



Abu Ghraib as the Aleph.

Abu Ghraib as the tragedians would write its sounds: aiai aiai aiai.

A document as irrefutable as the sun to the eye.

A lyric representing their history of pain,
and spiraling down those vowels.

April now, and what does that mean—new earth is all, and nothing
of world-building spring for Yasser Talal Al-Zahrani,
for Thaar Salman Dawod, for Ameen Sa'eed Al-Sheikh,
for Ali La Pointe, for Rachel, for Joan of Arc.

A prisoner, exhausted—fetal on the floor—in the hell-yellow glare
and greasy light, after his own body was turned into a science
of infliction.

“A ‘soul’ inhabits him and brings him into existence, which is itself
a factor in the mastery that power exercises over the body.
The soul is the effect and instrument of a political anatomy;
the soul is the prison for the body.”

Asymmetrical this warfare, as eyes to sun, as the will to state-power.

A version of the torture memos in which only aiai, and the words
for the many violences remain unredacted.

A version with only the names of the detainees; and could it register
as something other than a memorial—a demand on the future—
or would you skim it like a catalogue of ships.

A version, as in conceptual art, you make yourself according to three simple rules;

a whole library of them there in the (future) City of Otherwise & If—
here, now in the small theatre of your reading, a reckoning lyric.

Azaleas outside, April now, red starts in the sun.

Force Drift

In the epic all fields are allusive and alight:

under the algorithms of surveillance, gone
is the innocence from the the two-word poem search engine,
a rhyme with siege-engine now.

(A mural crown
was the Roman trophy for the soldier who over-
took the enemy-city's wall).

Light palm-shadows here,
in the hours writing you this morning I remembered
that photo from the early June internet—the siege
of Kobanê defeated—of the woman standing tall
in the back of the pick-up, desert horizon behind her,
taking off the all-black disguise she needed to cross
ISIS-controlled territory, revealing her magnificent
red dress, yellow and turquoise solar swirls—a perfect
image to end a film, | or history—the message you sent:
“to wear a beautiful dress is a human right.”

Force Drift [XI]

To wear a beautiful dress
is a human right

(and no less true in war);
to look up into a clear

day-sky, and not fear
a signature strike; to walk

through your city, no
curfew, no checkpoints;

to be utopian—even
if only for the duration

of the ~~p~~oem thought; to swim
in the sea (and in thought)—

all human rights,
o extraordinary flower

of the “I,” to meet you
in that secrecy,

there in the folds
of that obsolete rose,

that universal
treaty of the person,

find me so that I might
exist—we might

exist in that human
right, the anti-epic

we're trying for—
blue-black, black water, sky-blue,

redquartz, background dark—
I'm always writing you.

Force Drift [XIX]

—*for Ella Longpre*

The city is strictly performative: you eat
paper, it's ordeal & passage, a trance—*gold, red,*
chromium, weapon-grade bronze—and the abolition

of men, a password you made through obliteration
& performance, a transmission of ardor,
in memory now a reaction: parts per million of you

and “privacy, quickening”—*gold, red, chromium*—
Strange flora wilding the aftermath city,
martyr-crown, I heard you say of or through metastasis,

there in the small arms survey, a book code,
against the terror-logic of reversals & doubles:

FEAR UP HARSH EGO DOWN ISOLATION FUTILITY

bite on that, o men of Athens, the mouth to tear
at swaths, and carcinogens, it never leaves you
does it, the long sentence of the traumaeffect,

radicalized, transmogrified through the postures—
weapon-grade bronze—your body took, oracular
punk, Sibylline in faded black jeans, first poised—

chromium—above the bowl of melted snow,
then the soaked swaths, impossible communion,
you gagging, arachnidian, on the vehement sun of it—

gold, red, fire-black—ritual against infliction, against
the body turned instrument of infliction—*gold, gold,*
weapon-grade bronze—ritual for the body alchemical, and yet.

And then almost at will the sun disappeared
then almost at will the sun disappeared
almost at will the sun disappeared
at will the sun disappeared
will the sun disappeared
the sun disappeared
sun disappeared
disappeared
appeared
pear
red
ear

disappeared thru the will the sea the annul
then the sun all will stilled disappeared
pain the aleph wielded as sun as pain
under willed pain he disappeared
almost red almost ashed pear
as a deer will almost near
devasted in stilled pain
dead under the mare
white appeared red
heard the rape
bruise red
red tear