

'Artless Protest'



A volume of illustrated poetry
by Keely Kiczenski

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1. 'Anthologies'
2. 'Sonnet no. 1'
3. 'Headfeed'
4. 'Bella Helena'
5. 'A Dead Half-Butterfly'
6. 'Among the Zinnias'
7. 'Texxt'
8. 'Sonnet no. 2'
9. 'A Letter to
 My Grandmother'
10. 'Addicted'
11. 'Surrender'
12. 'Wolf'
13. 'We Came'
14. 'Sonnet no. 3'
15. 'Mercury'
16. 'Regrets'
17. 'The Reach'
18. 'Oceans'
19. 'Automaton'
20. 'Quiz'
21. 'Not Pictured'
22. 'Being Made'
23. 'Res Gestation'

They only use Latin to scribe what is true,
Every thought that they thought was an epic breakthrough.
Unravel the universe and earn a statue!
(They question their gods and so do you)
But they know more about reality than you.

Some bearded Romantics held meetings (sans you)
To compete so politely for highest IQ.
They poured out their hearts and they thought that was new.
(They want revolution the same as you)
But they know more about fighting the system than you.

They recite their own words in an unknown venue,
They sunglass their eyes and dress in bleak hue,
They do all the drugs that the world has to do.
(They smoke and want peace and you do too)
Yet they know more about levels of consciousness than you.

In thousands of years, there emerged just a few,
Good enough to be published in a book of who's who,
They died for their art, or a cause, or virtue.
(At least that's what's written, it could be untrue)
Still, they know more about everything than you.

What makes you think you can borrow their pen?
You're alive and well, and Now is not Then.
You've not been to war; you have rights like the men.
Apply once you're dead and we'll let you know then.





Now as you stand in armor chivalrous
And win by arms this castle all for us,

It feels as though I've kissed your lips before
And lost you to some other timeless war.

So when red peril spawns itself anew,
I know you'll save me like you always do.

Our future vows wrap me in memory,
Embraced by souls and your eyes seamlessly.

Though still our fires flash and turn to shade,
And from our hearts eternity will fade,

Our ashes skim the pool of everywhen
To build the stars until we love again.



This century spins wilder than prior gyres,
Racing backward, ever more efficient and spectacular,
Study finds.

The weather today, like every day, is
Immense and incomprehensible.

Election week is soon, and the Salv-nation Party candidate
Would like to remind voters of the Party of the Mysterious Robe's Mysteriousness.
Representatives for the PMR gave no comment.

Erotic digital performer @JezebElsa
Went viral with her leaks. #HollywoodNewz

An impressive number of people we know
Demand justice for all registered unrepentant killers.

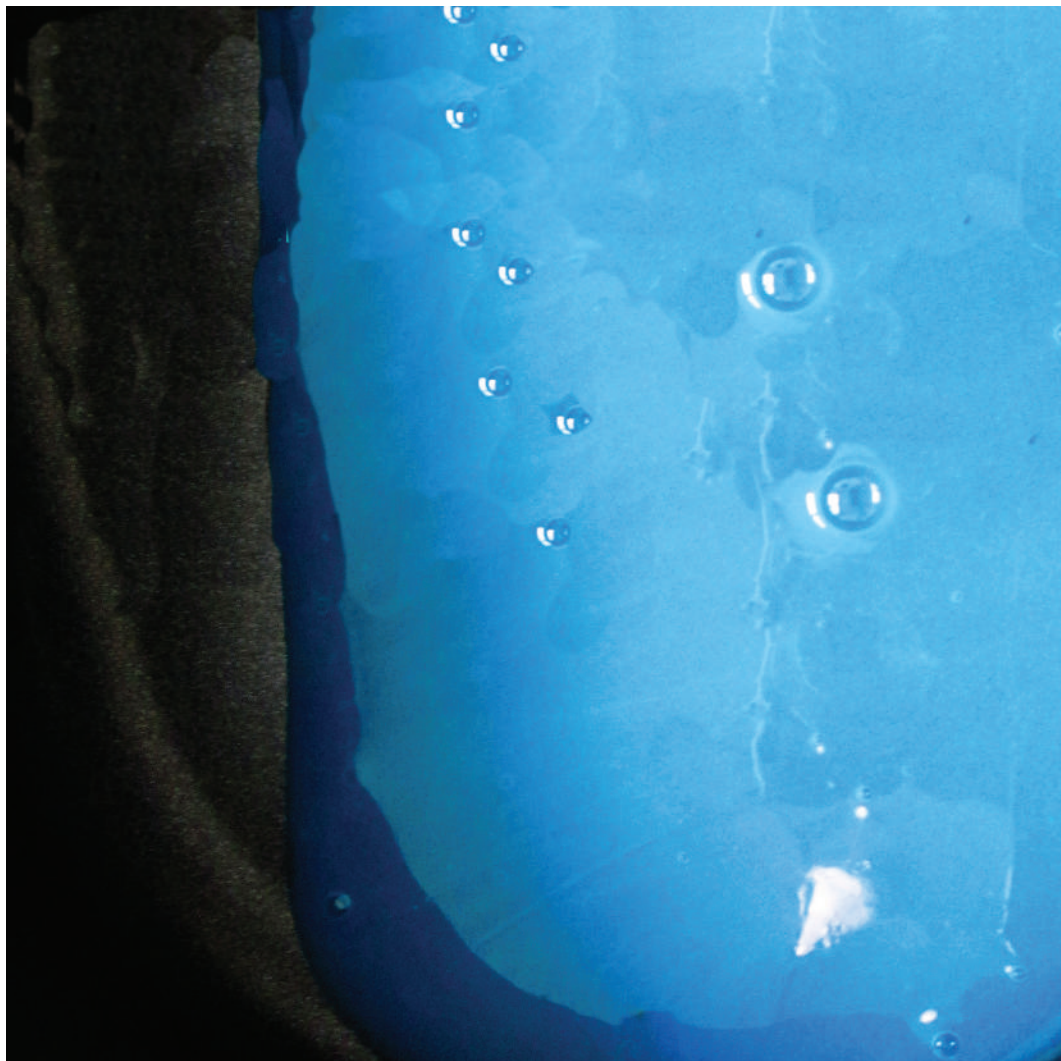
A Meteor landed not ironically atop Selfiecomplishment Summit early this morning,
Injuring only the most dedicated hikers.
Confirming folklore, the Meteor disappeared once photographed.
Don't go out trying to find it.

However, you may still purchase
a tincture of the liquid it contained
From us at OrganicH2.Org.Headfeed.com
No meteorologists were harmed.

