

blossoms from nothing

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by

Travis Cebula

E·RATIO

blossoms from nothing

E·ratio Editions

2014

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for Shannon

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*I should have thought
in a dream you would have brought
some lovely, perilous thing,
orchids piled in a great sheath . . .*

—H.D.

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“incandescent”

a desire, a to see.

a lens to see in dreams—
see this everything painted on
a black ceiling—it blooms in rivers.
in rows. in beds. as a former, and as such—

such as, we have been
through this before.

the crocus croaked,

we. I.

the I that fell into forgotten love—
counting wool and rotten,
spun predictable sleep into

a many falling sometime.

many birds and many flowers falling.

know this, a raven petal can only be
as real as the anything of our dreams.

“that machine has travelled into time”

I begin to extend my life;
 each day expands a catalog.
 images. patterns. forms.

I index myself to accordion
 files, to words. I love
 each person
separately. I remember.

 tomorrow.
yesterday.
 today I feel
I slept forever.
 or not at all. in this absence

 of clarity, if the dreams are to be
believed,
 then tomorrows will occur
in no part-
 icular order.

words will come
 as they will.

“the soft radiance of the incandescent”

desire. I try to conduct myself toward a future. I see the future in dreams. I see future dreams. I see the future dreaming. sleep. I drift into dreams night after night and have forgotten everything by the time morning arrives. love. rivers. cliffs. as much as my dreams can predict a tomorrow, that much will my dreams predict a former bed of yellow leaves. latter. that many such tomorrows will predict my old dreams of falling through branches. a paltry song heard sometime before. a raven sang to a dead. aspen. a raven croaked softly into my pillow. but which is real. we are never so afraid as we are in our dreams.

“instead”

each one monsoons naked.
naked enough to squander wednesday—
how a dahlia splits its green,
 into its carmine, into its pumpkin.

and the sanguine cream between—

wine—lips—

 years will open you, then, they said.

each day—feathers—

they will open your mouth to black water—
each day is a day to wander. it wanders to
 tuesday, where falls a single rain.

 in drowning, blue pressed itself to yellow.

as a hand in linen snow.
as chasing bubblegum thrown.

this crimson in a broken yolk

 grows into dreaming, 600 irises reach
to meet spring; this narcissus bends low.

“the time machine”

I begin to believe
 in the self
as a singular. mechanism.
 it discerns

dreams from waking—
it mistakes one self for the real—

a mechanism to translate
 tomorrow
into language, to understand
 how a future word
how it could presage
 the narrative of yesterday’s

dreams.

“here and there and cultivate perhaps”

we remember to dream
every night.

we remember our dreams.
they speak in a language
we understand.

tonight’s describes
the history of dutch bulbs,

the clutch of chlorophyll
on sunlight,

and all the uses
for bone meal.

in a fit of inspiration I attempt to
pre-remember all of the dreams I
will ever have. you are there, my
star, and your tree of starlings, and
the grey sky, and every tulip I have
ever dreamt. but the rhine defeats
me. the word is without image. it is
not a river I have seen. I do not
know its width.

“passed out of recognition”

I don't even remember sleeping. anymore. I've been too long remembering strange narratives grown from hatchets and ash trees. I've been too long with notebooks in the dark. all I have are nouns, wood chips, and the occasional uninvited. neighbor. most of them alone. most of them heading that way in time, however friendly. however lively. and what does a smile mean, anyway, even with a hello. a bloody thumb. a question of bandages. a stump. someday rain will peel away the earth from all of these fields. the trampled grass will part. someday the emptiness will end and jagged white will peer out. who will wait to sort a singular shard from so many. any. more. and if not found will the black soil stick forever. and will meaning be lost when cleaned from its dream. and will this mass grave be big enough for words.



“perhaps”

in pre-will love,
the sky dreamt. grey.

did it forget the words
to that old song. did it want.

it is not a certainty
I know—
was I asleep then, too.

but a murmur—it murmurs
to I, there,

my ever me—
rest, and no other—yes.

this
I have a river

and not its width—

“fearless enough in the daylight”

we take in

the morning scatter.

morning is a time
of hard lines—

petals and soil.
feathers and sky.

robins, blackbirds,
wrens, blue jays,
sun and shade

rend

and separate

by temperature.
as you and as I.

doves are strangely.
cold.

“a noiseless owl”

feathers in grass. fingers reach
out for the white deep down. no
one was ever meant to see this.
intimate. excised into a spent
river of violence. blood or
narration. either way. sometimes
this is all a bent head will yield.
some fences are built to keep the
dead in a field. should we
maintain a nest for something
dragged away by night. what
then. what do we carry if all we
get is this handful.

