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PULL

A BALLAD

Maryam Parhizkar

the trouble with bartleby
in collaboration with
the operating system

SERIES TWO





SERIES TWO

*For all of the beloveds
here and gone*

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*Through all the sounds that sound
In the many colored earth-dream
A soft tone pulled
For the secret listener.*

Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel
inscribed in the epigraph of Robert Schumann's Fantasie, Op. 17

*...And yet I see beyond that point
For there is counterpoint and counterpoint
And counterpoint dimensions dimension...*

Sun Ra, "Of Days"







In the aftermath of dissipation
a place is rendered away
altogether; in the instability
of keys something begs
to be reconfigured: feeling
for things in a half-life
a burnt out daydream
pulling us through *still*

some vision constant
an interruption for the
twitch a thaw a muscle
pulsing warm the long-term
state of emergency that keeps
you hooked *cosmic* those
letters sounding for secret
listeners resonating
low soft notes for
keen ears –





In the meanwhile of the frequency
a barrage of miscalculated canons
go on becoming themes for
the happiest days of these lives:
 the revival grows louder so
 grows our resistance
 to our own fabrications –

what does you in
what did you in

a crux in the way of inclinations,
that very real hold: *a feel for things*

a sound of some
apocryphal chord
forgetting the origin
of its scoring –





forgetting the origin of the line:
the unfulfilled inclinations
the failure of difficult heroics
the lone decoder of the sound
now thrown into pieces

particle

what did you in –





Back in the material cold we go on resisting
its inversion upon the place
moving alongside its lights:

what of the things swept in
fixated stagnant *twitching*

might you call the place a home
might you call the place a country





Might you call the place a country:

suppose it meant nothing to a continent
what broke from the mass in subtle shifts
a back/forth of sudden/slow motion –

reinscribing the same thing over
and over again over and over
teasing out mechanisms every
question no different from
every other question
here in the hold

– something to pass the time
when we don't know what
there is to get through.





Passing the time
things all in flux
things all cosmic
and still here we are
we are in some changing same
some changing same
what else to do –

and so breaking
the question down
we repeat back
to one another
for the said/done:
swept in/under
twitching for
the former
the formal
feel of things.





A feel, a *pull*: the sadnesses that cannot
be conjectured just *felt*. When a history
of weeping at sudden burials for which
words like melancholia just won't do.
When the hiccup of a lament moves
through the long-form real-time
of time passing the phrase running long
how long
how long

A pull like some stars happening on
their own accords a different gravitas
and here we are in its cold

the more the words
come through the more
the dither





Words come through
like lost books always
on the mind. The failed
experiment of songs
staying close to home
the heart though no
words will sing. In that
illegibility we make
variations from the
phrases we are able
to make out. Try
as we might no
theories to pull
that heart through these words
these words
these words—







Supposing the end of this time as we've known it
were to come in the form of a song
wordless the longest line enough to make
all its skeptics keel over:

along its fringe we move fast searching
holding fast to dangerous convictions
supposing the end of it were to come
emanating from a palm the weight

symphonic

Supposing we felt the pull from its pedestal
how might it undo itself from there
something to do with the difficulty
of the collapsing of its meter

Moving along the lights for home
might a light/house be your palm
an honest thing for the holding time
the holding time
the holding time





Supposing the pitch would bend
the matter and that is how it will go
cruxed toward a new inclination:

what is right
what is just
what is praised
what is loved

what is tried
what is true
what is said
what is done

think of such things

Holding the time that holds us
we sift through it passing through
its interludes





An interlude for the holding time:







Suppose you grew up in a place whose name was taken away by those who wanted it for their own speculations, taking the name to make it into a suspension of disbelief: something akin to the sense of *I should have known better but I will not*. They coin the name to describe things not quite true beliefs but their imposters, things to contradict the true ones, though we may be quite aware of the reality of the situation. Suppose you had the chance to ask for an explanation and instead comes the definition, an insistence on a hypothetical: *Imagine that you are standing on a glass balcony*, they say. *You may believe in your safety but a part of you is deceived into the feeling of danger.*







Suppose the house were precarious, though all appears solid. Then ceiling caves in: and suddenly there you are in a room that might test the capacity of some unconditional love. Building the house then, no anticipation that things would manage to break into themselves. A particular kind of safe like those feel-good movies where in the end the animals still make it back home. Things like that could happen, maybe. A glass balcony is still glass.





Suppose we hung certain objects upon the house walls, asking for them to *mean something*. How to be a strand among beautiful things. Though we do not see through the walls erected we make the juxtaposition against what is ugly. For instance, the father tells us a story of a girl who evaded death by massacre in a faraway place, locked in a small room, breaths way from the executioners by remaining in prayer for many days. Oh how beautiful the details, how good. How good. *Let me be grateful to be alive.*







Bowing our heads as he says the words

Now let us pray

O let us be grateful





We are in a cold a cold
inverting itself upon the country
how big is your love
if I expanded the measure
if the ceiling caves
if the ceiling









how the place drops upon
the place
the layering of the shades

rendering joy from the loose seams of the fall
from a ladder that breaks the head
that breaks the bread for an elsewhere





suppose you were to move past
the sad parts of a history
not a forgetting but
a passing for an
elsewhere

suppose that you were told the love
the love

suppose that you were told –





moving alongside the lights
we find ourselves in the periphery
of other people's pictures.

Finding us later
supposing
the midthought

one asks

particle

what does you in –







In the aftermath of
dissipation
so comes
another place.





SERIES TWO

Born and raised in Houston, Texas, **MARYAM PARHIZKAR** has worked and lived throughout New York City and its fringes. In her current lives, she is managing editor of Litmus Press, student of American Studies at the Graduate Center, an early music series concert manager, and a recovering violist.

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the trouble with bartleby
in collaboration with
the operating system
is pleased to make physical

The PRINT DOCUMENT

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by

MARYAM PARHIZKAR

which

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SERIES TWO





DOC U MENT

/dəkyᵻmᵻnt/

First meant “instruction” or “evidence,” whether written or not.

noun - a piece of written, printed, or electronic matter that provides information or evidence or that serves as an official record

verb - record (something) in written, photographic, or other form

synonyms - paper - deed - record - writing - act - instrument

[Middle English, precept, from Old French, from Latin documentum, example, proof, from docere, to teach; see dek- in Indo-European roots.]

Who is responsible for the manufacture of value? Based on what supercilious ontology have we landed in a space where we vie against other creative people in vain pursuit of the fleeting credibilities of the scarcity economy, rather than freely collaborating and sharing openly with each other in ecstatic celebration of MAKING?

While we understand and acknowledge the economic pressures and fear-mongering that threatens to dominate and crush the creative impulse, we also believe that now more than ever we have the tools to relinquish agency via cooperative means, fueled by the fires of the Open Source Movement. Looking out across the invisible vistas of that rhizomatic parallel country we can begin to see our community beyond constraints, in the place where intention meets resilient, proactive, collaborative organization.

Here is a document born of that belief, sown purely of imagination and will.

When we *document* we assert. We print to make real, to reify our being there.

When we do so with mindful intention to address our process, to open our work to others, to create beauty in words in space, to respect and acknowledge the strength of the page we now hold physical, a thing in our hand... we remind ourselves that, like Dorothy: *we had the power all along, my dears.*





THE PRINT! DOCUMENT SERIES

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in collaboration with

the operating system

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Can You See That Sound

JEFF MUSILLO

Executive Producer Chris Carter

PETER MILNE GREINER

Pull

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Series curator / editor / book design

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