios Stamatakis
1958-1985

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Contents

Baudelaire	1
A Sketch of Erosion	2
Born Again	3
When Gertrud Kolmar's Red Lips Purse Themselves Into a Throat-Bird	4
Hymnody	5
Innocence	6
Hyperborea	7
Breathe As Solid Object	8
Counterfeit Man	9
Idyll For Bei Dao	10
Facing The Centrifuge	11
Texture	12
Metztli/Atl	13
Paper/ Speech	14
New War	15
I Think My Love	16
The Disappearing	17
Libido	18
Changeling	19
Womanhood	20
Imagine	22
Riffing	23
Whirligig	24
Father	25
A Thread To Bear The Knot	26
Splinters	28
Playing Dead Swan	29
Ringtone Was Stuck On You Better Go Now	30
In Response To Huidobro's Midnight	31
In Estrus	32
To Dream Of Illusionists	33
Melted Patterns	34
A Sketch Of Disappearances	35
A Sketch Of Omissions	36
	37

Orchis	38
The Warren	39
Inside/Out	41
Parasitic	42
Apertures At Dusk	43
The Greatest Minds	44
Narrative	45
Apology With Salt	46
Rebirth	47
Affirming Grace	48
Bloodletting	49
The Air Itself	50
Trompe L'oeil 2	51
After Flight	52
When the Sternum is a Cold Furnace	53
Upon Reading Combs' St. Thomas Poems	54
Audobon's Vision	55
The Disappearing 2	56
Mute If	57
Landscapes Without Fruit	58
Tether	59
Born Again	60
The Adulterers Bride	61
The Mission Of Roots	62
Vapor Song	62
[in]organic	63

Baudelaire

of melted mouths piercing oculi [it is how you see]

& teeth to passion blending rhythms
caught in seethe

with madness vagrant/

wild-eyed [I love —

you see— your torso

[vessel of fabrics carved by the sea]

it *is* how you see

excites shipwreck

in all languorously tossing this

tossing this a

-way

A Sketch of Erosion

no longer knows this earth

as its body begins but ends

somewhere as a breath

of what expelled sigh

has creased

into the dirt

—echoes

Born Again

through pressure points & rotations

a sigh among them

taut & winnowing

through the fingers I

translation of the Black Sea

I seas that collect salt

& brine dialects

I recollect the gibbous moon

as even the darkest of nights

still amplify this light

my throat details the course of rivers

I have never delivered

myself in

& numen— a flash

of him entering between the wet

When Gertrud Kolmar's Red Lips Purse Themselves
Into A Throat Bird

to this trill dove:

mine mossy-eyed mix of goldenlack hair

mine foreign recall with the angels of sighs—

mouths springing flesh roam'd wild

flesh roam'd outside its tender ruff—

flesh so beyond the thighs mothered in

taut coil exploring nudes I could not translate

with the bonemass through eyes

baby-eyed [could not replace the larynx

with steel] to this: a world of elaborate

mistakes & you drawing the breath of bleak histories

into your lips

Hymnody

of murmurs *murmurous*

& what grows itself in the jowls

a quiet howling vision a reminder

of tongues once probed & plotted

with a conviction even Christ could not shake—

let be it resonant in this let be it nude revel

in its curvatures its dangers let it be

[carve of

demons in ash]

Hyperborea

& spillage of earth's thick unguent is out of fashion
view the less traveled animal returning to wilderness
to tease warm fur — the garden is wilder
in the mind & blinks & flickers in midnight's
orbs into frozen fruitless
sex where no raging waterfalls to rest on the navel
dreams are going going
gone to a life panting to the very end
then settles into clouds of chill
forever
mixed into

Breathe As Solid Object

with air sacks all nestled
in their plump
building up to a mouth—
a fissure where irises rise
to wake the dead
each unfolding of a new day
write *palimpsest*
so the tender scroll of lungs
grasp a memory
as tangible as ever
leave no laugh out
no unaccounted for sigh
breach no forgetful air
to hum cartilage &
bone into