“pleasant instead of black”

each day every kind of flower grows. each day
one flower blooms is a new one. every third day
monsoons from opal skies. warm. we wander
naked in the thick air of lilacs. enough rain to
squander the afternoon. that is for tuesday.
wednesday is azaleas and friday holds a single
dahlia before turning again to rain. before rain
splits drop by drop into shining petals. blue.
green. indigo. red. orange. violet. yellow.
carmine. fuchsia. lime. sunlight. linen. snow.
pumpkin. leather. butter. bubblegum.
sanguine. granite. sky. eggplant. egg. yolk.
cream. orioles. chocolate. lapis. crimson.
wine. lips. peaches. dreaming. water. 600
years will open. one thursday was an iris. I met
you then and that was the first season. spring.

“a resolute attempt to learn”

I have known your contours for years and years. the voice of your body has not changed. your surface is the meadow, I remember the message of green. the curve of, the angle of, the rise. in a semaphore of hands and hot breath, untarnished by time. the dip of. around us minutes lose their stature. they are not such tall things. not when wanting so much. and not when reaching. while. while I was leaning. closer, say. say, closer. let's say a procession painted the grass with dew. a wet touch, a wedded touch. if I was brave enough to lay down there—if. I was without fear—oh, then I would have shown you something about wildness. then I would have shown you a basket of roses cut from a blue hillside long ago, and I would have shown you how blood dries in the cracks of my palms. I would have shown you this to offer you the blooming I found. it. it was all. it was all for you.

“out”

I—

stamens grow from long
nouns. neighbors—uninvited—

heading toward however,
anyway.

even with
an apt question, peel
away the trampled mat. away the sod.
they say intrusive.
they say thoughts, and say them without you—

but we will. we will wait one day
more;
will worry one word

more from.
draw forever from enough—

and such long narratives, too
come uninvited.
friendly. mean. strong. different. indifferent.

a will to seed—this empty field.

you
will
still

stick
when cleaned

be the big words.

“like a schoolmaster amidst children”

today you must
say a yawning.

flower.
just saw into the wild—
it will yield that it was
just wilful seeds.

planted.
sometimes a harvest
when heat piled on heat.
sometimes a drought

of a furrowed
brow,
ploughed deep

from the wind’s unrelenting
placement
of weeds.

depressions in soil
appear normal

at intervals.

approximately.
the length of a thumb.



“sustained”

theory. journal. bridge. well.
starched. hum. target. tone.
crinoline. infernal. funeral. leers.
crystal. grackles. pawn. tentative.
embers. siren. rooks. marketing.
fleece. hair. its. striate. patina.
pachinko. anthracite. hidden.
banjo. parlor. bangle. futile.
decision. opening. exorbitant.
stipulated. tremble. anadromous.
alternative. sun. furl. lilac. stair.
case. stumble. parallel. laxity.
golem. staggered. solemn.
intensity. germinates. reticule.
belligerent. peril. candle. altered.
disjunct. cockpit. stellar. tackle.
ink. gristle. stake. typhoon.
webbing. charcoal. grissini.
heterogynous. down. trampoline.
spruced. mulch. um. angular.
parody. spring. is. dogwood.
rabbit. doodle. itch. anchor. drab.
ring. stubble. fireflies. by. linen.
blink. creased. twice. wink.
adroitly. thicket. twists. but.
persistent. waking. spins. urgency.
matriculation. rubble. pointed.
violet. lugubrious. limping. howl.
graven. hare. blankly. razed.
circus. tsunami. ripcord. tremor.
grove. immolate. people. stark.
kitsch. triptych. harkens. fugue.

flu. bubble. wind. topple.
burlwood. steep. fatigue. willow.
pruned. to. prickly. braids. static.
velvet. bell. rifle. field. orchestra.
wing. Elvis. navel. cosmopolitan.
myopic. wet. lesion. riptide.
spelunking. gyroscope. freefall.
my. shingle. passport. tally.
pickpocket. rally. of. blinded.
ticketpunch. alley. five. finger.
proprioception. penury. capitulate.
septic. bitten. mitochondria.
hypochondriac. my. reprehensible.
possession. bulbous. forsythia.
limbic. friction. reaction. encyst.
propulsion. insist. mirror.
pseudopod. denuded. dichotomy.
spark. escape. alligator. terminus.
blaze. apocryphal. hem. insist.
hundred. uncertainties. sacrifice.
diversion. gullet. insipid. ramp.
dynasty. expire. pulsate. warrant.
bellow. mock. threshold.
imaginary. enemy. obstruct.
dodgy. zebra. Eskimo. lateral.
staunch. nascent. arroyo. drab.
from. turmeric. cascade. barrow.
skip. serenade. mosque. moss.
startling. parity. guilt. yarrow. fold.
nib. laminate. moan. quandary.
tiptoe. gaudy. catacomb. hole.
tank. wistfully. dangles. vague.
rope. fractal. pungent. fractional.
apex. cotton. flotilla. kneel. erode.
atrophy. staves. vestigial. man.
bucket. charred. stifling. debt.

