

DANIEL POPPICK

Pink Stones

Leaking from home through its existing door
Yesterday I saw this vacant stranger
Walking blasted through the street
His head's port (you couldn't call it
A face with precision) grimaced and his gait
Rose wool, which also happened to be what
He had noosed on the pile you'd call his dome
You look at him and his body just sprays
And storms each witness
As I trust when told others are an act of violence against me
How does one approach a person, do you go like "Hi"
Ambulance running it
I speak to him here through a brick-fucked window
Lit on a street these nouns infect

Carrying their private mercury vials
Which they somehow use to speak to each other
On every glassine block
Mirrored line climbing and drooping
Based on a face or anus's whim
Or at least its environment, which is beyond
Intention, I must truly choose to remember this
I was walking to work with him in mind
When standing there in three dimensions
Before me I saw Margaret on a ledge
She often smokes there certain mornings
Projecting brick's serial genius
As the day reflected off her thought
Flung up the scene, and I its actor

Approached that building
As if playing a star snapped in half
And spoke the corresponding lines, her own

Which she accepted with medieval grace
“I ate three things: one of them was swan
Another lily blossoms, but the rest
Was the event itself, which I bled
From its eyes after shaking until decibels
Poured from its spine like a Polaroid
And that has made all the difference”
At the time I meant all sustained notes are Zeno’s
This is especially true of hinges
When the door sang every time a student
Left the lecture on sex as a commons

Later that morning, fated to begin and end
To world a new relation, each surface in that particular door’s
Hinge pounded another harder and faster, a high ivory key
Within each contact a million claps, which is
To say a million murders
Before I left Callie asked if I would be writing about sex
And I said “No, hinges”
It was like quickly walking through a meadow
In an opposite direction
The pure integrity of space went taut
And rang, and like that moment I have been wanting
To tell you about my life for some time now
I’m just discovering the comfort of the stones
Among this blank disease

I picked up this book and it seemed my life
It was person after person
Who will be on that coastal shelf
Until someone tilts the lampshade at too steep an angle
And the whole thing flames, bringing our house
Down with it, and in that expression
You may detect
My exact shadow for the first time
Scissored directly from the temperature
And pouring down the stairs
If the man I had seen earlier that morning
Had been my student, my shape

Would have been his first missed class
And my name his second, a failstream beginning to run

I walked past the white university
Filtered rose through a dawn so dumb it was clear
Except for hit buildings
The whole city appeared an attic
With traffic moving through its beams
Tails diluted at noon
To form the endless parade of objects making time
Retract into a single syllable's sheath
I screamed just such a word through that window
To rev space to an appropriate speed
But mine remained posed in your throne
On a pier
In which hours equal sentences and night a page
I crouch over in a game I use to throw your money away

Up all night whitewash called from the dice
When they rolled
And swallowed the fussing surf
In two ballooned gulps as if a singer blaming
Syncopation for rings erupting from his finger
They landed and said "We are seven"
So we won, it opened other actors up, the way one
Stomped down Bound 2 Boulevard
As if breaking straight into one cell from another
Like when in temple I whispered "Suck it, Columbus"
Into the Torah so it would land
And be heard now in the square
Another clatter slapped the stone and sails
It woke the cops we ran along

"Fuck the police" Eric wrote from his room
The song issued from some student's system on the street
And impressionable as I am
I undid their exoskeletons
Like the ribbons they were
Two monuments of speech slipped out

One looked a crab the other a horse
Concretely screaming
And then suddenly they stopped
Their bodies clotted at the surfaces
Back into a badge that slips around them
And repeatedly clatters to the ground
I wanted to tell you all about this
So I opened my phone

You sat in silence on the line's other end
With objects strewn in a ring around you
As incumbent daylight slugged the table, static
Saturn speaking back to gravity itself
My words rubbed my teeth, a vapor
Waiting to be installed in the day's exchange
I wanted to say "Am I more afraid of arrest
Or its vessel?"
Margaret would have known the answer, Eric the word
And Callie the actual question, but you just held the receiver
Up as you plucked drugs
From the receiver tree
The branches foamed, another nerve ghost
Bleeding free

We am a truly personal failure
We stood together blinking in the kitchen this afternoon
You hacked up a lens and it slid down the drain
Capturing a certain *c'est vrai* of the lips
Before they left your words
And erasing the image the following instant
But who could forget such a picture
It is glued upon mine eyes at this moment
Medicating a sensation of being "camouflaged
With shittiness," a phrase stolen from my office cube
From James, who chats among us here
Blessedly posted within this megaphone's range
Lice bend and blur under his name
As I throw it against the western wind

How rare it is to truly change
A dramatis personae gathers off the page, pink stones
Stacked on one another
Wall of everyone you've ratted out
Most of whom you don't know
As surface is privacy at miles per hour
Which pierced the man from yesterday
And were I to do it over I would try
To swallow the arrow barreling at him
Before the bowman's message reached you instead, blood
Flying literally in my face
I think and nothing happens, I'm
Not going to lie, it is
What it is

I put my lips to that word's law
And feel the bruise pinched between dominions
The swollen instrument a wall erupts from
So far out it echoes back
And with my back to the lawn tonight
This fear is not the laser animating
You into a symmetry, but Gemini themself
Who doesn't need that bag of garbage
That is each other's sibling's half
But here I are regardless not dancing on my own
I flow to my twinship, locked both in a cell and on
Its other side by people speaking
You turn to one of me and leak onstage
How rare it is to truly change