

AUGUST STRATEGY & ELEGY ASSAULT

JENNIFER H. FORTIN

Find your final place, premonitions' lush confirmation
Blood unseen glazing surface areas

Conflict diamonds, yourselves selling
Partially to fund unlawful & illegal operations of our rebel group
Ethical questions can be asked & many other questions

My looping slideshow features deceptive distended bellies,
Incongruent weighty guns & lollipop noggins on wet paper necks

That's sweet, breaks up all over the fucking place!
Your hunger may be just, different: ooo lollipop extremity

Pulp the gums reveal when your lips shrink, double coral reef
Oral observations oral conflict & oral pact

Consider money's relationship to everything
Consider how my heart hurts & yours too
Ask where one's from & how old one is

Diamond's edge cuts other diamonds like nothing
How you wanted to scratch out your own eyes & other horrible stuff
Mineral fingertips somehow news

I mean, you didn't want to show us? Wave farewell?
Glitter like store windows or pavement? We missed you?
We miss you

Blood traces glaze uncontrolled areas
Mouth involves so much

FUCKING, IN THREE MOVEMENTS

Once I lost the tiniest piece
of my babushka doll. It was just a fucking
sliver with two black dots for eyes and a straight line for a mouth,
but smooth, finished even, when I twisted it
between my thumb and index finger. I lost it on the back deck
and immediately huddled in the dirt underneath, furious at myself
for playing out our lives on planks, the spaces
wildly widening as the shellacked crickets chanted
for her, natural army hunting the most fragile splinter.
I huddled in the dirt and did not cup the other dolls inside,
Eastern red hip red hip near infinite scattered like a miniature, pretty accident.
I huddled in the dirt while crickets shot across my jellies.
I huddled, outrageously sifting the coarse from the fine, unable to tell
the difference. It was somehow just that nature
would not forgive, not even that first time.
The others smile stupidly, rosily.
Me, the smallest who never got more than three lines to the face,
and decks cannot agree on size or what's appropriate.

I am a fucking dying
breed. Yes, I need
the personal invitation.

When I give it to you,
your abacus clicks down, counting supple fingers
compute currents, belief receipts all stuffed
in your cranium's handy file cabinet. I am not
trying to require business transaction here,
just desperately wanting you
to have it. Wanting them voided
and our currency charging a worthy fucking space.

HATE OF THE HARVESTER

shirked shucked corn ears left on plate do not participate

cornucopia calls coroner to investigate deaths

cornucopia arouses certain suspicions

harvester heaps results

harvester grimaces while reaping

harvester grins while weeping

coroner concludes deaths are natural

concludes deaths are unnatural

horn of plenty, looking grim

maintain protective anger and fast

I BELIEVED THE IMPOSSIBLE

and the uneasy when best.

Until recently, I would not know that
owls actually cannot rotate their heads 360 degrees;

uncomfortable spin useful, I thought,
in cycling forests inhabited by the diurnal.

Medium chicken eggs are larger
than perched-everywhere birds.

When I thought I was holding up
the egg for one to compare

safely, her attraction, repulsion
nearly fractured the beak.

Athletically-lunged babies cause me
(they are larger)
to rearrange my furniture with sonic dragging.

Patronage of your jalapeño hands to lower
membrane almost as effective and not as hurtful.

Disturbingly irresistible urge
for temperature control—incubator regulation.

Take the factory seriously as architecture.

Its chicken-wire matrices have the potential
to break and stretch—to strangle small animals.

These beliefs and others prefigured the whiplash line inter-
rupted by observation's injury.

IN A MIRROR:

Lightbulb reflection forces wattage on pre-existing illumination,
greasy, severe stranger. Looking up look up to why is that
a saying meaning revere? Strabismus brings the room rooms
another abysmal level of humiliation.
Blame placed natively on eye. Eyesore rooms: eye is sore.

used to keep
ophthalmologist appointments
before reading four
old-fashioned Disney somehow watching
measured *precisely* sight's deficiency
dark ratios

give a child iris-sized stickers
to decorate the prescribed eyepatch

alters the cruelty fraction see? doctor didn't

double if covered as opposed to triple dimension
the flatness of things protrudes after a while

A toilet in what was once a family's parlor.
Sitting room otherwise translated.
Seems to be excessive cornering in the small zone.
The curtain should not touch the human,
only the human—the curtain.
Pay no attention to the.
Pay no attention to the wizardry of us,
operation of handles, maybe made of soap.
Disappearance after the daily.
Go looking no further than a single backyard. Really,
things touch back.

Witnessing kitchen goings-on while gazing
the wrong way in a recessed bathroom.
Dishes: dirty yet.
Behind is happening also, though object
permanence appears easy to unlearn.

It is not easy, however, to cross a person
off in your address book. There's so much to do.

Water spots on a mirror change an entire outlook,

its points and peripheries. Own eyes undo.

Sunlight vs. unnatural light: duke it out,
muscle for prize highlight obvious shame straddling the brow.
It's anything but undemanding, this light.

Filament-offspring does not travel far from home;
outside light pervades.
The pervasive is not what wants
tri-monthly replacement by an unsteady hand.