

Pygostyle

Part 0

A caveat in the form of Anne Carson:

“I like to write lectures. My favourite part is connecting the ideas. The best connections are the ones that draw attention to their own frailty so that at first you think: what a poor lecture this is—the ideas go all over the place and then later you think: but still, what a terrifically perilous activity it is . . . How light, how loose, how unprepared and unpreparable is the web of connections between any thought and any thought.”

(‘Uncle Falling’ in *Float*)

How light? How loose?
How unprepared? How unpreparable?

How?
Before what?
Is this a goad?
A goad TO WHAT?
A thought?
It cannot be just that

It cannot be
It cannot be
That cannot be what creates the terror
Of the thing that floats

Just like that

Feather

That

Escapes

The

Stuffing

Of

My

Coat

Every

Time

I

Breath

Too
Hard

*

Part I
The exposition

Augury:

Ritualised bird-watching, the practiced observation of the swooping behaviour of winged things, heightened to the level of obsession.

Obsession being the practice of welcoming

Of omens

*

A few weeks after I arrived,
I walked out of the damp into a dry outside: the garden's landscaping was ordered by a derangement,
whatever was left remained. In one corner there was a frozen
hand, standing amongst a bed of dead flowers and an eviscerated bush.

The dextrous muscle of a middle finger
flipped off the sunlight, finger proud with weather-
beaten flesh. The bush that was once in state of living
was now dead, the entanglement

Complete

A bare fence

Overhead

I

Over

Heard

A

Flock

~ if it could be called that ~

Of

Arguing

crows,

As

They

Dove
Down
Under
The
Eye
Of
The
Self-proclaimed
Sky.

I

Dipped my head until I felt the crunch of my spine as its friction moved across the base. The skeleton attempting to orientate itself towards the grass stones, suburban boulders. Whenever I must move this head of mine, I think of those bars of chocolate stuffed with absorbent, aerated yellow sugar. All that is buried above the soil
Hides Above The Level of
Hibernation.

Part II

In the form of logical reasoning (i.e. argument) known as the syllogism, the three-part form builds its basis on two propositions. The first is known as 'a', the second, 'b' – a kind of middle. Like any 'good' form of argument, the system of storytelling known as the 'three-act structure' finds its basis in the middle section, the rump of its body consisting of something called the confrontation.

The middle could also be the bony part.

For some nights, I had looked up at the ceiling, obsessively redrawing a vision of the house as given over to a growth, flowers feasting on the gutted insides of floorboard and plumbing, shooting up through sprung wires where the bed was meant to be, turning towards a light that cycled through a rhythm irretrievably unaffected by any kind of outside.....

Standing

Under

Neath

The table

Of

The horizon

Line

I cannot say why, but this was the case: amongst the other lost things, strewn across moss-covered paving stones were three abandoned x-rays, all picturing the same subsection of body. Their abandonment was discordant, the stills of blue-burnt shadows of someone's old bones, chucked to the side, like a provisional graveyard in amongst casual weeds. I always wonder if the plants that arise next to burials know of their deathly palour? Or if they are indifferent to their proximity to the dead?

The x-ray's reason for being there was vague and deathly. I had no reason for suspecting they could be anything but human. I thought I recognised the large shadow of a hip bone, the vertical protrusions of the femur into rounded sockets. I remembered the bones that I had seen broken in my life - the girl who broke her wrist when we were ice-skating, my sibling's squashed femur, the smashed collarbone of a friend, the fracturing of a shin of a parent. I recognised from other images - the broken and the fixed - that I had also had some similar approximation inside.

But as I inspected the x-ray's dirtied surface, sun-drenched and rain-smothered, amongst the features of what I have learnt is the concavity of the human pelvis, were what could be described as the shadow of a tail, the triangle of the coccyx. On it, in the grey of light, a ghostly deposit of feathers, the disappeared notion that there could be at the lowest point of this body, a pair of wings. Nothing could explain their deposit there other than the strangeness of a random confrontation, the outcome of a distant carelessness... There had to be a reason....

The reason being:

How

light? How

loose? How

unprepared? How

unpreparable *is the web of connections, between any thought and any thought*

To me, that how always felt so heavy

As heavy as a man falling from the sky

Part III

Untitled

Outside, the light continued to furious

The sky remained clear

The ground

extended

its

sinking

*

and the shadows waited until
the fate of each plastic slice of bone would congeal in the polluted air

Text by Cassandre Greenberg