



Pratt Institute, New York, 2013.

Auto-sacrifice (Notes)

1. *Pink Lightning for Ban*

“The day of the riot dawns bright and lazy with a giant silky cloud sloughing off above the rooves.”

“The mouth of the riot is a stretch of road.”

Pink lightning fills the borough like a graph. All day, I graph the bandages, race passion and chunks of dirt to Ban—plant-like, she’s stretching then contracting on the ground.

Three streets over, a mixed group nears a house. Their faces are pressed to the blood-flecked window, banging their forehead on the glass. Inside the house, a woman arranges the meat on a tarp. She tucks and pins the shroud behind its ears with quick-moving hands, looking up from time to time at the crowd that’s gathered to spit on the window and call.

That night, I dreamed of exiting the subway at the interface a car would make with the M25. The commuters were processing around a semi-rural roundabout, their hands on imaginary steering wheels, their wing-backed loafers shuffling on the tarmac, the black road, like wheels. Evening Standards tucked sharply beneath their arms.

The dream requires something of me.

It requires me to acknowledge that my creature (Ban) is over-written by a psychic history that is lucid, astringent, witty. No longer purely mine.

2. *Meat forest: 1979*

Ban fulfills the first criterium of monstrosity simply by degrading: by emitting bars of light from her teeth and nails, when the rain sweeps over her then back again.

I like how the rain is indigo, like a tint that reveals the disease process in its inception.

Above her, the pink lightning is branched—forked—in five places.

A brown ankle sparkles on the ground.

Genital life gives way to bubbles, the notebook of a body's two eyes.

Like a person in an ancient pose, I lean in a L-shaped posture over the counter: flat back, rump displayed to any passer-by, blood dripping down the backs of my thighs. They don't see me. I clean the street until all that's left is a ring of oily foam, the formal barrier of a bad snow. Are you sick and tired of running away?

Then lie down.

Invert yourself above a ditch or stream beneath a bright blue sky.

Then pull yourself up from your knees to clean.

Clean the street until all that's left is a ring of oily foam, the formal barrier of a bad snow.

It snows that April for a few minutes, early in the day. Children walking on the Southall Broadway open their mouths to receive the aluminium snowflakes. In their bright pink and chocolate brown dresses, tucked beneath the heavy blue coats, these immigrant children are dazzled by the snow, even though they were born here, a train-ride from a city tilted to receive the light, its sprig bending over in the window of the pretty bank.

Many years later, I return. To place a daffodil on the Uxbridge Road.

Is zinc an element? It's a sheen. Spread it on the ankle of Ban.

Is there a copper wire? Is there a groin? Make a mask for Ban.