Counterfeit Man

in lamp-form it dims

to coarse his bone

where flesh is made unreal

in these flitted transparent angels

[I so hex these tendons &

phantoms from his abdomen]

he is sigh of precarious nothings

or ouroboros now keen to constricting

the vantage to bitten orange &

bitters his sex hung rigid in between

curtains of wasted sweat

Idyll for Bei Dao

swathes of alluviated brown skins

swathes of dawn in Autumn

perchance you are a boy [a dreaming boy]

ascending to the melody of what is left

after turmoil

birthing a new era

through concrete strata

you are a boy a boy chasing the seams of pages

for lost feathers granules of sand

naked at sea in your imagery

you are a ghost a pale ghost

calculating how much of this dying light

passes through your hands

& what is left cupped into your knuckles

solidifying the secrets of angels

Facing The Centrifuge

you find yourself a shadow of a time once gathered up
in a poem & calculate the wingspan
of unnamable birds [it is be face &
faceless at the same time] & come learning
absence as the lord in every wound — [
just be sure to push your fingers into the ribcage
of the earth]
son...
you are like a woman
with enough terrifying silence to fill ghosts ghosts visible
in your dreams
ghosts of you in another dimension ghosts are.... lights
out grasping at never & you
awakening on the verge of a gasp

Texture

knows not its proportions—

is unbounded & awakened

is paper slicked with gadfly spit

is sprawl of loose ligaments

plump esophagi

so's the bone protrusion

& archaeopteryx specimens

so's the dung beetle imprints of motion

along sand & the tiny hairs along her backside

to mark the moment of ripples

Metztli/ Atl

& she reckons it her nettled hair

full of Aztec blood &

if she could stop heaving this dry eclipsed
belly—

this need for hyperbole tongued this

vessel with lips & suckle with all its might

the dry earth the cracked earth

a parched name moon not rendered in the gash

—her tight containment of laments

[*ointment* /
water]

Paper/

— to feel vast to attract/

not attract a pressed word full

in the youthful crease of / to make the fingers

feel too much of themselves lessons &

enlightenments stretched into progress —

bowed into weightless stems we kiss

become necessary in a kiss to influence the thought of

veins/ mouths/ poem— gatherers of

language plump with throat — turn out a

page — turn

into saliva & let fly to leaflets of

Speech

the quickness of thought

sense the breathing divisible

hands & their knuckles

raw so's the pumice of a breathy crackle

so's the voice that teaches you its space &

spites the starling— what burns is ?

what is is what is lingering

in then out of you permuting

infinity

New War

take this new frontier

for wind-worn sparrows

twisted saplings

& all this mottled fur

take this [drifting childless

into palms weathered within this]

of lips that

once felt weightless in this

but they —as with everything—

taste the brine & seethe with this new

now is not your love poem

period

is not your presence with smiles

& now our lips are exactly choirless

blushed & sprouting wounds

I Think My Love

is a late sketch of final doves

& reckons the moment of bewildment

bewildered as me or was me I think...

love what comes next [if

anything] ? what is pressed on my lips

like hurt? I think... lord! *this*

lord I never knew suddenly surfaces as stigmata

on the lips.... worn hands clenched in dead grips

for you o' lord I think... suffering

used to be for idiots now it is love a list of parables

nobody ever follows now it is o' this

just to forget

The Disappearing

that which begins & breathes

anonymity of late summer

as a terminal cancer — the flow of bone

out of skin — how it is countered:

nothing with more nothing

where life is written as the coming

of undone

Libido

it is the swarming in the wax—

as skin knows it is inevitable rupture

& searches for the scent of a madhouse

where all men go to the gallows

but not before begging

for the sweat of a final woman

Changeling

& possesses me to do wrong things

with my wrongness

so's this frenzy effortless so's the eyes

narrowing-in seeking the black slit of shadows

& harken me harken me

to thick lusters of the illumined-less

& room-less— my son was once

a mark of twisted saplings

was once a blush of black blood

[I carried his secrets with me

for nine months] I understood

him in the swelling of me

understood so many things

dwelling

in my belly– I swaddled it with lunacy

until lunacy carried me onward /a

changeling

Womanhood

I search for a warm to bury myself into

instance the grave snapshot cautionary

& orange in this hour instance the sparrows nest

instance eyes much smaller — fingers bowed into herself

a fading color practicing a line or space between a gash of

[so many unnamable parts] unravels of twine

of leather

in case she was the hard-to-be-touched

thanking the scalpel for its precision

whispers *I have kept you from all tender things*

Imagine Him As If He Is Christ But With The Sex And Violence

we carry on with sticky dialogues

gumming at our gristle

this milky cud

between us gets fatter

you could try to poke a stick at it

you could try a finger— bone

straight into bone

Riffing

this heart song it is not pragmatic

is to the strum stun is

swallowing in it &

willingly go willingly

to that home

of swelling chord I know

Whirligig

a bone-mix pinked in all its marrow

"little sprig" or "tetherer to skin"

