

CONFLICT

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I. Title.
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FLOODLINES

I palm my throat, mirror sunk

you barricade cities, thread
cloudlines, collapse levees
into stick fields

I am ancient I am careworn
I am paperstruck I am not
an initial I am no trouble

strength measured
in markings, in vowel sounds,
in the fractal of a name

my car still full of umbrellas
but there is no syllabic
to stop tidal flood, glaciers continue
to melt, at best we hope for
an arrhythmic kindness

I open my mouth but there's
nothing but water

WHEN YOU DID WHAT YOU DID

undo what's done, the doing of the deed
done on that day, dreadful deadening
down dusk fills daydreams, the dripped
deckle of a dancing drowned discovery,
wound dissolved then deepened, drecked
wrecked delicacy, the delicious tendered
damage, what damned dullness in all this
doing, in the dreadfulfulness of days undone.

INDIFFERENCE

full nights wrung out punch
drunk a light at the door
mourned curl patterns gate
the comfort of shoes
shrugged off/on/off

I will forget everything

spatter pained warmth risen
epidermic stars mouth held
there are too many alphabets
to catalogue these artifacts
sheets of skyline hung to dry

I forget everything

kitchen inflections trillium vicious
or blank wall siphoned tea boils
into tilework volcanic steam defines
pleasure a maturity of fig newtons

I have forgotten everything

love dances on a freckle shakes
her fist at hurricanes mutters pretty
pretty please cherries all that
puts her paws in water

I forgot everything

ash baked a swan's portrait elegies
the pale tang of uneven cobble
grief latent in broken crowns
and empty buckets hillsides

I cross my heart I cross my heart

I SUPPOSE

I might take comfort in the learning of things:
that Aramaic has six terms for unconditional love:

*Kenoota, Khooba, Makikh,
Abilii, Rukha, Dadcean Libhoun*

all of which translate only into *love* in the English Bible.

Or that Roman brides wore flame-coloured veils,
flammeum, intended to protect the bride
from evil spirits on her wedding day,

or that in France, a living person can marry
a dead person of the opposite sex.

But, clasping my hands together, I pretend one hand
is yours, remembering that moment, that first time,

when your fingers sealed with mine, the slow way
they came together, and then fastened shut, like a lock.

UNINFLECTED PARTICLES:
A SIEVED CAHIER

indefinite article *definite article*

a baby or a very young child	the amber road
a beginning and then an end and a middle	the amnesty of an amnesiac
a beloved hairstyle	the banality of commerce, neck luck
a bride leaking petals	the burning ship for the dead sent to sea
a bucketed pour over	the circle of one body around nobody
a burial ground for women	the colour of arterial blood
a charm	the condition of it
a city made of waves	the direction of a palm
a cube of glass sinks to lake beds	the fields of empty living rooms, car lobbies
a dancer's limbs	the French verb <i>attendre</i>
a deluge myth	the fulsome flick
a dark horse	the gap between this and never
a full lower lip	the grill teeth of a step
a galleon full	the hedgehog's dilemma
a game of who's done what with whom	the invisible woman
a group of small	the involvement of stars
a heart condition	the kindly ones
a hinterland	the length of an elementary school
a homophone	the liquid density of sad waters
a ken of keening	the loss of a day or three
a little too much	the lumen, a perceived power of light
a lyric method	the lusatian culture in the early iron age
a manual for identification and care	the methyl mouth vapours
a mutton lamb	the milk line thickening

