

PHILIP KOBYLARZ

from *flags, scrolls, robes, deserts, waves*

... but death is only a launching into the region of the
strange untried...

—Melville's journals

A slug. Many wrinkles in sand. The beach is silent after the storm.

Buckets

filling themselves with water.

Stairs behind a door lead to nowhere. Clock face eroding into
continents; spirals

of where its arms skidded, rubbed.

Beads of sticks suckled by the marsh where the birds gather, hopping
moment from moment,

boulder to dishpan boulder.

Hostage marches into a crowd, acquiescing, tasting the wet cloth of
one last wish.

In a pocket, key bones.

A collection of butterflies alighting from pikes threaded through their
bellies. Quicksand

inside mud. Plumes of

written letters blow into the grip of the wind, tossed away as random
as garbage. Victims

of the self cannot smell strands

of wild violets immersed in water. Drinking water. Drinking water will
only make one thirsty

for water.

The window, a distant and approaching badland of no particular shape,
hue, shade of day. Grains

of sand beneath the fingernails.

Tears of moisture on the glass' lip. Sun peering out from well within
the shadows.

Wicked how the hair is always in tangles of lust. Canyons fill dormant
with solitude, later
to be filled with clouds.
Laundry lies in bundles, just released. Need only to add matches.
Pennies getting darker in a jar
growing thicker, losing luster.
Not really like pictures pressed into a photo album which last for
pages of forever. Gray scales
of the pickerel. Oil, oil and water.

Say the ancient coin with an imprint of a Greek owl. Lovers follow
crowds of lovers
down the quiet halls of museums,
or mausoleums to where beauty's stopped. Divination by liver. Maybe
sulfur. Whereabouts
of water buffalo.
Postcards on the table arrayed like decorated plates to be contemplated
while eaten from.
Cave of the thousand
buddhas. The inner ear meets the lips of the conch in an illicit kiss.
Fireworks are lost
over the ocean where
no bridges can be built. Doesn't stop the piers from reaching. See the
rockets expelling
their seconds of fury.
Explosions over the water unfolding as cactus bristles. Sky behind the
sky.

Clouds,

pass over.

Bear of Russia. Inevitable imprints that tattoos leave behind. Sight of ankles

in anklets.

An inability to neck-crook the apex of noon. Seagulls circle hungry circles. The bathers

wade out into the depths with wine swollen bladders, their feet nonchalantly searching for bottom. Buoys

ringing the bells of their Fortunato caps. Smokestack an integral part of the beach, late part

of the century, eveningtude.

Forgotten, lies the moon. Forgotten: memento mori. Forgotten, the single helix

of exception. Sacred duality of the jawbone. Flower of the artichoke. Reading tea leaves of steam. The valley

shortened by fog. Nothing is as persistent as nothing's insistence. From cradle to grave boots march. Bread loaves

rise like dull Lazaruses. Finding the straw in a heap of needles. Navigator lost in his directions. Compass' arms,

mustache of any clock.

Footsteps to the ante-room. Walls surging with water, broken pipes,
mock-crustaceans
of spiders,
contain smoke. Rain delicately pools in puddles of spit. What the cloud
of unknowing
knows.
Cypresses at the cemetery provide directions for the dead. Beer
effervescent with salt.
Tears stain
windows in rivulets of sadness, joy. Birds sing alleluia the only way
they know.

Cemetery where no one goes. Deer hooves of hearts pounded into
ground. Turning,
the earth. Pebbles
of particular shapes, colors. Tintinabular, the rushes grow decapitated.
An array of eels. The ivy
winds about its throat.
Mailbox with its lids slightly unopened. Windows winnowed from its
old house, glass
yet unbroken. Where
the weeds won't grow. Footpath treads across the field dividing it into
one. And another.

Insomniaries. The rise of the fall. Sphinx candle. Dogs asleep on their
backs
in the sun. Yester-
days devoid of tomorrows. Candelabrum decorated with seashells,
onyx in retrograde. Emery
board. The how of

now. Contrails of the ocean crystalline. Cats where their footprints
roam. An orrery made
of tin, mold.
Patinas and disregarded waylays of glances. The 5th element of leaves.
Ocean eroded to shore.

Ingredients. Jet streams. The wherewithal. Ineptitudes of a sudden
nature. Shades of shade. Not
to be. Perpetual
eclipses. Pink angora hat. Verbiage left on the scrabble board. A wound
opened, bled,
wiped with vinegar.
Chrysanthemums of the sea. The shock of after. In the magpie's nest,
cigar bands. And the moss,
resisting; red.

At the gate, bottles with cut lips. Crypts of grass cuttings. Moth wings.
Stationary
weather front. Still
a front. At the gate, a trail worn thick. Strands of birch. Playing cards
wet
and mangled in
alleys, no jokers. At the gate, a gate. Handles, pulled. Insouciant.
Towards
a line of people bent
on waiting. At the gate, a passage to. Through the gate: changeling of
fences.

misses a tune,
wound. Ashtray
with a spade imprint. Still no one knows why the murderer has done
what is, what continues,
to be done.

For instance, this. Technically, we don't know. A planet may resemble
ours: the how and the when
why and the how, the how
and its aftermath. Subsiding, tide leaves presents of polished stones it
worked so hard to
accomplish, then throw
away. Seagulls signal bad weather, but they don't mean to. Voice of
the immediate past is
distant, rocking
chair when its resting. Clouds another form of ash. We forget the
mementos.