cleave its wiry weft to pull quick—

not be coy with

disassemble & 'rouse

the neck to bloom

tender-tissued metals

Father

it is later than a grave without him —a word
as it disappears in a voice that no longer calls home
so's the taste of seeping into all this aether [it
possesses this
empty chair— it is 27 years of unbeing]
without him time
coarsens a ripe wound time is dark
without the spark
& a thereafter is just to be within us enduring
as a child endures its tender growth just because it has
no other choice —to
endure
write all things down as they happen unfold
the notes isolate
them in your eyes *child* — I

whisper no sweet no

longer no spew of laughter as it were before
the child-eye
became adulted

A Thread to Bear The Knot

this is where nerves are

stirring fever in the air

this is where a black harvest

plums — ribs kiss

where cleansed with salt with dirt with —

in that which is *sans titre*

to a spectacle of raw knuckles

& fingers worn into oracles

[the mark of God's bone] —

see the narrow in between

see our necks outstretched

to veins showing through

Splinters

of torchwood all bodied &
with no apologies this burns before it
 photographs of curled figures [her face
striking before the flashes
of it go out to a chalky black] dear
dearly unrecognizable missive

—I write—

 dear shrapnel: you disintegrate those wild hairs
 tossed into ash
you ignite the moment dream turns into
 wakefulness
 turns into stroked tides of red

Playing Dead Swan

to grace a high neck — hair

in an unscrupulous twist of nettles

flow of sinuous limbs unhinged

bare breast & thin fingertips a Harpy—

a hymnless hard lip boasting toothless in its pluck

all oiled with ointment fish

— with the faces of lovers

so close to the jaw bound in their sapless

traces of earth they in their finite bitten

it is within naked linen splay so white

one can almost gild the lily into a smile

blush painfully this fragrance of black

In Response To Huidobro's Midnight

drapes a cloudless hang cool night
air vaporous turns of leaf-glide
hours after sunlit hour gliding hours
in the earth's belly where we think we are
tender alone & unaware — it is October
the sun wanes sooner these days
& ears bow out to receive melodies of a nascent frost
 [we bite our nails into
 quieted nubs — we grow older before dawn
more febrile] dear Vicente: your cold house
 in a cold room
 in a cold land
 reminds me of air suspended in pause
our faces coolly placed to the window searching for
 signs of Erebus
in Midnight's crest to mold ourselves into being

In Estrus

are days of the distant

reaches of fingers —leaf

ribcages blossom

veined with wanting

seek this heady

stigma— this nectar marked

with nestles of mud

this windowed

uterus her flashes of

sharp teeth [a sigh:

my body is my

body but there is more

of me beyond

the curve]

To Dream Of Illusionists

one must exhale code—

a fragrant pique

one must offer phantasms

go through unstilled doors

— palming nuclei of lamplight

peripheral

this soothsay so's the constant of wonder

in the nondescript— edgeless rather

to dream gone mad

in its pillow

the stirring & tangled of

what beams infinite

in its muffled laughter

Melted Patterns

dripping with— or what dampens or other

lovers tapping in the watermark kiss

or what my eyes appear

warped a thousand times over

to dream of plucking

coordinates from nerve endings

—drips out a haze haze of

numbed nevers

A Sketch Of Disappearances

a little curve a little coil

& after you is *you* a Gemini

or cupped in palm wild vertebrae spilling out

non-corseted as God's plan takes heavy breath

& sparrows nested 'neath the gather—

in aether: ephemerae / twigs / hair / pulse

you or what asphalt petals move up to

your swollen bodies in haste

of no settlement within their borders

A Sketch Of Omissions

to stop speaking — & I have disappeared

or dispersed my belongings to evade

or call to light the specter midway

through portals

[cultivating clumps of hair voodoo]

