

Denver

By Greg Bem





I

Slice of high brow the low though intact vision flutters though I'm hot and the blur continues  
and you have not arrived just yet and yet somehow your shadow precedes your flesh

I am the waiter the crown of the coupe: 16<sup>th</sup> floor deadening hardening  
And then hence you've arrived from my memory of Indianapolis and our phone calls

A Spirit Wanderer sex rattled our sexes rattle and rocks form beneath our four total feet  
(in a land, dusty, you can't help but notice the dried disease escaping  
like series of breaths across and scattered collected in pools a mile high)

This is Denver this challenge this is 7 months no maybe 8 how many since October?

I do not  
count  
without  
water

Your blood is a boiling hydrant left out in the heat thus boiling, storm clouds rushing above the rust  
as wolves do as infrequent as bleeding wolf noses while children of wolves come in and look on and  
the deformities outside of the windows pass as the public pass as normal though for me they are  
eruptions and ruptures of the gazes and my skin reacts kindly but noticeably when all I need to think  
of is your arrival in this sea of special anonymity / cannot fathom the frequency of thought and the  
change of licking your eyelids your towel wrapped around your breasts your asshole concealed or me  
grabbing your hair like coils of rope it has caught my snag, it has caught the rhythm of your  
fingernails jamming into my shoulders, scraping skin and making me clench my jaw and smile /  
Denver bandits keep mumbling and this is such an empty town.

## II

The way the rocks are casually covered with the dead forest it's as though the flame has my skull and is pulling, pressing, pommeling and the fire was so many years ago the guide book says the master tome the tomb of our desires is within the snow we find ourselves making it to the snot dripping down our faces it's almost 10,000 feet in the air here and we are sick, sick creatures. She with her hands bracing forgiveness the runner's body is not in tune with the earth of elevation and he his love is growing out of his ears the blood pouring across the side of his face his neck there are clouds and so many people pass by saying not a word the families and the lovers and the singular entities

entrance to the park the monetary washout a beige color behind the wrist

we have thrown ourselves together as gymnasts or elephants do their tusks

washing as rolling as Cupid pulling a move in front of the sun

(silhouettes and staccato fantasy structures, the lost legs of our trip, air crushing into us, pressing into us) (morbid this fascination with the least and the lacking) (moments at once lubrication and leprosy's big game is home to a fascination or rather this is just dehydration and I'm going a bit nuts)

we are cold when it rains

when it rains we are told to watch for the horizon

it grows dim and exclusive: nothing like: being here

(breathe in deep, let the height in)

and then we touch faces wetten them together

tricksters in the garment of light

### III

Garment of light are you serious all the shadows in the world come out tonight you cannot be protected

all the shadows of the world come out tonight you I speak of thee I speak of Eye come out and stumble along looking at the world like a computer—

slice open the city and automatic fire the block by block manifesto penetrating the gut no flak jacket packed in bag

manifesto-jam-ming crooked : booked

between the bookstores and the outlets there are the mutants

they touch palm to face to palm to palm to face to palm

everyone knows someone and even the eyes like vacuums so solo the blonde there crouching I know not of her ghost she is she waits in the corner she must be waiting for someone someone someone she knows from the mountains is coming on horseback coming on bus train car scorpion sting dead to the south to savior for her to be safe for her / those eyes I cannot cross those methamphetamine beaming eyes I keep walking watch bike racers dicey in their moves then watch those backs higher than skulls people wearing packs lost as ghosts as solo the napalm of neon crushing the forests of brick with transactions we hear about touch taste calmly like rag to brow and this is the time alone we sweat alone / masturbate or alleviate the sickness with room service like back at home with purpose and endless combinations of butter flour sugar chocolate [A ENDLESS SUPPLY OF THE COOKIE]— die or just dream of diabetes

the meekness in the air the way the air gets worn like skins like someone's tanned together breath my watch reading 2AM the drunken texts sent out like missiles and impact we have impact—

in the case of the crypt

do not forget your woolen blanket

no pillows for homeless

this is sexy

24 hour Euro café plays reggae and Euro just got a whole

lot

larger

I am drunk, but drunk for you.

IV

Automobile Italian Fiat your leather is plastic your plastic this plastic

the lumbering lectern my shin on the dash not enough air—

causes the heat waves to finally get together—pull, push, press, I insist(ently)

we never pressed in, never honked:

we listen to music / wonder / where on earth do

/ these paths take us? / these radio waves wake us?

(now we walk along a ridgeway shaped like prehistory / the animals inside us

/ to come out / above the lanes of the highways below us)

Emergency is a new way to say Smile

and smile is a new name for exhaustion

// there could have been permanent brain damage

And just last night all the poets gathered like playing cards atop a table at the edge of downtown all of them having flown in from somewhere there was the Egyptian coming from Seattle there were the young kids smoking cigarettes studying “both” poetry and fiction at the university there was the poet who used to live in Hawaii and now lives in Paris the poets who still live in Hawaii the editor of the press (who strangely as worst A/V guy of all time as king in own castle maybe this is how Romans felt about Nero / Nero the A/V guy / Denver lookalike it’s fine) and the fever was striking me in the face altitude sickness a backhand or boxer’s jab to the throat me pinned down beneath a single vanilla wafer cookie tasted so terrible all I could think about was how the wine didn’t help and the smokes made me choke and the little Latino child running around near that concessions cart and that local bus that would connected Denver to Texas and Texas to Mexico and we all stood out there the clouds impressing me but not she not the clouds weren’t that great (though Seattle, Seattle, calling my breath back).

Hotel Room as Empty as a Casket Filled with One Man

The name being called being called in a series of flame

Please, Lover, Go See the City, Let Me Drift as though on a Floating Pyre

The name being called is our name we are together beyond walls

Peace Arrives in Sleep as Sleep Arrives in Death Tonight

(/ The chorus of the flatlands is not one of wildlife, strangely)

V

Tho' these steps they do not render in the head in the head they do not render these steps tho' I have fallen through them fallen up and then down right through them the madmen children golden women twine and barbs and this space cursed with no new memories take back the memories thrust memories to fire preload and be audacious about it while muttering "Sir this, thank you, Sir that."

I have tried to accommodate despite the height of such situations /

lurching / wrenching / my body rejecting the simple qualms of air /

no lust will cure what secrets you have of me / us

no dynamite plunged to crack of earth to explode the white mist /

(it takes me back learning the spaces we became one within / inside of)

She stares at my wholesome / parts to whole / whole to parts / rounded out and

rounded in

I have wondered and wandered for moments the air ninety something something on the side of a brick wall and the quadrangles of the grid system lacerate and we grow incredulous that this time is up just like every time hanged a noose a line stretching across space the space we've walked the dust we've shared the program getting with the program I wait while we watch grass elatedly dying the brown of death more lively than our flesh in my sickness in my stunted growth I shrivel into a dried stuffed body :

: you give what you grant, give a name, name fascinations while sipping water puffing air roped into a tight wad of rubble atop stone and sacrifice / there is so much history / grab hold scrape the flesh dig deep tongue a tick quickly thereafter smooth over such a tare of the body and tear into what you desire:

understand we've underscored our own winding curses bellowed stomachs growing older with visages of each other we mirror the blood's cool smother our lips forgetting we watch the castle crumble underneath our decisions and letting the unknown out / as scattered as the lobes wrinkles of brain matter pushed up aside under ache undertow my skull growing dull and thin must return to drowning sea to begin—

and yet no:

we've already drowned each other—

and now we're bathing