

CARMEN GIMÉNEZ SMITH

from "Post-Identity"

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the animal imagines what life is in her fiefdom
what the edges of her domain are
what parables become policy
vice versa the animal susses out confederate
from the horde the animal defines the age's pathology
how will the animal cure it
how does the animal describe worry
and recognizing it how does the animal
solve the animal outside of time
does the animal become an immunity
or serve the fiefdom what is the give
and the take away is it false hope
inescapable class the trap a fortress
we all grew up frozen at a slant
are we up or down are we over
and out can we clamber in from the wilds

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how shall we remind
the mathematicians
the politicians
and the statisticians
and the tax exempt
megachurch man
and the house flipper
and the executive garbage
who hiked up the cost
of Daraprim and EpiPen
and the complicit Ponzi
scheme of lobbyists
and the propogandists
and the Democrat-corporate
shills and the patriarchal
misogynist statesmen
how shall we reiterate
that want is drug is conduit
and capital is the rabies
impulse is the mechanism
nationalism the mask
the matrix is us sheeple
and so we should capture
the mike post-haste we're tired
of getting jostled on currents
dismissed by the judges
made into sex object
unwillingly reduced into
effigy or dismembered
on borders and razed
by the American appetite
for Sinaloan meth in teeny
baggies with skulls on them
each skull a human head
tossed to the furrowed canals
edging our border lined
with the bodies of journalists

and mayors a magical realism
not seen in your ethnic literature
will someone listen and if so
how will there be reparation
will it be animal mineral
or vegetable will it have
only symbolic heft and flavor
or will it be forcibly removed
will Nero hear from
his driverless chariots
with seats that lean back
into giant palanquins
shouldered into the sublime
to a condo on Mars
by rows and rows of bodies
not just brown but all our
bodies consumed by mythologies
of difference of disruption
will they listen
with respect with the republic
how will they feel when it's
explained and it's not feelgood
ribbon business but our
bodies like chattel in pens
because of the venerated
cannibal factory feeding
infinite and wanton wants
the pliancy of adolescence
bones sugar fecal matter silicone
gristle even cells broken down
into individual patents
the factory releasing
only one xenotype at a time
free with purchase of one
million shiny objects
shall we write our demands in blood
shall they be inscribed in the annals
of art and history
how do we transform their powers

do we break them apart and bury them
set them on the shelf
do we push them out
on the ice floe or take
away their scepters
can we disrupt it
with our word parades
do we extend ourselves
into walls again do we
let them in on the plot
or do we burn them

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is my lineage apropos
my diction mid-to-high
is this the office where I turn
in my papers where I turn
on the reader did you examine
my permit my creed will I be
scorned or feted or disregarded
or memed or made to confess
and will I have to get christlike
will it be messy because I resisted
will you levee around
that flourish will you tighten
the reins or is this a limping treatise
often I hardly capture I'm doing
harpy that I'm a city's pestilence
but also the cure I'm under
and down but still tell-all
so do I thank you when you touch
my idiom do I mother or write
serve art or the state do I beg
you to power the engine
construct the proper institution
or is it a collective effort
one in which we feel noble
and broadcast our dignities
in the end do we take
it on singularly or as one bodily
force and is there a syntax
I can appropriate
for my limited parlance
or have I already done so
and no one has told me
because I am not
of their denomination

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why are we wedged so much so horchata
mulatta corbata pirata and obvi piñata
metiste la pata cuando abriste la boca
pero te lo digo with love