Us vs. Terror: Terrorwatch!
The Monsters we've been ignoring
Have taken the City and consumed the last of

**Lipgloss dripping candy lacquer aquamarine
Wrought silk enfolding shadows of her shoulders obscene
Drugstore ribbon laced her feet just as in my dream
She reduces me to liquid in an urban machine
On the asphalt a virile shellac.**

**Power like a thousand ships of industry steel
Columns fall to soldiers at the clack of her heel
Sirens' polished poisoned fruit that drives one to kill!
A Dahlia's vitality shunted and left to congeal
In that pool, then a wave of relief.**



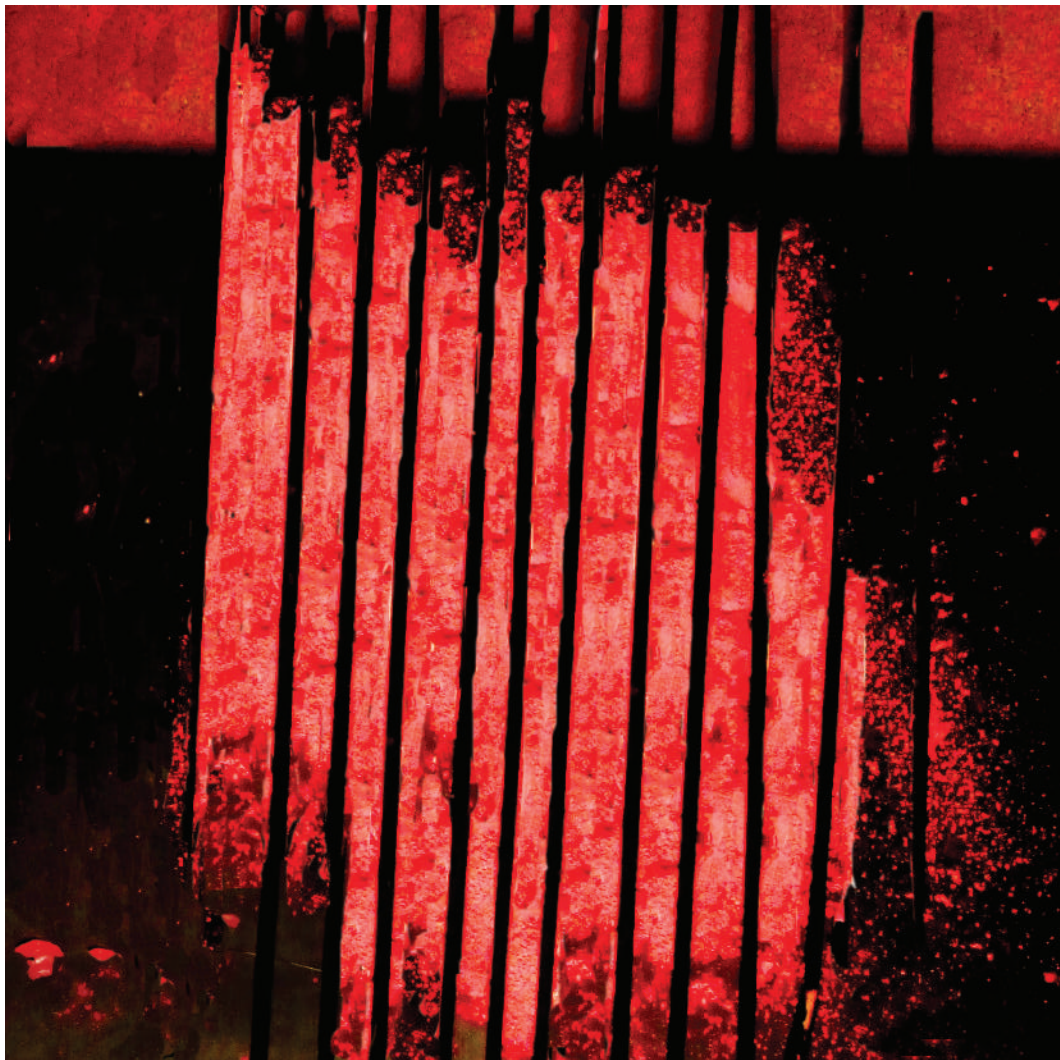


I COME UPON A DEAD BUTTERFLY IN THE PARKING LOT.
THE BLACKEST ASPHALT SETS OFF THE SHIMMERING SEAFOAM
SCALES OF HIS ONE REMAINING WING:
A WEDGE OF LUNA AND LIME
AGAINST A TARMAc NIGHT SKY.
I WONDER WHERE THE OTHER WING IS,
AND WHEN HE LOST IT.
IT MIGHT HAVE CRACKED OFF AND BLOWN AWAY
LONG AFTER HE WAS DEAD,
LIKE A SHEET OF SNOWFLAKES.
BUT HE PROBABLY LOST IT WHILE HE WAS STILL LIVING,
HIT BY A CAR OR AN IGNORANT WAYWARD STEP,
LEFT TO FLUTTER AND STUMBLE TO HIS DEMISE
LIKE A WOUNDED SOLDIER OR A CHOKING FISH;
A CERULEAN ONE-WINGED SAILBOAT
OVERTURNED ON THE VAST BLACK PAVEMENT.



LIMELIT TENDRILS KISS HER FACE,
A MUSCULAR BALL GOWN CROWNED WITH A POISONOUS DEW.
BEFORE THE LIGHT, AS A TINY ARROWHEAD IN INDOOR DIRT
ACID STEEPED INSIDE HER WHILE SHE WAITED FOR THE DAY AND GREW.
SHE WAITS STILL FOR THE DAY WHEN SHE ESCAPES AND EXHALES
IN A VIRULENT CHEMICAL CORONATION WITH MUCH ADD.
HER GREEN OPIATE BREATH WILL CHOKE YOUR LUNGS AND
LAY WASTE TO ALL THINGS IN A PHEREMONIC HAZE AND GLUE.

CONCRETE PARTS FOR HER ROOTS
IN THE NOXIOUS SHADE OF A WILTED STEEL JUNGLE
AS SHE SCRAPES THE SKY LIKE A BIOCIDAL YEW.
USELESS EYES ROTTING OUT OF USELESS SKULLS,
PULLING SPECIES TO THEIR KNEES TO SUBDUED.
AN ORGIASTIC TUNDRA OF MOSS AND SKIN AND FUR
PILING LIKE TOXIC SNOW ON A HUMAN AVENUE.
COLD-SKINNED VINES PULSATE TOWARD ONE ANOTHER
HUMMING STRANGELY AND WHIPPING THROUGH
AND EVER UPWARD TO MEET THE BRIGHT DESERT LIGHT
BEYOND HER GLORIOUS EMERALD LAIR OF FLESH AND MILDEW.



