

V E R M I N

Lance La Rocque

BookThug / 2011

FIRST EDITION

copyright © Lance La Rocque, 2011

The production of this book was made possible through the generous assistance of The Canada Council for The Arts and The Ontario Arts Council.



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des Arts
du Canada



ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL
CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Printed in Canada.

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA
CATALOGUING IN PUBLICATION

La Rocque, Lance, 1963-
Vermin / Lance La Rocque.

Poems.
ISBN 978-1-897388-92-1

I. Title.

PS8623.A76284V47 2011 C811'.6 C2011-904766-7

ECOPATHOLOGY

I hope there is a here
In the hereafter.

Sleep is salvation.

I have no faith
In the larger nerves.

The forests contract
Cartoons expand.

I'll take a stand
As much as I can.

Wonder. God I wonder.

CROSSING (11 MONTHS / 40 YEARS)

Emily –

My little harlequin
Breaks the cold sky.
Earth
Stolen from the Nothing
I halfway enter
And halfway anchored
By your small hand.

SINCE YOU VANISHED

Since you vanished
It's all bridge
Under the water.
My bridge.
Gives me my neck and some air.
See me standing absurdly
Arms stretched out.
Palms flat on the surface of the river.
Like stethoscopes.
They listen for more than remains.

PILOT

From the distance everyone
can hear the terrible noise
of the helicopter policing the city
for some lost soul.
I can hear it too from the depths of sleep.
I can hear you coming
from the crowded world to this empty one.
I can hear you
delicately manoeuvring long dark blades
across this darkest border.
I know it will be you
alighting on this planet.
Your promise.

And I will not awaken again.
So that I can be with you longer
that we might lie together side by side
and listen to the waves gently rolling
under our invented moon.

Everything before you, and everything concealed
you may take entirely
to do with what you want.
From now until the moment of your flight.
And my sleep deepens.

THE JOURNEY HOME

So here you go.

The journey home.

You place your head quietly in the shell of your hands
and remember and forget.

The sea crashing up against your resistance.

The sea crashing up against you.

The sea crashing.

The sea crashing.

The sea

The sea

The sea

BLOSSOM/ICE/WATER

Death is a dark thing, she said

Like a white blossom

Kissed to the ice –

A

Misshapen moon

Touched to and intimates

The subtlest surface

States

Of one's lake –

Barely –

A thin cold skin

Suddenly between you

And the ungainly clamour of your being there

BIRTH

Dear Emily I
have no language
but do anyway
with which to say
the darkening purple flowers of –

exude their languorous wings and have
across eye moon
and eye sun –

like wet leaves
and like sleep –

but now to find light's burning
smuggled through darkness and
(ignited in blood?)
at last
the hard breach –

scalpels bleed starlight
Dec 17, 2002.

EMILY MACHINE

The child feels
in my arms
like a vehicle so
ill prepared
for much of anything
let alone
the inevitability of flight
and black holes.

COLOPHON

Manufactured as the first edition of *Vermin* in
the Fall of 2011 by BookThug. Distributed in
Canada by the Literary Press Group: www.lpg.ca.
Distributed in the United States by Small Press
Distribution: www.spdbooks.org.
Shop on-line at www.bookthug.ca



Type + design by Jay MillAr