& I am what the luminous filter outlines almost

accidentally but I am not musk of red leaves fires

in Edo a sketch

of apparition swan blood kneading

into the leaving out of martyrs

Orchis

& grow their selves out of clay

the blush root— a hand furled

now the elbow shoot between spaces

& placement

a choir of sparrows

that know the breadth of their wing-beat

is just a breath & what billows below the feather

is no fault to the eyelid

The Warren

-for Alexander Jorgensen

nothing comes

but leaves from

the mouth "little thistles"

if not interested

then why bother

counting eyelashes?

he says [rather

indifferent to textures]

suppose flesh is

what lies under

our heads

etching borders

out of habit

hope for symmetry

&

Inside / Out

return at the nape all indiscretions — I have want
of less pulp & so a poem is naked & stands
before the man clutching her insides / out

& the man is a grasp of unscrupulous flesh

& the man is not a bird

by any stretch of the imagination —is not so
uncommon inside her

is not or what it was an absent space

the monstrous growth of dark

Parasitic

may think you are an angel

but you seethe with— humming

lanky thorax

God's eye bobbing in a jar of spit

& specimen this

flea of being this

instinct from birth

you are no butterfly of order

no smooth inner lining of—

shimmer

reminding one of a beautiful death

Apertures At Dusk

& with their black rooms

of moon-frame

or fretwork of cells

sun falls into stomach

nightjars veined vines

from a tortured pear — a window

gnawed-at too soon

The Greatest Minds

let us reshape what is impervious
to make thorough by water-thrust —
so the pitter-patter in all this heart-blush
arteries swiftened with blood &
reshape the shrunken marrow
blossoming organelles within it
& not forget ours fingers outstretched
mapped-out to vein statics
& pierced through God's ripe abdomen
do with it within its fluid abundance
once bodiless — an idea is to carry off with it
swiftly

Narrative

to urge this all "gutted-out"

sprouting twigs

from one's mouth

Apology With Salt

to taste the ghost promise

of this pungent hymn in my throat

[as the specter

hunkers down whispers *trachea*]

no indulgent liver no lover

of fatal surprise —

& I suspect swallowing the fat

of empty spaces is the only way

to glimpse the sun

Rebirth

every night a pooling of blood

or exsanguinated the spilt seed

by morning how clean the sparrow—

divine its feathers a child

Bloodletting

a tease of quick blood
aged into this vein [I used to down the holy
holy elixir of] a beautiful bountiful
metallic poison & you used to taste
the tears in this & salt pressed into
was what you meant when you said "count on me
in this endless need" or die trying

The Air Itself

lest this beast be flightless & shaken

in its exact bone orrery —it is clear

to matter but not mouth of cold stones

/spout-piece of time

arrangements of cumulus less & less

tethered to this

be it ill with knowledge or buckling into

pulp flushed from them [I think

the argument is in a vein —blue or red or]

it does not congeal in itself a warning

nor semaphore to carve into sounds

of the fallen

Trompe L'oeil 2

excruciating decoy of atonal pulse

I move you to another melody-lack

of malignancy the palatable becomes less

palatable raws itself in the thick

of the retina in memory of no memory

| O' squandered is the macular impulse

of shadows in my palm the dove is angular

oblique with the moon) O' mask

I still find the contours slack made of glass

less fluid it is not itself

by appearances

When the Sternum is a Cold Furnace

swiften the extremities into chills

& where no blush is content

nor present—

just deliver the sarcophagus

through the nose

all air is plumes of—

the freeing of vapor

with just a flash of mercy

Upon Reading Combs' St. Thomas Poems

when you look into my eyes you move my spirit into
yours & my last thought leaves for shadows of
former thoughts once wrapped
in gusty nights I allow you to lay me into your dark
enormity spherical subterranean &
there I go to jeweled rivers of — wrapped in a pale
Sappho you omitted & muted into pink
regarding sex & lack thereof — flashes of dust-
musky books & creatures "new-eyed" so truth
distracts the newborn glint in one's eye becomes
demystified fragmentizing like craquelure —

when you vision the bird it is almost muscled into
your palm & as nestled as the wombed nebulae of
your eyes as they haunt me from the distant reaches of
St. Thomas I can hear the current of your tendons
hear them veils of this flushed over me

