

5 POEMS
&
5 BLUES

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Beard of Bees
Chicago
March, 2003

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The 8th Intention of St. Bangled-Banner

“That’s the anthem—
get your damn hands up!”
—Jay-Z

What-not, bee-boned devils
shake more than okay
& no amount’a wow-how’s
gonna get’cha outta this sing.

This here’s West Outer Space, girl,
where we keep liars up-wind
& stay-safe powers sugar-cane
gossips take for revelation
end-spooked & covered in love.

The devils juice this town
into great-scotts & minister
tricks which sermon us up
moons we pray “Live!” to.
It’s never up to you
what we warm into —
break this down:

Gotta low-down blow-smoke
engine 3 clicks from conclusion;
our nation goes when we don’t
keep the right speeches. Check it.

When you’re outta that evil, It say,
I gotta’nuther evil for ya.

for Matthias & Amy

We think there is a top

thickening with escapes
three days from this
another measure or even more
control — which a little sun rewires
skin cells summon
a fever of spheres
fulfill an ear
as do as do
as we live the last flickering act;
turn aside for a shipwreck;
take to the you you try to scatter.

“We”

“I don’t want you to have nothing
to do with motion.”

–Jellybean Turner

The new men have staticky
ambitions; believe the future
has nothing to do,

as hands dawn on them,
spelling out each mouthful
when enough has been.

The robots have the hearts they can;
don’t see what animals
see in being still.

A constellation warms
them when they’re the cold
they’re occasions for —

but words of this are miles ago.
We remain how they behave:
bending one more surface;
taking to another age.

When Will We Begin?

King Wen decides five fires
for us, draws a small atlas
of chances on the moon,
opens lemons like a mind.

You're that difficult to seduce.

So I shake yarrow,
read fish bone,
throw dice at fireflies

until my limbs phantom
& the sea dresses me in salt
& you sing the song
that happens to you when each lip-
tipped urchin says *he's* the blackest
flower of them all.

Lady of Our Indefinite Pronoun

“The evident shift of pronoun (what I
now mean by ‘we’) is a clear question
about place.”

—J.H. Prynne

“Don’t talk about it —
be about it.”

—Busta Rhymes

I’ve somehow hummed myself
to your darling world.

I would do
if you weren’t bent
on the sods
where you ran me
human & blew towns
unwise to us:

that’s that
hula-hooping nay-say —
yeah: you warned me...

wait for it
inside the drift
as if it were thirst:

get the gear
& some old mazoo
before the dead
crow into their own.

But how long can we
rewind the very thing
eating between the sting
of what comes next?

Let’s two-time this beast
you say it sits with & hum
us from our darling world
down about the dozens
& a long way from some-time.

Natural Ordering the Blues

I've had 3 visions & it ain't even noon.
In the last one I saw your other man. . .

But that so-and-so don't matter no more;
I know he can't clam like I can.

Gravity's gone bad for you, girl;
everything 'round you's up in the air.

I can smell all the juju in here, girl—
even the shiv-gurus treat you square.

So. Two Cuba Libres & you're anyone's pull?
Well. You never knew 'bout my gal in finishing school.

& here comes the Springtime, honey.
Everything's being selected.

Where's your other man now, honey?
Prob'ly in some rounder's collection.

I ain't got to go, woman, 'cause I already went.
You don't believe in money 'til it's already spent.

Talkin' Natural Selection Blues

Hold drift on the one hand
& eras in the other:
deeptime in the lowlands...

You're caught by mountains, now —
walk with your crown down.

There's always an end to the sex of us;
don't play dead when the change behaves in us.

I've gotta pocket full of species —
I'm in your tree if you need me.

I have the epitaphed ken
& the time to say when
to send out the epiphytes
& get signals to these parasites:

get your own hosts to ape
cave worms for the new birds
who've taken lizard's traits

& lure away your mates
waving their predator tail.

Half of them move on —
another half stays.

You're stuck in the middle,
your head in old ways,
but your hands on these days.

New Blues Villanelle, trad. arr.

You say that it's a crime
to bet-cha five you know my name.
I heard you twice the first time
you said "fire
into the flames";
& you say that they're a crime
to ever take for tryin'.
What got you to talkin' "Be loved fain..."?
I heard you twice the first time.
But know it's not against kind
to shine behind the train
you say is a crime.
So don't look down the line
leads straight to shame:
I heard you twice the first time
you ever stuttered at the sign
I'd devilled down all the way.
You say now I'm a crime?
Heard you twice the first time.

Lemon-peel Girl Blues, trad. arr.

Gotta cold fix from the grin team
your bad self & your laser beam.

I had enough of your mouth
your karate move & Old South;

ya won't snake charm your way
into my bed today.

The hot-foot powder's gone —
rounders all run on.

Your bandit's been smoked out
papers served to your clowns;

don't think you'll shake
down my red house today.

Stop playing button-button with me —
it's all the same to your wind machines.

Lemon peel still dry
& Satan reachin' for one more ride.

Baby, you see your way
back into my bed today?

Just one more bisquit roll
one last Georgia stroll

before you hit the Front Street game
& deal dead-man's hands to the county gang.

I Got the I-Ching Throwing Blues

This yarrow'll cost you two fins
a dark chord & some chin music

before King Wen can do your changes
with his hexagrams & text arrangements.

Did the Hoptown Witches bring you here?
Or did a Palmer skin you for one more tear?

"No blame," you say, "but she's killin' me.
I'm deep into the sticks & she thinks she's free!

Yet her Pollenboys & Flim-Flam Cheats
're just that many more rhythm priests."

A human being's a mobile occasion;
nothing's ever an anachronism.

The system's self-investigating
shapes to duck time's beck & calling.

Six in the third place means:
"He's bringing in the thieves."

Nine in the fifth place
means: "The woman molts in the face."

It says, "There might be some thunder at the well."
& that the past "is just another word for Hell."

with borrowings from *The Secular Grail* by Christopher Dewdney
and a studio outtake of "Idiot Wind" by Bob Dylan.

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Chicago, IL

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