

Grant Miller
&
Nick Smith

Subtle Revolutions Explicit Directions

It was revolution.

You said.

Yes.

It was direction.

I felt.

Don't think so?

I remember.

You forgot.

I remember the trees.

The trees were supposed to bloom an orchestra

of sharpened light beneath a blanket of auburn hair.

Flowers made of sand and plucked by soluble sea-life
under a swirling surface of signifiers.

You forgot about the rocks.

The rocks weren't destined to fossilize an artifact

of blunted sound between the sheets of ashen skin.

Sediments dismantled by diamonds and buried by hardened
hermit crabs into the docile depth of reference.

Yes.

Nah.

Yes. We tried to hold that under objective scrutiny, didn't we.

Nah. Ya'll didn't try to repress your subjectivity, did ya?

Didn't we.

Did ya?

Then you started sending those postcards.

A synthesis of matches and bright-eyes cardinals.

Flammable epiphanies made of wood and
shot down from the sky by a lone hunter with no face.
If only I stopped hearing those stories.
Entropy of ashes or hollow-boned wingspans.
Charred abjections degraded to dust and
flung into the wind by a flock of sheep with many names.
Revolution, you said.
It was direction, I felt.
Perhaps it was just a manipulation of light in your teeth.
It sure isn't a reflection of night in my eyes, no.
And those postcards.
These stories.
Eiffel Canyon.
The Holland Bridge.
The Grand Tower.
Golden Gate Tunnel.
Niagara Pyramids.
Ground Zero.
Ground Zero.
And postcards from even further still.
But stories from ever nearer too.
Summer places.
Winter spaces.
Remember?
Forget?
Do you remember those summer places
where year round a tongue sought you out,
those carcasses of words hanging idle
while fruit ripened to taste.
Did I forget those winter spaces
when minute by minute closed lips evaded me?
These infants of images sitting active,
flowers fermenting on call.
Run to the mouth, you always said.
Escape from the tongue, I never muttered.

And then deeper.

From the surface.

And then deeper still.

The surface then.

To that silent and foreign idiom where in the hands of impervious planets the tallest trees would break without a sound.

From that cantankerous but familiar loquacity where in the heads of impetuous people the smallest pebbles would drop flat with a thud.

Some say the earth was feverish and did shake.

Unanimously spoken the sky was nauseous and couldn't sit still.

You were universes, you said.

Universes where people made of metal circled the sun in tiny ellipses of expectation.

I am a flamboyant island, I thought.

An island where sailboats molded in glass moor in my coves in the buoyant wake of resignation.

At home it was me and my mailbox.

A ritual of desire that always laid in wait.

And at night. Waiting for stars to dress in nouns and speak of a sunset too broken to drown the earth.

Aboard, it was just you and your listening.

A whim of surrender that was never really expected.

And in the morning. Listening to dreams undress in action and stutter through a sunrise too fixed to illuminate the horizon.

This bond that spoke cycles.

That game that draws lines.

This history that spoke men.

That fiction that hushed gods.

Yes.

No.

Truths are always the silent and stoic.

Lies are never the articulate and reflexive.

Unmoving.
Blockaded.
Unquestioning.
Blasé.
Un.
Blah.
I waited.
You disappeared.
We waited.
I disappeared.
Waited for vague understandings of linen
sheets shifting in currents of coordinates.
Disappeared.
Waited for the frail undertaking of intricate lines
carved into a father.
Disappeared.
Waited for epilogues
hung in tiny brushstrokes
just beneath your speech.
Disappeared.
Disappeared with precise misconceptions of nucleic
acids recombining in pools of roses.
Do you remember?
Disappeared at the impromptu refusal of color
rubbed across your mother's cheek.
Do you remember?
Disappeared behind another preface
with its explicit foreshadowing
spilling over the meniscus of my meaning.
Do you remember?
In a field of blackened grass we had an orgasm.
I bet you forgot.
In that forest of whitened trees neither of us came.
The way your clothes compressed your body after.
HA!
How your nudity slipped out of your head before.

Hm.

And we laughed.

HA!

And you cried.

Hm.

Hung from some Cartesian Axis,
nails through its wrists and ankles,
drowning in words and vinegar.

Floundering in an existential ether,
points around your chest and head,
floating in nothing and oil.

Drowning in words and vinegar.

Floating in nothing and oil.

A temporal certainty, you said.

Drenched in water.

A timeless mistake, I thought.

Drying out air.

And now look—

the sun still floods the earth in yellow needles
of question.

But then hush...

the moon still suffocates the sky behind its purple cushion
of acceptance.

But the sun refuses meta
or even meta meta

And the moon invites mmmm
ever still mmmm mmmm

And the roses that hang above the window
cast shadows

that stretch the length of a pointed finger.

And the concrete that crumbles in the basement
gathers masses

that drag the weight of a broken mirror.

Remember the dog scratching at the bathroom door?

Did you forget about the kitty purring in the bedroom?

Remember all the manifestoes?

Did you forget all that we didn't do?
The forgotten aporia?
The memorized complacency?
And then the silence?
But now a din?
Silence.
Dissonance.
But the celestial.
Yes.
For a moment there,
writhed in mud.
And the transparent?
No.
Wouldn't be there,
it'd be fuddled in dirt.
Yes, yes.
For a moment there,
writhed in mud.
Nope, nah.
Wouldn't be there,
fuddling in dirt.
Revolution.
Direction.
And then silence.
But now dissonance.
A word, you would say. Wrapped in paradox.
A sound, I will sing. Stripped of harmony.
Silence.
Dissonance.
A word, you would say.
An image, you wouldn't see.
Simulating static.
Silence.
A word.
You would say.
Signifying nothing.