

WHITE NIGHT LYING SUPINE

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DESCRIPTION

In this suite of five poems – “The dark shapes you follow,” “Inside a story,” “Deep in Serpentine Swell,” “To this day, we spiral,” and “Years later,” – the poet intends to trouble, thereby question, binaries and what they can signify. These binaries include, but are not limited to, inside/outside, (wo)man, (non)human, truth/lie, and open/close. Alongside this questioning is the poet’s implicit reimagining of the notions of identity and self, as well as of our volatile intimacies that are other than the conventionally held ideal and valuable, meaning, relations that are neither clear nor coherent. This collection draws inspiration from dark tales that suggest the generative power of ambiguity.

KEYWORDS: poems, binary, identity

The dark shapes you follow

You have seen these all before.
This forest.
This light.
How you have been holding up

All this time
Inside the deep pink-painted house.
Amorphous

Behind the draperies.
On this rain-swollen day

Your breath on the windowpane
Reflects what
Must not be your face.
Your eyes taking in

The wild outside
Away from all
The inhospitable creature comforts—

It has been awhile
Since the tremble of that thought:

You, child of a lesser god

Taking off your polished shoes
Reaching for the hand held out
By déjà vu

To step out and wade
Through what echoes as dark
Turrets and
Shapeshifting clouds.

Inside a story

She wills for him.
A woman pale, lying

eyes wide open,
ears fan out

and clawing deep
the belly of darkness she

split open.
Night sounds

vibrating a cacophony
of still wind and frogs

humidity
bamboo
heartbeat.

Her eyes with no irises
her tongue, lolling

beginnings of foam
in her mouth.

Inside a story she wills
for him, and he would

come for her
silent on fours, thick brows

a shadow god—

she, opening

the protean white night.

Deep in Serpentine Swell

No words come to me now
Some form of guttural
Silence has curtailed off
Their dandelion seeds

No longer hydra-headed
Hearing echoes light-footed
Alongside unworldly breeze
I no longer dream awake

No longer recall old injuries
Festering passions
Congealing
Love I must have laid onto

Amnesic rest

Have I at last made misbegotten
Peace with violence
Fiddling with textures of fault
Lines no more they ceased

Shaping themselves into
Words gleaming blight
Timorous
Wanting

Emplacement elsewhere
Arid

Myself declawed

To this day, we spiral

1

The harder question has long risen.
Now, something looms over.
What are we to make of it?

2

All this time.
We know thresholds lie.
Perilous has always been right next to *urgent*.

3

The penultimate period, a shortfall, is long, is even.
Who has the most to lose?
Go ahead, count on the fingers of many hands.

4

Meantime, conflagrations.

5

We breathe and seek:
Discord is just, futile... splendid as love—
That which fuels and feeds off all our odd hungers.

Years later

We lie, eyes open against
the camera for a photo we have agreed to
label five minutes of—

Our pose is a look is a gesture is
the casual way we seem not to care how

We lie, eyes open, not
looking at each other no matter how close
we are cheek to cheek, lying

On our backs, faces up, eyes open
against the camera for a photo, smiling
at a future we have agreed to label

Five minutes of—

Between you and I who knows

Where we are at
at this moment we have agreed to
call Present

Could be anywhere, this
Lying

On the grass, this sunlight, random
dandelion kissing your cheek
this windy day, possibly
only a pose for a photo we have agreed to

Label as otherwise—

Our pose is a look is a gesture is
the casual way we seem not to want
to lie, eyes open, not
looking at each other but at a future we know
we'll recognize: we could have

Bitten deep into the apple, you and I
one after another—
or have we, already, and afraid, do not say.