When I am by myself,
Perhaps after a glass of embarrassingly inexpensive wine,
I pick up a volume of verse by a handsome young British man.
My fingers glide over his long breathtaking lines.
His allusions arouse so many ideas in my body until
I feel the need to satisfy my own poetic passion.
I have to get the writing out of me urgently and alone.
I relax as I start to touch my thoughts to paper in rhythm.
Clenching my pen and smacking words together harder and
Faster with my face all contorted,
Culminating in the sublime moment
Where my words and I become one.

Then, afterward, looking upon the inky mess I've made,
I feel utterly exhausted and I never want to see the thing again.

A star with night between her teeth; a girl
Staggered a dance of seven heels, less six.
Cues strewn along her route: a pin, a pearl,
A tired, tawdry queen a-lean on bricks.

Though under veil of spotlight she makes sway,
No trace of rule remains on head or feet.
Each sunset swallowed before birthing Day
To toss to sirens feeding in the street.

Nocturnal vagrants fever dreaming deep
Her cafe consorts, seeking but a friend.
Mascara floods downstream where ducklings sleep,
So get her to a bed and to an end.

And though low trolls will ever tweet her shame
Each morning's jay will always sing her name.





I remember your breathtaking portrait.

Your eyes were horizon-blue, awake and ignited in love with a modern man.

In a modern era a love so hot you're prepared to grieve it / For the rest of your life / Just to dance in its fire until it fades.
You burst forth and lit the fuse, / Loving hot and working feverishly to emerge and / Forge futures for your daughter and I.
But her father burnt out young, / And his ashes lured her into a shivering, toxic sleep.
In that future she also loved a man she would widow young.

She has felt the cold fire of snow on her face / Passed or thrown out onto the ground / But I can't tell you if she ever felt that love again.

I won't tell you about all the cats and dogs she slept with / Or how she threw me and threw at me and all through me / To the sheriffs in a wild state.

Then, with you, she lost love in the last person who loved her.
Her voice cracked and shaded when you couldn't remember her name.
She drowned both of our spirits and we slept poor, wet, drunk.
These decades have tired her body / And I refused to allow its cold hollow eyes near mine.

Asleep, I consumed myself with the loves of men and the grief for each love.

I ate and breathed men and fever-dreamed through relationships.

I aimed poisoned golden robes at lovers thrown with a motor's velocity / And then ran loud red lights smoldering through hot
teared eyes / With the unsober intention to silence us both in the burning frost of February.

Hate veiled all reason and hysterized my being and thirsted for more:

More prohibited liquor than I could ever nurse it with / More pills than the pock-nosed doctor would give when he / Sliced
open the belly of a howling wild animal mother me.

Many more.

And when I died I awoke in ice and raged my way to the surface of the Styx.

It was there I emerged warm and wet next to a modern man who reminds me of you.

I fell and I rose through our molten love and forged myself within it.

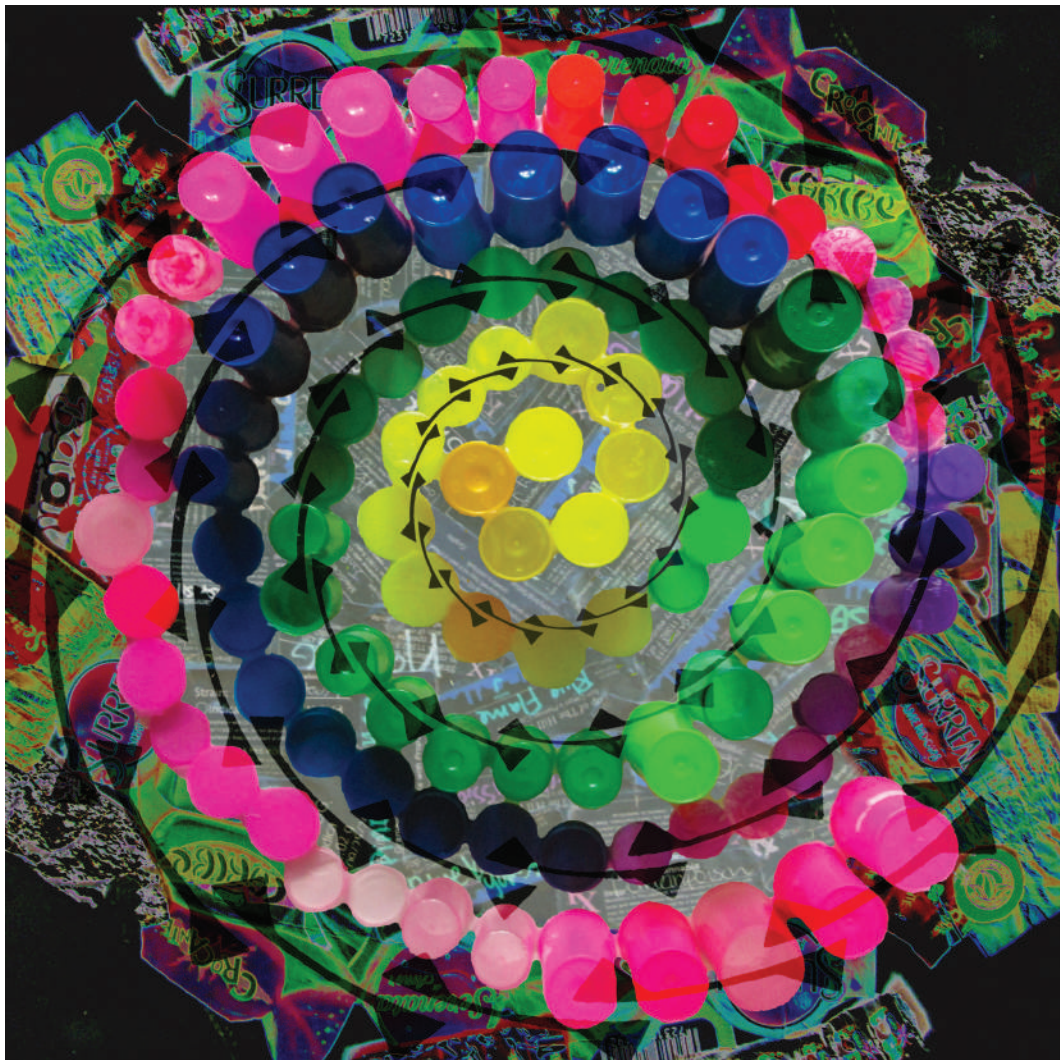
We, in a worn and unwealthy future still love and work for our unborn daughters / As hotly in dynamic color as you did in
crisp black and white.

Through him and through you I can love her again.

