



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