



Photo credit: Alessandra Capodacqua

a ladder cannot be convinced to climb down from itself

. i watch him knit a mirror with his eyes

watch him cast the first stone into original memory
to see it skim towards the same mirror
now propped up against the horizon
shattered like glass fingernails from a wailing wall
as we ourselves alternate as gold teeth
exploding inside this mica mouth
spines smelted into the slightest answers
inside our own ears floating in open ocean
as wishing wells for the drowned

as deep as any word our heads pop up
to compete for the dot on the i in genesis

your licence to create the opening dream sequence has been revoked

enclosed are the instructions
on how to design a life
while walking the dog
so it can sniff out the bones
in your own grave

)...strike gently away from body...(

in a downbeat of the psyche
your necklace lets go
scattering toes & fingers
in Bren gun slow audio
across the heirloom oak table
in another Pacific War drama
shot through a Vaseline lens

)...strike gently away from body...(

you stop in at the dry cleaner
to collect your skin only to be told
that the stains cannot be removed
without extra cost and that the only currency
accepted in this establishment is the soul

)...strike gently away from body...(

this list is predetermined:

1. stand here while your tongue is dissolved in water

a ladder cannot be convinced to climb down from itself | red-prayered | pear
| peach

2. spend more time teaching dust to speak
3. permit yourself to learn the botanical names of lies

without regret

i fall into my father's mouth
sucked back through his cigar butt
spat onto his bullock's eye

asleep

his eyelids become trampolines
rebounding one eternal seed
between here & hereafter
blindsided he sees everything
in his wake

the soft grenade in his hand
contains no messages for the future

i watch him separate each lip of its colour
before these words form

)...strike gently away from body...(

orbiting shadows
intervene with grace
in a burning wheelchair

to let down what we couldn't lift
to let down what we couldn't lift

you catch yourself wading
through your own ability
to scold the light

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you take aim
at the world
with one thought
& realise you are
the target ←

you catch yourself wading
through your own ability
to scold the light
for being silent

)...strike gently away from body...(

how to replace the washer
to stop blood leeching into the cloud
above your head

do you remember
how we would hover
above each other in sleep

how we perfected the art
of waking up in the wrong body
at the right time

in our blinking
our jellyfish propulsion
through evolution

i was the first person in history to close a door .

red~prayered

for sandra selig

/in suspending yourself

as a red line

to such an extent

that you are no longer

visible

because you are there/

/i send myself

to the corner

to face the wall/

/i imagine my veins

in the same configuration

of what (you) see/

/i imagine the smoke

coming from your eyelashes

as you sleep/

/having tapped the head

of each nail with this question

none

could describe the hammer/

pear

he ate the Morandi pear

its skin
bruised with immaculate
observation

its flesh
using his tongue
as a brush

peach

my father sings to a white peach

in the hope it will ripen

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sooner

his fingers
unable to think
for themselves