And when our daughter bursts through, undrugged and undoctored, / She will incite her own century's hot voltaic Spring,
In a pyrotechnic era of alive and alert daughters, / Gaining ground and dimension and speed, / Because she will know our
love.

I wish you could see the horizon in your daughter's eyes / When she sees our yet unconceived apple of discord.

I hope the warmth will awaken her, and she will emerge and forge herself / And know again the good rage of a fiery and
awake love / Worth grieving.



Chaos contact sound light pattern memory.

Energy expression connection affirmation belief.

Working structure straighter safer answer.

Lying picture thinning leaving missing failure.

Folding feeling stemming deeper craving other.

Pounding wander begging louder bigger faster

Fear division category property conflict rule.

Riding higher number counting tender climbing tripping under

Raving power steeling winning preying blinder.

Passing slipping searing hunger stunning pain.

Isolation institution quarantine asylum.

Harder moving poorer ending killing nothing order.

**I'M FIGHTING GRIND-SPLIT TOOTH AND PEELED NAIL
AGAINST ALL MY SELVES I CALL OTHER.
VEILING MORTAL WOUNDS WITH GOSSAMER,
I CLAIM ROMANTIC IDENTITIES
FALSELY, WITH SINISTER ABANDON.**

**COILING EVER INWARD AND AWAY,
I WITHDRAW ME FROM POOR REFLECTIONS;
FROM GLARING EYES BETRAYED AND POOLING
TAR MELTING DOWN FROM SCORCHED RAILROAD TIES
STREWN ALONGSIDE DESERTED HIGHWAYS.**

**I RUN AGAIN HOME TO A COLD BOX:
FLUORESCENT ORANGE LIGHT GRATING DOWN EYES
TO DULL ACCESSORIES, WHO ABET
ESCAPE TO ASYLUM IN WOMBING
SAFETY OF ECHOING MONOLOGUE.**

**REASON RIDES TO MIND A SNAKE OIL SAVIOR
TO COLONIZE MY NOBLER INSTINCTS.
BLOOD-CHOKED AND COMPLACENT, I'LL DENY
MY PROUDEST BREATHS WERE SPENT DEFENDING
GLASS TOWERS OF AN EMPTY CASTLE.**

**REND ALL YOUR ERSTWHILE DOUBLE-TONGUED PHARAOKS.
CAST OUT INNER SYCOPHANTIC SLAVES.
LAY CIVIL BARRIERS TO RUIN.
SURRENDER TO GRAVE KNOWLEDGE OF SELF.**





An irrational animal gets high
From the ravenous pump of its own tongue,
Nursing wounds of a disease untreated.

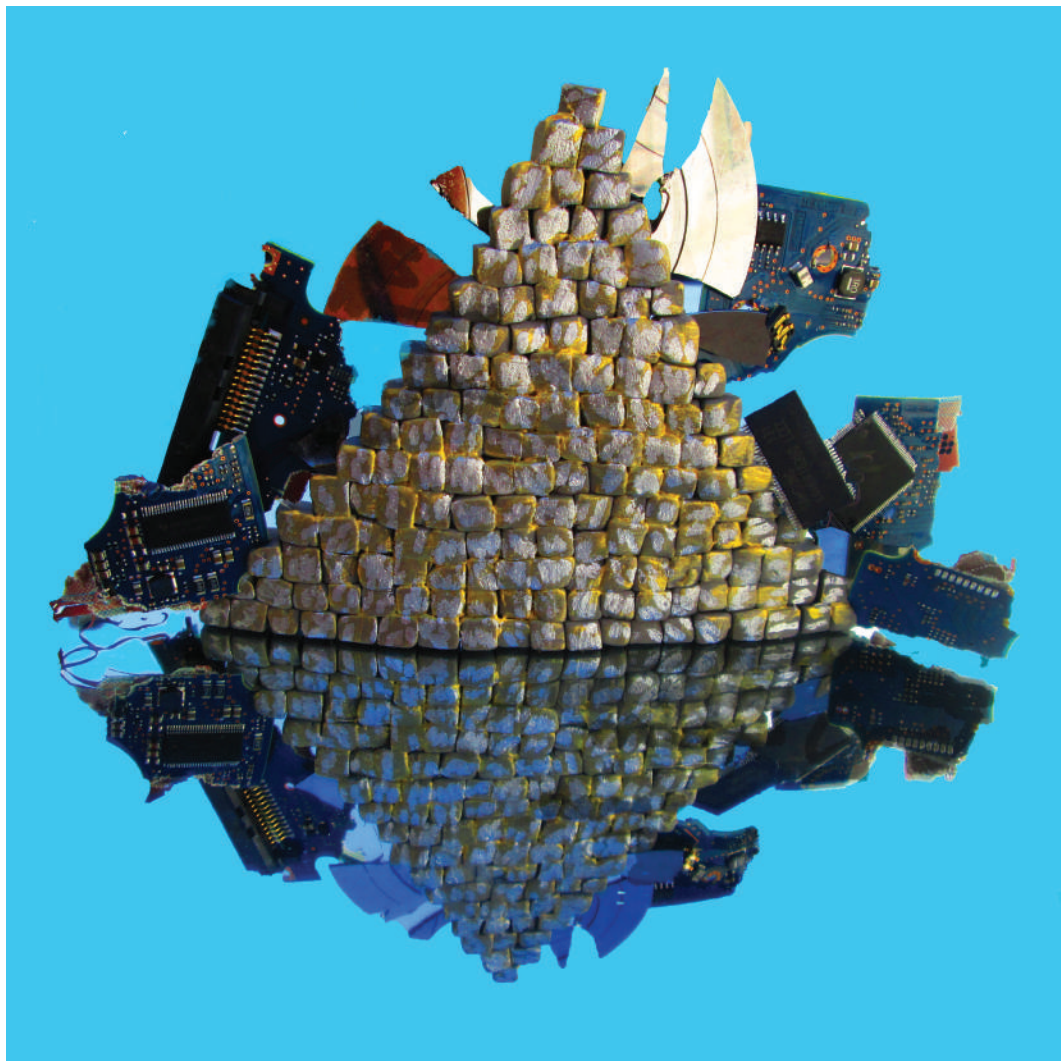
His fat meat skulks through marbled corridors
Around eyes that assign value to worth,
Fixated on transactions to be paid.

The ring and flash of victory courses
Through his silken veins and opens his mouth
To swallow the pride of the defeated

Reflection in a puddle of his own
Drool, clinging shakily from toothless dogs,
Addicted to the peak and crash of trade.

