



*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your licence to create the opening dream sequence has been revoked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
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

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

sooner

his fingers

unable to think

for themselves