— a dream of such tender pulsing

Audubon's Vision

it is & we are with the bird's eye view twigs &
these shards of feathers smoothed-out in perfect
lovers slope of garden plunge & studies of levitating on
his page — with hours of blossoming in this array of
spindling vines & flower bursts so orange
they sun so curling they into wisteria-drenched
grackle & fly

'way to moon

The Disappearing 2

it makes no sense to blur oneself into finites— to
soothe this room
into permanence make impermanent the
examined sky—
make tiny this blue [continents between continents]
between the exploded view of stars you are
seeing yourself
as a static sea of nerves rippling with antiquity
you are billowing
in this spectral debris —go missing as an apparati of
was— a posteriori a poem of the world's erosion
or how the sun tastes
in its final glow

Mute If

gather up your hunger & meet my eyes in a fix

there are pink discoveries & unopened doors

go if must if musk disperses its scent

in all the right places

——hibiscus buds

the blush drawn back into my chest

stillness if such a move

should suspend itself in the swell of hot nights

your belly is the earth is crowing in its skin-mesh

& go must

search through this air-sac

for shrunken remnants of breath

Landscapes Without Fruit

ving for what hunger in tooth

is delivered through a spoon

is a dallied-up nothing of orphan-starve

a barren orchard bares its knots

is callous prone & of the gout

a moat—no water

a moan of secret shelters

& this house of babies swaddled

within their own emaciated cores

[sleep

you are far too benevolent]

Tether

it is all flashes of sinew

& not flying into this verse

where guts tease the night

terse it is— "swirl of flies"

I long the strain to set me free

you see before the intensity

of seeing your form leaves mine blindly

but not before coiling [I think

this mouth begs to wander away

from the face] pith of pressure points

an "ah" with it

The Adulterer's Bride

scent of wilt-rose dampens the skin--

she is delirious

& all ears

girl comes sounding

like the buzzing of

hungry flies

cadavers sticking

to the roof of her mouth

she tries to starve the baby in her voice

—violet with flashes of

her belly

her torso

herself in the gaze of a lover

drifting through eye slits

& holes

The Mission Of Roots

it is between what is felt

& where one feels

less contented

doubled-up

it is all loose knots

or jangly noose— we romanticize

the pull either way

it is haunt with its fingers

a figural God

it is to free itself to reach

a growing life stretched

to imperfections

Vapor Song

spandrels form

plumes of geometries

warm inside you

if I crawl

through this viscera

I can call you *mother*

tongue purpling into

sprawls of arboretum

—an asterisk — a punctilious account

of stars formation of

eels & uncoils

scents of it rank in the air

& sea-spray

the upheaval of

angles—

undulations

[in]organic-an excerpt

One is measuring a root contemplation of thick oils 'round
the lips & locates a tiny fountain space foci rich with lilac
splay. Azalea musk [in] jets

of dwelling fingers rich 'round moss & fur & areas between
awareness—

oculi lumpen with water eye encountering indecipherable
vermilion & crystalline blur often shimmering vapors [in]
flux.

This is not my home. Not yours. This is an area
of transparent bodies appearing in satellites of crushed
metal stalactic shards of steel.

I home in the equatorial recess of my body's other body— I
teeth the stars constellations burgeon in my eyes. I arrive
like one arrives with the passion of Euclid —thrashing hot
& mathematic

a Greek cistern engorged with geometry.

Gesture the area of my face between your hands & I
almost appear orbital shreds of myself of you with a plan to
hear angels when we are all

oblivious to physics. How one flies. How one becomes a
changeling in its

own skin.

You call me "impermeable" & not at all like dew.

You call me "indefinable" & not at all like learned

& in tune with this anatomy. I wish for a planetarium to hide
me in— to reach through this strata in my mind & call forth
Jupiter or Pluto or...

randomness is never random is never
without depth is what you have left when you stop praying.
You say my focus is morass or perhaps akin to gelatin
tissue. I am just beyond the grasp of an inkling. I am
inorganic & unfamiliar [the human machine is

just a shell with the other half missing—
DNA eroded long ago]

Neptune has no position on this antimatter.

Matina L. Stamatakis resides in upstate New York. She is the author of *ek-ae: a journey into ekphrastic aesthetics* (Dusie, 2007), *Metempsychose* (Ypolitita Press 2009), *EoS* (Oystercatcher Press, 2010), and *The ChongDong Misfits* (Avantexte, 2011) with Carmen Racovitza.

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