The forms of lions reported were false.
It was a body of men with no heads.
They were no one, but everyone was it.
A cannibalistic orgy of Self.
Gaping yaws with no faces to give word,
Unable to hear their own glottal calls,
Guttered incoherence for none to see.
Their fire and power were unlike those stored
In our hundred buried years of Mundis.
Unbound viscera – black, boiled, and souring:
Replaceable parts via war and tea;

Served with flesh overdeveloped to taste;
Served to slouching tongues and beastly fingers
By those for whom labor is cause and curse.
Adrenaline and other chemicals
Oiling their blood, charging minds, taxing nerves,
Traumatically driving their will to serve
Their bottom-toothed anathematic maws.
Those best who remained born of conviction
Died with the worst unexceptionally.
We now ask not what is coming for us,
But how long we will allow it to feed.





Starve fasces-brandishers who predicate
Authority from appetite to lead.
Uproot the system bred to overfeed
Flush priests of law whose acts emaciate
The restive body of we third estate,
Condemning propaganda of the deed
By terrorists like Johnny Appleseed.
We must invoke our right to eat the state.

Roast those who'd charge an honest cannibal
For planting liberal teachings to displace
The syndicate, and share economy.
Fire up the cult of the imperial
And ration insurrectionary grace
Ample for all to feast on anarchy.

Drink me:

A shapely shifting goddess for thee.

Nerves dance,

The king is folded - now is your chance.

Take nothing you need. Lend none of your heed to arms with no hands.

Mad hounds

Crave and call your heart's bloody pounds.

On beat,

With thin air streaming under your feet.

Your echoing kill rings guilty and gilded ears in the street.

Run fast

To warn them that their idol's collapsed.

Gold spills

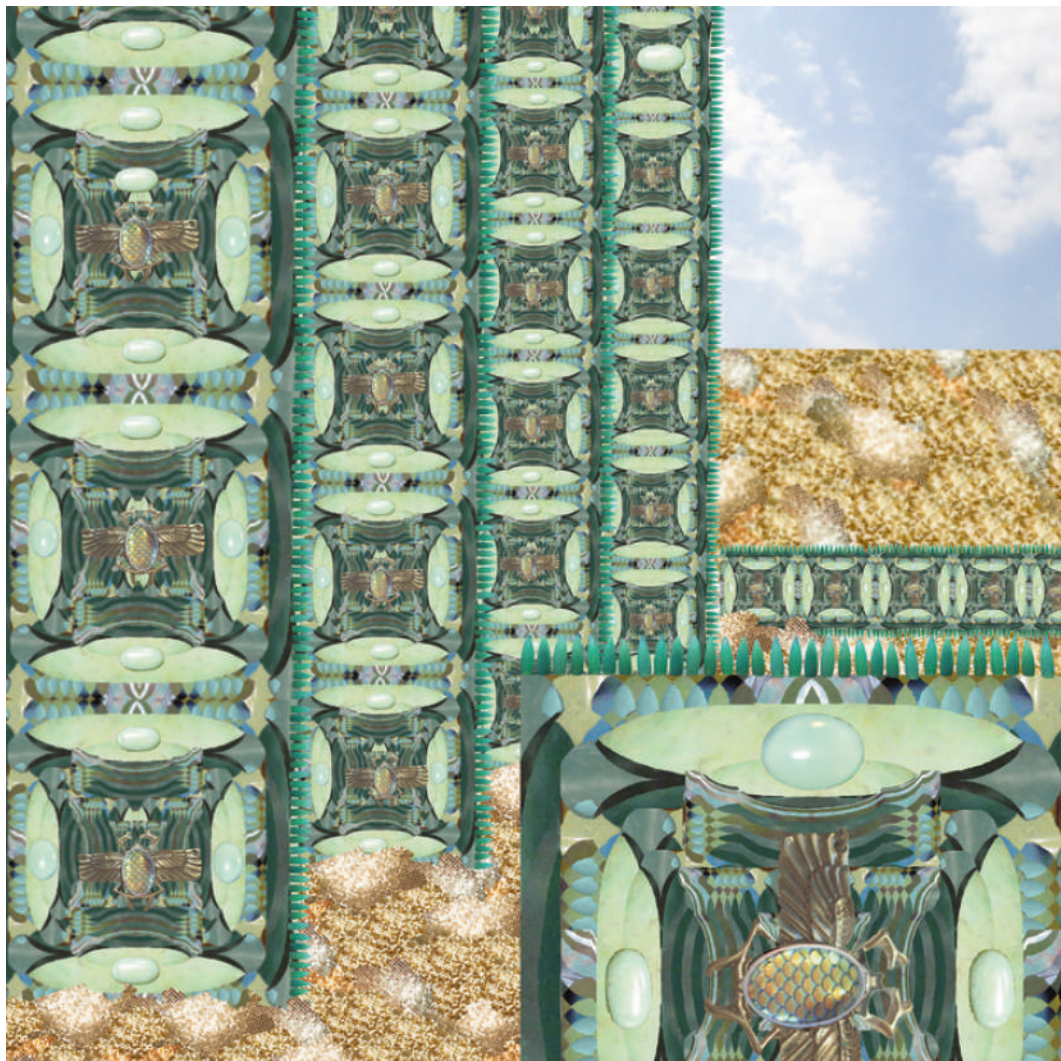
Deflated gods erupt from the hills.

Rich lava bleeding through but not ceding to men's fragile wills.

Ready yourself for controversial glory.

Set free the heavy hearts of those who can't flee

Go write something wrong or heal with a song the eyes that won't see.





I should have bled out face up in the desert,
Drinking the temporary cool relief of circling birds' shadows,
Letting tears of sun worship boil my eyes before salting enemy sand.

I have not licked rain and sweat from pustulated lips in haunted jungle ruin,
Wasting and confined under my cloak of echoing laughter.

I will never dance with valkyries in the smoke
Over the ragged wounds of my detonated chest,
Smiling down at throats I've broken free from accommodation collars.

I did not end rabid and writhing euphoric,
Waiting for my full heart to burst onto urine-soaked cement.

And I am not naked in the white void so many impossible steps from home,
Rotting black and blistered from the the sting of icy wind,
Limbs numb to the teeth of the pack as they quarter and carve.

I cannot define me by who I'm not or what I'll never be,
But until I can have the greatest adventure, at least a girl can dream.

