

every, beyond't nothing



harry k. stammer

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//intro [stammer]

I would rather write about my hernia operation than write about my work.

The work included here is group of poems done in 2005 that continues my use of description and conversation. Someone said they thought it was collage, but it's not really collage but "conscious blabbering" strung together. While "conscious blabbering" is not an academic term, at least that I know of, the term describes going beyond the collage assemblage to a process of where many moments are strung together to form a direct moment and eventually the dissipation of the moment. I have also experimented with using parts of words to allow for the meaning to be pushed out and for the reading to be slowed down. While my influences include poets, I've been much more influenced by novelists and painters/musicians including John Cage, Martin Amis, Charles Bukowski, Miles Davis, Frank Zappa and Thomas Pynchon. Much of my work over the last several years has focused on the homeless in Los Angeles. Indirectly focused on the ways that the homeless think, live and live with mental illness, and react to world around them.

//intro [Primeau]

I remember the first time I ever read (saw?) one of Harry's poems. It was one of those "what the...?" experiences that are so hard to shake. (Thank god for that.)

Over the last couple of years, I've watched Stammer's work diversify and intensify; I've seen it mutate and evolve. His poetry is never still. It is always restless, always branching out and growing back in on itself. It is special. Perhaps, even, it is one of a kind. Harry's textual potions are post-Language excursions which test the firmament of syntax. Just as his (equally ambitious) vispo experiments prod - and sometimes outright mock - the link between word and image, so his poetry defies the relationship between language and thought. Stammer's unusual mind-to-page transcriptions attempt to redefine writing as a more free and organic process.

However, *every, beyond't nothing* is not merely remote experimentation. Unsatisfied with simply tweaking form and function, Harry applies his radical language analyses to the mental workings of the homeless. Similar to industrial cult classic Skinny Puppy's "music through the world through the eyes of a dog", *ebn* is the urban jungle through the cracked minds of broken street people. In this context, Harry's work gains further energy and power. It assumes a radical social dimension that cannot be ignored.

I won't tell you exactly how to read this chapbook...because I can't. Yes, it is different. Maybe it is difficult. But it has substance and soul lacking in so much (post-) LangPo, and stylistic adventurism that is often lost in more conventional work. Give it a chance; the only thing you've got to lose is your sense of acceptable apostrophe use.

//drop

two toes two weeks one toe three fingers

forced coat pocket cup shaking bush search back
stretched shoes toes up (8am by) arms
wrapped [out at evening in by]

knee boots black to red jacket drawn around
";cambio, es?" 'tending parking sitting bars lot twist'd
two toe left side shoe off reflecting
glass backed (in) car it car

"it's nothing, now, not me, no" walk
cross set end street where't: back shortly tv screen
opens "weight like" arrive implied "open'd clouds
over" //dropped popsicle sitting back bars

shoe off left knee right knee over it's such
foot on foot on calf "common reasons why people"

failed (get up) no! shoes stretching up
toes fingered can't modern walkway sleeping in't

//drop

after stumbling red very small
spider ringer foot (aniline) "to

say, said." intend'd tried experimentation
(ing) that it points finger(s)
less dried (ing) machinate(d) that

stupid raised "who, will be
made responsible" not fucking identity

[lie] after returns (ence) stumbled
fingers foot from fingering (shade)
drag points read sentence noisily

"a time, a time that said"

two times an occurrence directionless
moral one/two (completely) spider left

arrow green red light outside
hangs right glove arm "you
introduced figure, use for something,"

side transversally backwards folded linking
chain slid forward ankle finger

foot folded covering (purple) thumb
arrested popsicle forward liquor store
two arms "left to fall

and to the left" only

bars metal sight that surround
feet tips had slid hollow

explain it connects foot grind
tooth/teeth (that it says "to
perception") above division gave wooden

form fixed "for top, leaving
on..." in puncture as table

broken entered one (store foot)
and chair hear to leave

'to beat finger foot substantives

//drop

sick on the sidewalk left side away street
"gun, point" collision (vomit with vodka) right side up
to the sun acute (ness) prostrate shuffled
"proving the actual existence of the,"

clam'd face arm in elbow (chicken bit) jumble'd
"tacos and beans" sleeve simile 'pugnance syndrome death coarse

during "sick sidewalk 'festation" washing dog bowl
water eye one motion low level
"lift your, and sip" sand papered cheek motions

and talking saying during less strength as valued
as declining 'rupt (that there) seeps lying

on the ground (name?) hole-n-wall syndrome
"interpreted, attacks it" can't see through it most
moving to any level in the parking garage "taking

that analgesic" wooden desk chair metal hesitate
(ing) conducting one passport to another

handy cycled from protagonist as principled into blistering
up lips and face'd clamming derived scrapping shrunk stuttered
(ingless) benefit-less disorderly damaging wrist turned out

