

Resonant Frequency

I watch you watch yourself.

We call this kind of memory confabulation *love at first sight*, but it is not *love*, & this is not the first time. You succumb only because they are the person you catch glimpses of your whole life.

The vision is uncanny, as if differently colored, kaleidoscopic & surreal.

This is that moment when you are unsure you will be able to begin again.

& it must feel natal for such actions to be reciprocated. Your flat underarms begin to drip, & your lips part. The hair at your scapula—how does no one suspect your shoulders of wings—stands on end, points up like worms in mist. Your sight becomes a tunnel, & you are unaware of me behind him. Watching you watch him.

With siren fingers, your swollen chest swells slowly with this city air, this stale winter's apartment white radiator air, until yours touches his. & they do, & his hand explodes, his wrist contracts, stung by two million, five hundred & thirty eight thousand hornets, & the elbow dissociates as if to save the body from venom. Shoulders crumple, & his chest becomes pockmarks & so much folding & folding until all that is left is a ghost of him—a real person deeply behind fog, retreating, a portrait thinly behind papier-mâché.

Scaffolding is erotic: generative & indicative of collapse. Both pre-ruin, as a protective structure, & pre-decomposition, a means of slowly unbuilding the building or destructuring or otherwise tearing down; and a symbol of the new. Scaffolding to help us create.

Why do you withdraw from my touch. *You are so beautiful.* Up to this point, I have recognized myself in you. But then, *I am attractive, aren't I.* I lip to only myself & the wind, *Of course you are.*

I would like to live here, on this square scaffolding circumventing the square steeple between the train & the lake, that scaffolding with stairs crisscrossing only the south side of it, this scaffolding which is more beautiful & more complex than the steeple itself. I tell you, *I want to climb to the top*, but you say, *No*: There is no reason to be at the top. I just want to inhabit it, even if only its lower reaches. I want to live *needing* support.

To live begun & yet unfinished.

What I want to know is this: what is it like to completely lack agency, to completely forfeit control. Why do I feel like I do when I don't. How, when, & under what circumstances do we each transform our punishments into something constructive or generative. & if this can be done, can these ever rightly be called *punishments*; do *punishments* exist at all as we define them.

His head hangs off the edge of the bed, body pinned and wriggling; his throat is taugth, hyoid exposed. The standing man, the *fucking man*, forces himself into this mouth, agape: incisors scrape

corona, & there is an obvious if only brief struggle to lick the tongue down—or up—& squeeze past uvula. The *fucking man's* left hand holds the man's exposed throat just below that cartilage—pinches it (hard) with ragged claws at carotids as he thrusts.

& I do not stop watching.

Why is *recognition* so often synonymous with *identification*. If stories are invented to teach lessons & to assist persistence, what is it we learn, & what is it that *remains*.

Why am I so sad, & why do I so adamantly refuse the fact.

Would *knowing* the answers change anything.

& if I know *No*, then why.

(I weep & long & turn to stone.)

I

am stone camouflaging stone at the foot of a very rocky mountain.

Your relief is mirrored in his face.

& his face disappears in his lips & the lips split themselves into multiples & flap away.

Weep at not getting what you want.

I want to tell you this will continue, that this specter can never reciprocate or love or long or burn. All he can do is disappear when you begin to feel close. & I weep doubly: sad for your not having all for which you yearn, also for knowing I am in the same circumstance—in love with a specter, a half-shadowed person looking at another & disappearing right when the desire is strongest.

This is rust: choose a material we know will decay in a predictable way. Just as we have done for oxidization.

For beauty.

To decay is to anticipate beauty.

I weep stony little tears & let them roll down brick & mortar cheeks.

The only sounds I make are yours: when you cry out, so do I; only when you sniffle do I; I only have the energy to yell & scold after you scream in despair.

I weep for you & your decay. This is dehydration. I become dry, I rasp, & my body only crumbles into the mountain; my voice, only able to repeat. I dal segno your words.

Because I still want you to know I am here.

Chi dara fine al gran dolore.

L'Ore.