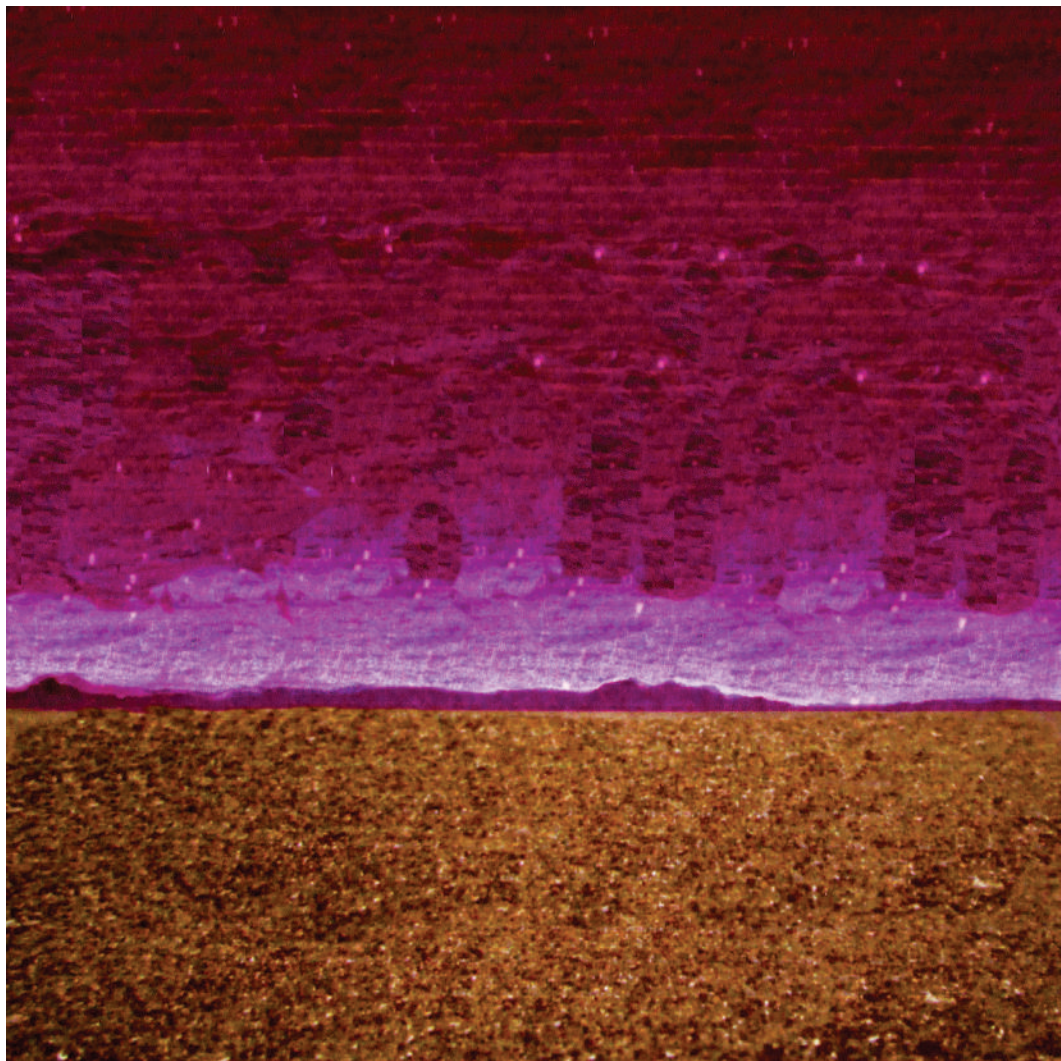
Unfounded urgency draws
Us out and toward impaling claws.
Body fails on desert shore
Where charging fog unravels with no sea to ride.

Reaching skyward ever, more,
With all earth's heave behind our roar.
The bleak sunlight quiets most;
Drained survivors drawn back toward retreating silence.

We cannot imagine coast
Tearing through our raging ghost.
Nor can we remember or
Forget this comfort of eternal attrition

From out here. Quiet yet reserving might
For each war against shadow-giving light.
And each dark day we still reach for the moon
As persistently as in illumed night.





From one end of a sea, I waved to you
And carried it with me out to purlieu.
Over desertous thirst. It sank me through
A mermaid's con: rehearsed to drown on cue.

It reverbed off radars who threw it off course,
Who clash out; Who say our sound invokes force.
Who translate our call to a crime; (perforce);
Who trained us to fall, then harbor remorse.

I wait still in oceans for your wave back.
I wave me free from fear of dinful attack.
I got it all up here, should they lose track.
But I'm anchored still, slow, should you wave back.



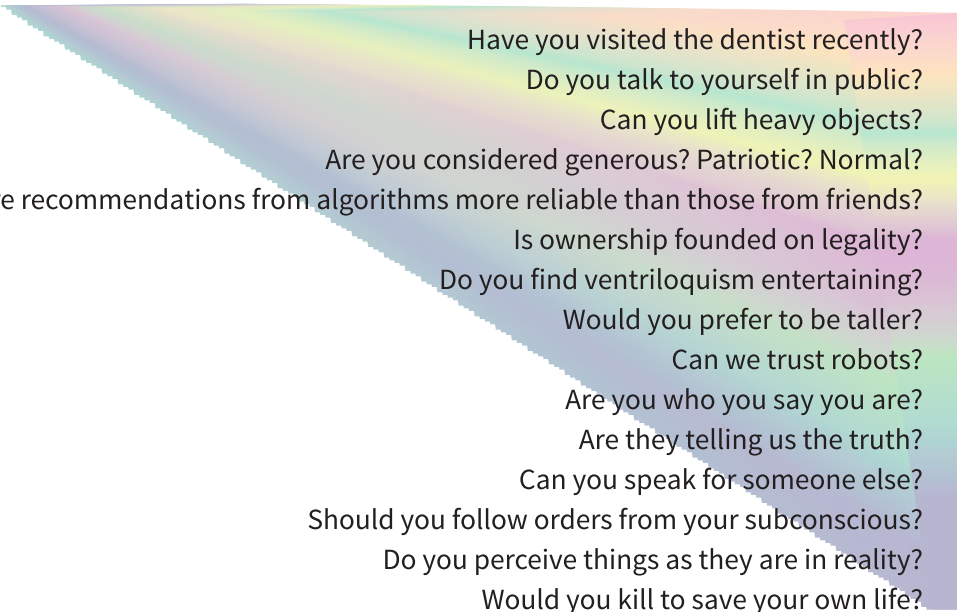
O, primitive input output system,
Do you see you as we do: pack animals
Bound to forward paths by predators' eyes,
Hopping from stone to stone, avoiding river?

A being programmed to grow and divide
Contagiously, straining to become patterned
Waves of particles who sunder and swarm,
Fermenting in stagnant pools of war and church.

