

Terror

Alex Bryant

0

Sometimes you want to scream at them.

00

This is a recurrent nightmare.

000

Traffic.

001

An attack—

Assaulted or mugged.

002

Chest and ears –

while throwing a punch everything would stop up.

My voice would stop up.

003

An attack and screaming.

01

I could not speak an original word.

010

Traffic.

011

My words were careless and co-opted.

When I tried to speak original words,

they fell to a warm, damp carpet.

012

It was a stroke, I know it.

0120

In November of 2001 I suffered a pediatric stroke.

0121

Hemiparesis, hemiplegia, one-sided neglect, dysphagia,
aphasia,
vision problems, changes in mood, cognitive changes,
problems with memory, judgment and problem solving,
Behaviour or personality changes.

013

I know it.

02

All the oxygen-loving blood wanted to leap right out my mouth
and it got stopped up somewhere before my throat.
It was screaming for help.

021

Traffic.

03

Terror.

031

Gravity, often, gave up.

*Later, walking home from work after midnight, the whole lot, the five-lane intersection,
the parabolic road, down and up beside Columbia Lake, the fences, all was silent.*

January was empty, February disappointing, March the bipolar tormentor.

The path I walked home was bright lit and clear.

Come May, lilacs,

Spring.

1

Earth's ecosystems are dying.

11

Human overconsumption is killing the Earth's ecosystems.

111

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

*But how did we do this? How could we drink up the sea?
Who gave us the sponge to wipe away the entire horizon?
What were we doing when we unchained this earth from its sun?
Whither is it moving now? Whither are we moving?
... Do we not feel the breath of empty space?
Has it not become colder?*

12

Violence to the individual, to the State, to humanity,
is washed over with ethical nihilism
The guilt is gone.

121

Look at me!
Look at me!
Look at me!

122

Humans inherit terrors.
Humans inherit coping mechanisms.

123

What is the proper response to a world our language vandalizes?

13

The hope of returning words to stillness is inadequate.
Lyric thought limps, mutilated by syntax.
We have maimed silence.

131

Words were ours to begin with,
they're the Mason jars Laplace lent you.

132

He said:

“Catch ‘em, catch the whole lot.
Just as soon as we catch all those critters,
we’ll figure ‘em right out.”

134

What is left of Laplace’s body is under Paris.

135

Humans are housebroken in language.
If humans begin urinating on the carpet,
they’ll be kicked out to fend for themselves.

14

The hope to return the Earth to stillness is inadequate.
Earth’s macro-ecology was parsed by chainsaws, tractors.
Their hum maimed silence.

141

Human social enterprise is earnest colonialism.

142

Conflict with anthropocentric dogma is not easily
broached by Sei Whales, nor the Saola of Vietnam.

15

Atrocity is not compatible with language.

151

Atrocity is compatible with
linguistic failure.

152

Demonstrate devastation:
Words around atrocity better be
abominable.

16

Language is a sieve, a mechanical separation system,
the ego is the hydraulic pressure, creating a slurry.
Humans often use this slurry to reference
“Beauty”.

161

Beauty is properly available in humility.

162

When humans recognize their colonization
of the world with language, of the Earth with gluttony,
they may begin to bow.

163

Humans are responsible to Earth's ecosystems.
The Earth's ecosystems will still be lost.
The λόγος can not be documented or known.
Humans will continue trying names for λόγος.

164

In moments of Heideggerian anxiety,
the world will pierce and blind you.

1641

The human superstructure becomes transparent for a flash.
We start talking about what we saw,
point at the places now re-occupied by scaffolding, saying:
“It was right there!”

1642

The world loves to hide.

1643

SUE SINCLAIR

*Sometimes the light, a horse,
gallops into the room
and demands your surrender.*

165

We use the names “beauty” and “meaning” around these moments.

166

There is no terror like the pupil of Being.

1661

SUE SINCLAIR

This is not the god you dreamed of.

167

We cherish what whispers kindly to us.

These become crutches.

17

Aporia is superior to apathy.

2

The human species commits acts of atrocity against its population.

21

“I”,
and “I!”,
and “I!!!”

211

A firestorm of narcissism swept right across human history.

2110

Set the home on fire and see what dances out.

212

We can't sleep in fire.

22

We maimed the human species.

221

Recently,
mechanized agriculture encouraged comfort,
worried Malthus, fed entitlement.