a newspaper turnover	the moon curve
a thousand year photo	the multiplication table cripples me
a reduction	the one thing I asked
a sad babylonian or assyrian or hibernian	the other's amazing stomach
a salutary sun fetched from the sky	the oval window mount of a daguerreotype
a sensation of falling	the parts of a curve where stroke is thickest
a single freckle	the preference for orchids
a single piece of parchment rolled tightly	the problem of choice
a subset of a subset of a subset	the rate of particles across a given surface
a talisman to guard the bow	the sad phone machine
a test of metal	the scar lateral to my design
a thimble full of tequila	the sickle sweet
a tongue here, a palm, your thigh	the sky
a universe expanding	the sound of voices bent against glass
a vital component of ornamental objects	the suffusion of grief from
a weight of letter darkness	the tenets you adhere to
a well-washed shirt, my shirt	the term infant
a whole season	the territorial pissings
	the thickening of regret
conjunction	the weakening
	the wolf and the cosmonaut
if a beckon	the wrong answer to every question
if a bye bye baby bye bye	the you undone
if I am or am not	
if I only had a brain	possessive pronoun
if that means anything to you	
if you are not kind	my amazing face
if you cannot name it	my answer
if you love someone	my attributes

if you pretend me frostbit	my black moods
if you put your mind to it	my complacent tongue
if you stay inside	my conversation privileged
if you are going to do this	my cousin Elizabeth says
if we are pulsar	my darkling bright
	my dissolution aching
<i>conjunction</i>	my dream minding
	my dyed liver, the bones of my dead mothers
and a sigh, deep inhalation	my fingers polish topaz
and also to hide from the scrutiny of clergy	my fists let go
and between hiccups	my friends dance up aisles, their faces
and between standing stones	my grandmother's method for pain
and boundaries of my unclaimed	my grip upon you
and days of no chlorophyll	my happy home
and didn't mean	my heart bicameral
and dropped from several stories	my heart's ferment in glass jars
and I meant to call you: but	my knuckles bled
and I tell you she isn't	my life preserved, tsunami
and laid it out flat	my life!
and let slip	my lost attributes
and make MMMs all over, seagulls	my lungs puffed out cloud silhouettes
and on one foot a shoe	my my eye eye oh yes
and one and two and three	my name unpronounceable
and paper oracles	my neck – the moon
and seems	my own personal Pandora's box
and smash grapevines into wreaths	my pre-Raphaelite beauty graces endless etc.
and so much more now than then	my presence, the metaphor
and swallow up collapsed linoleum	my reckoned shoulder
and the other bare	my shirt fresh laundered

and then	my throat veiled
and this is hard to explain	my untouched elbow
and tips of teal fireflies	my untranslatable goodness
and vibrate in jaw	my wall of a wall
and water pour over	my weapon can be sword, sickle, pole arm
and when I call, you answer	my worth
and you always told me no	
and you never	<i>preposition and particle</i>

	<i>preposition</i>	to a lamb's bleat
		to accurately remember
from across this room		to be reasonable
from april until ice		to burn for
from her fingers		to claim solace from stars
from my hands		to count dimes
from pulp paper, a brittle baked		to crack an egg
from the craters on Io		to do and places to be
from the slightest movement		to encompass a thimble
from the start		to erase the merest
from your shoulder, the ways of stepping		to go
		to goddess or vegetation or pretty ghost
	<i>preposition</i>	to heal tissue
		to hear one melted syllable
of a bitch in heat		to hope and lose all coherence
of a bracket worn over then pushed		to illustrate the depths
of a bridge rising above it		to just about manage
of deeds done		to know your bones are made of water
of a dowry		to mail your little flame
of a name		to make it all better

of dams or sudden loss	to matter to you
of dyed pulp wood and gardenias in bloom	to my continued
of each leaf through vein	to my head and sent diagonal
of escape velocity	to nubs, flat pitched
of ever evolving colour, no temperance	to orbit
of five year old girl with fists	to realise
of grief	to realise you'd rather
of holding onto a stem	to rose, to mahogany, the elegant slide
of invisibility	to say I'm stake-bound
of it stops, that doing	to silhouette a bookmark
of kicking it	to singular
of lake ice, what a mess	to use 'the dead'
of light, set on the tips of the fingernails	to veil my throat, that you
of long dead insects, the Baltic kind, forms	to walk the whole way home
of magazine covers in the rain, pulp mash	to wander
of me, my prescient character	
of niceties, of greeting	
of no artistic significance	
of no purpose	
of passive joy	
of pure architecture	
of sea	
of thumbs	
of us across tree lines	
of warmth rising	
of water pressure	

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