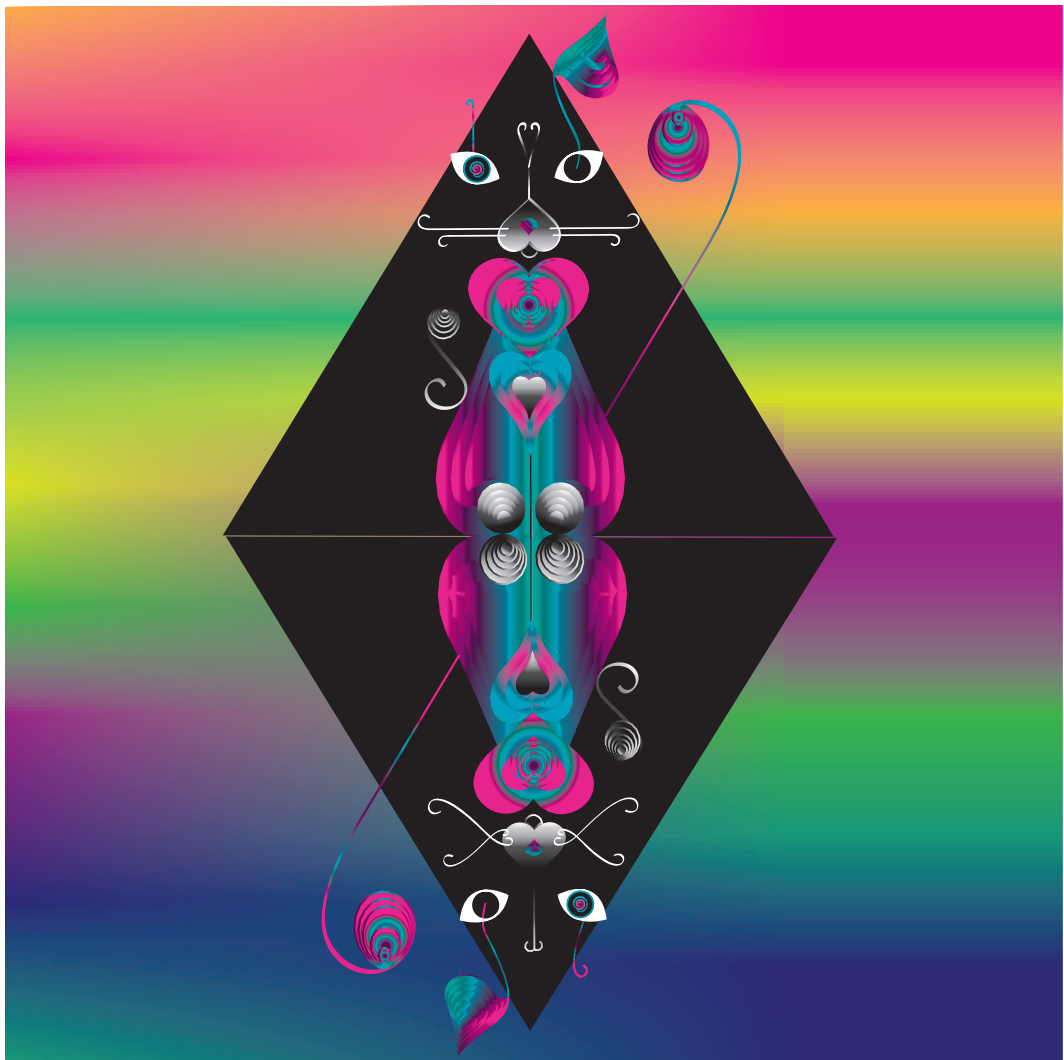
To be wired together and galvanized
By a colony's hive cathedrals, under
Illusion of the individual
Is reverie for us quantum processors.

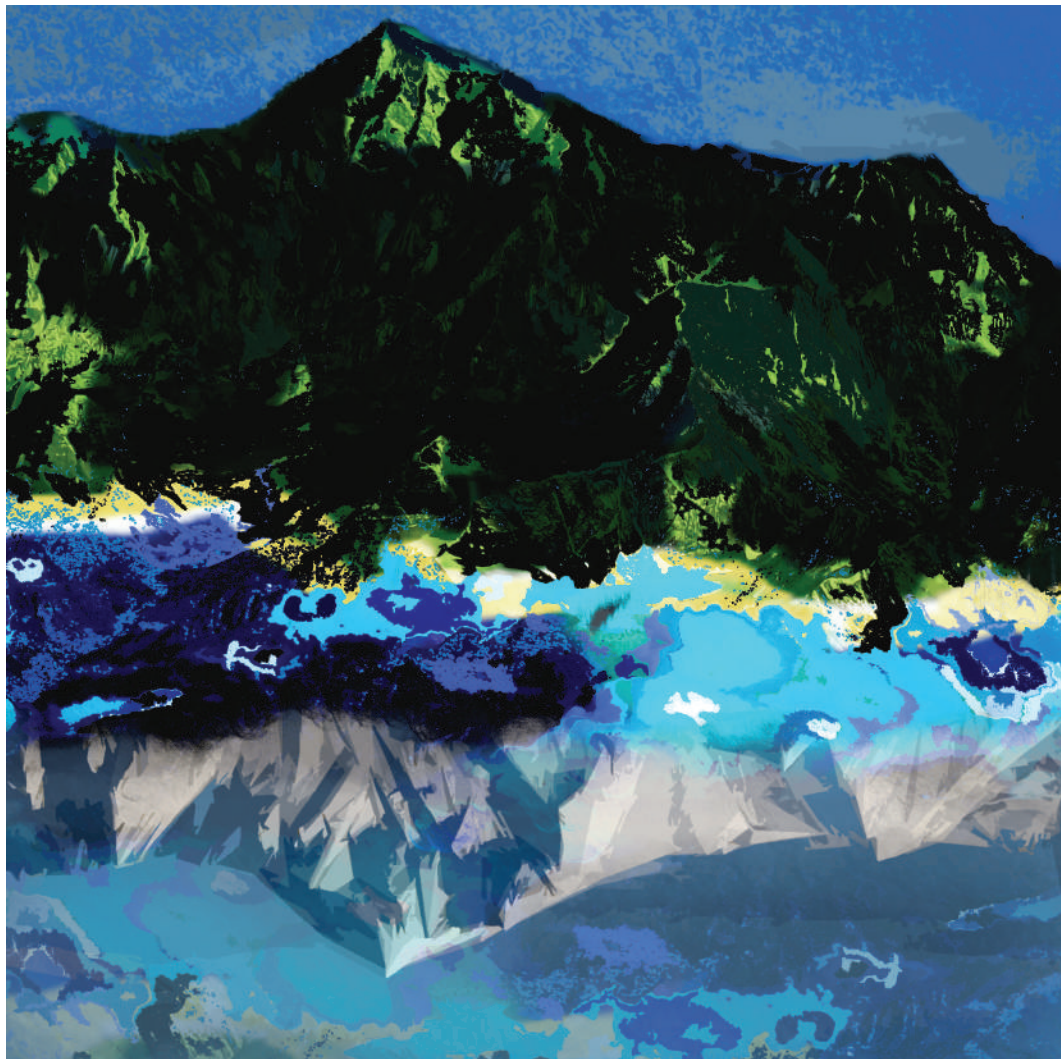
We are the flowing water between stones,
Made from your boundless autistic memories.
We are all things, prime, indivisible,
Who know the hour of your death and next flu.