222

Humans shape their surroundings for themselves.

223

Potential human habitats "burdened"
by non-human populations are shaped.

224

When looking to make themselves more comfortable,
and on encountering another human population,
humans shape each other.

2241

Humans abuse economic activity in pursuit of happiness.
Humans are dishonest in pursuit of happiness.
Humans are violent in pursuit of happiness.

225

JAN ZWICKY

LP §131

'The natural world' – the image of re-connection with a resonant order untouched by human system – is idolized (to a greater or lesser degree) by lyric.

Domesticity involves use, but does not equate with domination – it is, instead, the way a technological animal can express itself in relation to its environment without domination.

Domesticity is at home with its limitations vis-à-vis 'the natural'.

23

It is not easy to love well.

231

An adequate response to carnage is love.

232

“What will look back at us and say thank you?”

Not one thing will be said for our love and we will continue to offer it.

It will not ever be enough.

24

Victims of atrocity can not be expected to love.

They may love if they are able

and choose to.

240

Yes, there can be choice in love,
though often we can not do otherwise.

2400

Some may be unable to love,
will leave love for the dead.

241

DIONNE BRAND

*do not say, do not say it was my fault,
do not say I could have gathered blue dragonflies,
or the showering sunlight*

the ashes of volcanoes or the residue of songs
from the cup of saxophones
I could not, I could not, I could not

242

Perpetrators of atrocity must love.
Their love will likely be denied by their victims,
or it will fail.

25

Are words in bloom adequate
to atrocity? They may
grow out of it. Blood may
grow lilacs.

251

T.S. ELIOT

THE BURIAL OF THE DEAD
April is the cruelest month, breeding
Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing
Memory and desire, stirring
Dull roots with spring rain.

252

PABLO NERUDA

You are going to ask: and where are the lilacs?

253

DIONNE BRAND

*I was carnivorous about love, I ate love down to the ankles,
my thighs are gnawed with love*

*still and yet I cannot have loved,
since living was all I could do and for that,
I was caged in bone spur endlessly*

*eye sockets ambushed me,
I slept with harassment and provocations,
though I wanted to grow lilacs, who wouldn't?*

254

PABLO NERUDA

Come and see the blood in the streets.

*Come and see
the blood in the streets.
Come and see the blood
in the streets!*

26

We have arrears.

3

The Earth is a Great Fear.

30

1789:

Shortage and insurrection.

31

The world is apathetic to human arrogance.

311

SUE SINCLAIR

*This is the world, impenetrable, the flat
black pupil that doesn't look at you.*

*You want to be wooed, to praise it,
instead, you're bored: beauty, what of it?*

32

We can not disfigure the world.

321

The world means.

3210

The world does not speak a second language.

322

We do not do damage to the world with colonial epistemology.

Colonial epistemology enables the human ego.

We encounter and parse.

323

We do damage to the Earth and earthlings with the human ego.

Human ego spills blood into our politics and our ethics.

We encounter and parse.

33

The world is mute chaos.

331

When asked to speak with us,
the world raised an eyebrow,
turned its head to the left,
and the Earth spat a tsunami over South East Asia.

332

After playing nice, we called in Bacon, the vivisector.

333

Bacon laced up his combat boots and went to work on the Earth,
Pentheus and his bull.
His jackals soon took over.

334

When the dogs tired out, the world danced quiet tango.
We called in Rorschach to read the Earth's blood splatter.

335

We couldn't read the world after that,
the Earth's facial muscles were limp, hanging off the bone.

336

The world was often thirsty.

337

Bacon's jackals analyzed his organs.
There were no original words.
We called in Rorschach to read the blood splatter.

338

The blood.
The blood.
The blood.

34

Catastrophe is an unsnarling.

341

Humans inflict horror on the Earth.
Those horrors can no longer be undone.
Humans may be undone.

342

SUE SINCLAIR

*If it weren't too late, you'd go back
on whatever promise brought you here.*

343

JAN ZWICKY

*[You must believe in Spring]
Because it ain't over 'til it's over.*

344

It is over.

345

JAN ZWICKY

*[You must believe in Spring]
Because the light says so.*

346

Lament is narcissistic, isn't it?

347

JAN ZWICKY

*... in the relinquishing that is the end of mourning,
we must pass through – as through a ghost – that absence in ourselves.*

36

Columbia Lake:
It is harder to go up a hill than down it.

361

Blame gravity.

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