What you do not know is this: that place, where I encountered the one, that place where I met the other—it is the de Lacey cabin. A man is *Paradise Lost*, giving me words to speak. I am she, looking into that pool & thinking myself wretched. My French will never be as beautiful as.

Who taught you to write in blood on my back.

Resonance is the tendency of a system to oscillate with greater amplitude at some frequencies than others. Frequencies at which the response amplitude is a relative maximum are known as resonant frequencies. At these, even small periodic driving forces can produce large amplitude oscillations, because the system stores vibrational energy.

Everything changes, but nothing is truly lost.

These exist: wave nodes (stationary, fixed points, single atoms in the right position where, to complete the series, the pattern, can stay still, where simply being is enough). There is nothing special about a material which acts as wave node; it is just that each atom in the wave is affected differently, & it happens to be in such a position, & the wave happens to be a specific kind of wave, that everything goes up on one side of it while everything on the other goes down.

I do not know if we look at each other as much as you & I used to.

But I do not know how much we watch each other talk. There are times, such as serious conversations in bed, our greyhound between, but I remember dates spent learning how your lips & cheeks move when you speak, how many teeth show. Perhaps that is all this means, that I have learned it, memorized it. I have run my fingertips across the pout of your round bottom lip, & I can tell you all about it.

Teach me what we do when we know everything already, answers to all those questions which are apparently so important in the beginning. Teach me to bypass the meticulous recounting of our days. How to get to something that will again make me watch your lips. I do not know if either of us know how to get to that place. So we do not progress; you & I are feathered & tarred in this era when we tell each other only what is new, because we can fill in the rest. & anymore there is not much novelty.

This is not altogether disappointing. Ritual & the habitual, schedules are comforting & easy. There is safety & security, womb-warmth here. I do not blame anyone for succumbing.

Imagine that you want to demonstrate that you are valuable & feasible. Imagine that to do so, you begin to prepare dinner two hours in advance, only so that you can pace & fret & take out the garbage, do dishes that have not yet been dirtied, write about imagining yourself being a housewife to kill time before that moment when you need to start cooking so as to have dinner warm & on the table just as he enters the door.

Buy ginger root. It is somehow exotic & childlike—like a child, not *juvenile*—cooking with it, a demonstration of mastery. Do not admit, even to yourself, sitting & writing about cooking with ginger, your cat twining between legs & legs, that you do not know how to cook with ginger root, though you love the taste of it dry & ground.

You should wish your chopping were louder, exaggerated, booming down the stairwell so he hears it as he enters the building.

This is why I freely admit to not knowing what *love* is: it is a word that is applicable not only applicable to multiple feelings (for a lover, a friend, family, ginger) but also to different parts of a relationship. Infatuation versus love versus commitment versus *only one*. What makes it most difficult is that we only have so many words at our disposal. Count them.

Tell me the word for falling in love *again*, for still loving one while having those feelings duplicate for another, for happening more than once. What is the word for having two soulmates. & for having two *only ones*.

Two pendulums mounted on a single wall have the tendency to synchronize. But just as easily, the energy could alternate between them, one swinging further as the other swings shorter—a pseudo-parasitic relationship. A codependent relationship.

The codependent relationship.

An echo is not a repetition; the mountain does not speak. An echo is a reflection, a mirror. (This is important.) This means you only hear a version of yourself. This is important, because it means that I can only tell you things about yourself, & you can never get to know me. This is important because you must know that I am not withholding. This is important because—& how many times do I have to say this—you are the cause & driving force of this figure. (I am speaking literally.) No, not the figure, but that which it states, it speaks, it iterates. I manipulate it, change it, add sorrow or pain. This gives me an advantage. (& over what.) We say to her only that which we want reflected. If we do not wish to be seen as cruel, we proffer no cruelty.

If sound is reflected & returned in less than 1/15 of a second, we cannot understand it. Physically. It is the exact same phenomenon as an echo but happening much faster. So much faster that our ears perceive something else. (We perceive slowly.) This *something else* is reverberation.

A sound wave must travel 22.6 meters for it to register as an echo—11.3 each way. Thus, it is possible to be *too close* to hear someone say *I love you too*.

I cannot exist without the iteration; I cannot create myself.