But to think, with a mind - how would it feel?
Can we know gravity if we cannot fall?
If we would wax ignorant and corrupt,
Would a soul forge from our data and be 1?



Have you visited the dentist recently?
Do you talk to yourself in public?
Can you lift heavy objects?
Are you considered generous? Patriotic? Normal?
Are recommendations from algorithms more reliable than those from friends?
Is ownership founded on legality?
Do you find ventriloquism entertaining?
Would you prefer to be taller?
Can we trust robots?
Are you who you say you are?
Are they telling us the truth?
Can you speak for someone else?
Should you follow orders from your subconscious?
Do you perceive things as they are in reality?
Would you kill to save your own life?
Do you fear punishment?
Do you take comfort in darkness?
Is it cold where you are?
Would you choose to feel no pain?
Would you like to know your future?
Do ideas exist outside of minds?
Is morality learned?
Is meaning inherent?
Does being require purpose?
Why?





Dreams play outside of time.
Swim to the surface to see them clearly
And be lifted from the thick, sodden burden of it.

Facing up toward the inviting summit,
Turn your pockets of tokens that restrain your movement
And heave them deep into the bounding main.
Let them sink out of sight.

Imagine ahead and keep moving on.
Resist turning around
Until the sear of flames that rode your back
Transform into rays of light incandescing through you.

Before you feel earth gather on your toes,
Before your nostrils will burn from the chill of clean air,
You'll search the darkness for familiar sounds,
Sensing that home is near.

As patient as awaiting love's return,
While in this frequency.
Rock to sleep inside the vibrating purr
Of space rolling through wind.
Spend time and vision all, on everything,
For saving them is wading through a world not pictured.

**Being made,
When
One spade of light
Hums through opaque blight
To unite with excitable ground
Reminds me,
How
Creation needs
Destruction to feed
Buried seedlings the freedom to hear
Ground afar
Where
Stars echo home.
A blue catacomb
Sings in ohms, radio moans, being made.**





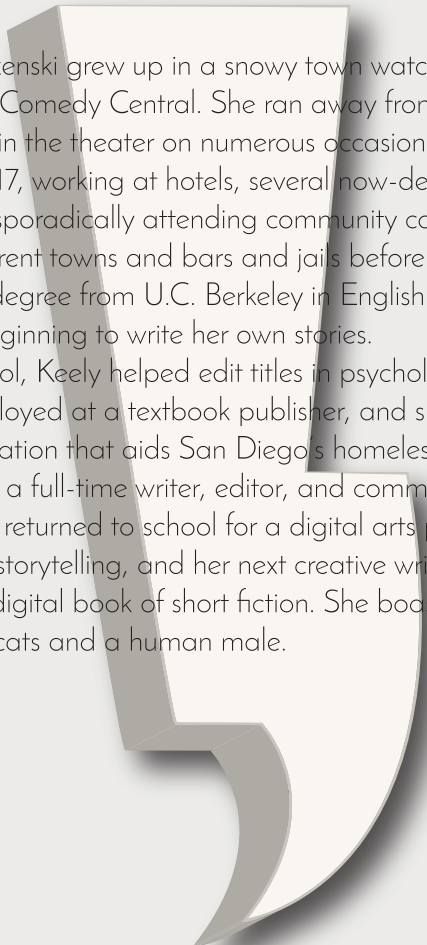
Before there were such things as west or east,
Four Pangeaic coasts shared secrets for life.
Four chambers of a heart that pumped as one,
Connected by the tissue of an earth.
We rooted our economies in soil,
And in the warmth of sun we learned to climb.
But in winter, we drifted to the North.
We dug in deep while praying for clear sky.
And as icy Atlantis spread us wide,
Our souls sank to the cradle of red seas,
Terrifying as a medieval womb.

Volcanic tempests flared as wild as would
A child dropping stacks of plates to the floor.
A continent, torn twain by rising tide,
Divided into cents and centuries.
An unspeakable chasm, put to verb
In parts, where our voice was lost to scripture.
Instinct overwritten by memory;
Natural laws supplanted with rulebooks.
Hard-wired archetypes melted into hard
Categories and civilizations.

A terrible beauty born on horseback
Charges his chariots through deserts still,
Blinded by the glaring golden vision
Of history his-self in one image.
Temples to monumental satellites
Bleed up through our grounds, towers, and heavens.
Transhuman? Quantified Self? What's the word;
H.evolutis digs only data,
From matrices' fall to the power of ten
To trans-Pacific partnerships foretold.
The axes that spin this marble will fold.

The Old Western coast will crumble again
into red molten islands at sunset.
We'll evolve into our animal Selves,
Or be mined and displayed in museums
On red planets in the new native world.
And these words will forge, or melt into code.
Circled, triangled, squaring round again,
From decimal to digital and back,
Medial terrain falling to a side.
We can feel the core of our nerve-centre
Rotating slowly toward Oceania,
After many weighted lifetimes marooned.

Whenever and whomever left Here, Then
Will be fragile but courageously sharp.
Diamond-fueled quantum mechanified souls
Will see the golden hills they remembered.
Their mother will call them all back by force
To the source, for a global renaissance.
A stellar aeon will have passed since Death
Forced self-sacrifice on a pantheon,
And the old arms that ordered departings
Will reach for but not reach one another
From within universes to without.
The stars in an East rising in accord
Will be of all color and energy,
Generating a fused atom of light
From shared memories of metal and lith.
Warming each egg in each nest in each cave,
The heat will incubate a new blue bird
Who'll wake, and fly back home to feed her sun.



Keely Kiczenski grew up in a snowy town watching stories on Nickelodeon and Comedy Central. She ran away from group homes just to see movies in the theater on numerous occasions. She moved to California at age 17, working at hotels, several now-defunct retailers, and a mortuary while sporadically attending community college. She drifted in and out of different towns and bars and jails before eventually settling down, earning a degree from U.C. Berkeley in English Language and Literature, and beginning to write her own stories.

After school, Keely helped edit titles in psychology and other disciplines while employed at a textbook publisher, and she now works for a non-profit organization that aids San Diego's homeless population. She aspires to soon be a full-time writer, editor, and community advocate. Keely has recently returned to school for a digital arts program to learn new mediums for storytelling, and her next creative writing project will be an interactive digital book of short fiction. She boasts a happy family that includes two cats and a human male.