and then it was all close enough for me to
fend away with my hand. one. dream after
another piled up until the future filled.
one. word after another piled up until the
pages filled. one. sentence after another
piled up until the prison filled. one. drop
after another until the river filled. I saw it.
I saw it all and it was. one. life after
another piled up until the future filled.
one. life after another piled up until the
land filled. one. life after another piled up
until the holes filled. one word after
another piled up until the future filled one
word after another piled up until the life
filled one word after another piled up until
the holes filled in.

to after filled.
the another drop.
it after filled.
the up after.
one life until.

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in.

converged.

mistaken.

clock.

hotel.

imitates.

jasmine.

throats.

half.
confluence.
dirge.

beak.

one.

acute.

whimper.

link.

was.

plumbed.

then.

fell.

unlikely.
kisses.
that.
portend.

opalescent.
union.

badgers.
as.
diagrams.

sets.

transgress.
nape.

bracken.
nap.

fringe.
calling.
your.
too.
embroidered.
platform.

a.
license.
inside.
plays.

this.

quizzically.
populated.

field.

“resolute”

I changed
the angle of time—

not to closer, but to trap, to

touch fear—a basket
dried—

found, it was all woven
not of,
but by
things leaning. a string pulled.

a wet was a face

without you,
how it fell to blood
the blooming

I,
and all for.

“I rested for a while”

once upon a time we were
together. sleeping. in a field,
stones spoke like broken
teeth. once upon a time we
dreamed some stories could
end somewhere else. we
dreamed that the clouds
above our bowed heads
could never be made of
steel, that the hardest rain
would fall south of here, the
way the wind does, the way
the fog of our breath sinks
into winter. that once the
years caught up with our
dreaming we'd find rest
upon a bed warmer than
wet. earth. so.

the shriek blossoms
from nothing
dying.

when nothing is allowed
to die.
we dig

a long,
tired hole
for it.

once upon
a time, a flower

on a grave could

just as easily have been
a plastic lily as a white rose.

“toil to get into the future age”

once. I had a fortune.
there was one flowered
night and hours. hours
stretched toward hours
on an internal horizon.
something of a dream
for a word. something
heard. or vice versa.
someone singing a
nighttime song. when
hard words take on
melody. pillow.
hands. eyelids. satin.
these words of
particular stake. or
vice versa. curtains as
lashes, it's all the same
libretto. this lullaby is
not, by the way. a
resolution.

“through that long night”

the mechanism as described will function imperfectly. upon waking we must count to ten, one with each breath of the one we love. if we are alone we must count two for each breath of our own—this is the price to pay for the privilege of dying slowly. at exactly ten we will remember the next night’s dream, and write it as a single word. hand. shadow. flight. our words shall be the arches suspending our story. arches to climb upon arches. and in spanning our nights our words will carry us into our next wish. this is the mechanism, this is how we remember our dreams—as passengers. one morning you will forget to breathe. one morning my word will be no.

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ē · rā/ tiō

I wish to thank Jennifer Phelps, Jenn Aglio, Suzanne Dulaney, and Elizabeth Robinson for all of the advice they offered during the evolution of these poems. Much gratitude also goes out to the editors of *Versal*, *The Feralist*, *Fact-Simile* and *Tarpaulin Sky* where some of this work first emerged into the waking world.

Most of all I want to recognize the ongoing and spectacularly generous work of Gregory Vincent St. Thomasino, who put his faith in these poems, as well as many others along the way—not to mention their author—and generously offers to publish the products of writers' dreams with admirable frequency. And resolve.

Photography by Travis Cebula.

Travis Cebula currently resides with his wife and trusty dog in Colorado where in 2009 he founded Shadow Mountain Press. His poems, photographs, essays and stories have appeared internationally in a variety of print and on-line journals. He is the author of six chapbooks of poetry, including *Blossoms from Nothing* from E·ratio Editions, as well as four full-length collections, the most recent of which, *One Year in a Paper Cinema*, is coming soon from BlazeVOX Books. In 2011, Western Michigan University and Charles University in Prague awarded him the Pavel Srut Fellowship for Poetry. In addition to his writing, publishing and editing duties, he is a member of the permanent writing faculty at the Left Bank Writer's Retreat in Paris, France.

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taxis de pasa logos