rested back (units her) sidewalk sickness

//drop

unpleasantness this/that despise state wooden floor ceiling glut
screwed dispossessed(ing) yielding current meat rolling "one's
proper bath carried,

haversack from pain" blood and hands stateless rubbing bone (ed)
(y) earning great car and extinct wistful 'recting that access
limited straight to south quickly starting 7th/Bixel "bullet in
the head" (does not cause pain to possess one's) in

starting rub't that afflicted skinless earn hands is cylinder
threaded for backwards "grilled and served" (etc.) launched above
(decoy) flabbily high

interior outside sounded filtered subdued "they say that cripple"
to connect muttering study to follow gripe (pain as agency)
disfigure "indicated ruin ignorant dogged, words that referencing
food" feces human spaced advances

spotted distant 'oiled such look 'onym for great disfigured
defeats less to one definitive folder harming made with marked
straw it wall Figueroa that little muscle contracted more wooden
floor most trained in't promoted saying "cut this

member, its member, outside" bloody bones they feel inside
(accessible severed)

//drop

representation otherwis(er) screaming "CUNT!" issues adequacy of
"of the making, baby" laugh approached mys (tical) ly
block metal plates over (asphalt) "you, truck

dump pressure (suggests too much) miracle'st
acting eject human hands waving require't 'cult'd cursed
"little, word plays (apparent)" place of unique

where appendix there smelly head hat skinned
super conscious "la, la, mind that's"
just smelly head baseball cap't skins concern (but)

"there's that advantage, that on bias, just before it,"
ok just prone't sentence round't bracelet ankeled
hung (less) 'sentation 'erwise (ing) balanced

instigat'd steps clear & effective taken takes pecuniary
jumble tooth cut left cleft cut out urge an
action screaming "FUCK!" closer far show "you"

it is every beyond't nothing '(t)

//drop

"imitation not naturally, begun next" placed into one
broken hole behind shop front metal grating rolled up
desk chair facing out away (distanc'd) across

the street toward the 110 entrance
"away and there , it's" pasted to [and] edge
plastered paper'esque (form) anemic slit down reached harder
thinking

does/doesn't adopt will (ing) will (as opposing)
1% milk carton wedged in "organic"
set ruling (ruled) rule 'tifiable 'ciently formed critic(sism)

"but, my world looks this way, smaller" see'd the
praise 'strating part rules 'ractions place'd 'made
up caps backwards inevitable part whole(s)

//drop

"disquieting, abundance" pushed rhetorical gloom ass wipe'd
behavior
entrance step step street steps across "as building, period"

(putting all 28 days together) sameness habit
where "ah" honest successive [sulk] ing

peel't (that's honor) agree prefer pale'd flash lighting
"tokens of love, but then serious crossness lays, years"

open car door out pee on the
wall can thrown she's around corner

//drop

"the piss trail off spills to the..." tone
'pefy staring first at under't human (pure formal) talk
as exotic end's as code "you've read
it, at least once" balls between hole

and you (translation)'d mourning (that) left behind
described 2x2 paper stick-it "she's prone, right angle left
leg" wind shield (yesterday?) mode'less 'gation one
'history cement'd "didn't get t'sixty, today"

//drop

twist no tear asphalt over concrete "out here
in the," inflexible violate (violator)'s unctuous hand felt
inferior
connection (or dis) contingent (cy) distributed between
"any of them(s)" unpleasant implying imposition

right wheels up over the curb following 2
feet behind talking "I'm breathing... here" pulled out around
(of part cloth torn) systemic flattering 'dify
'cator rotated(ing) back ('sward) none (as)

piercing metal cylinder "funny" (couldn't spit it out)
separate sound from such a sieve(s) pitching strained ignored
before tissues 'actively concealed lever //drops back
seat 'phillips' short turn left (out)

contempt ("base it, orders") beating striking beauty in't
'hiva she's brought convinced evolved to't eaten appears
fork/spoon
(t) 'ingent rounds "under this ghost (ly)"
circling unaware fixed flight points at't

shaking out one pocket (no pills) development insistent
terrain down hill upside versus comic deeds transport 4X4
area sidewalk "step, step happily mind'd"
yet but cruel repeating words these

//drop

rollup's up body at weaved quality
flashed (ing) textur'd stucco lightness "fact it"

abrupt hand tether't closed end
defended flatly area tenon (ized) "that, is"

less anxiety on entering foot
up one ramp parking garage are

question(s) "is this loading or unloading or,"
not quite (home) objections certain

(ly) upon brick entry matter seek fright
less dread upon construction marking

//drop

early (er) walking Wilshire offramp chain
link raised "seems to be" inevitable asserting
ball cap plastic 'presented reached

right ingredient (content sides) "but while the
author" sitt(ing) feet in dirt
plantings freeway (look up 5am, why?)

argues didactic unless sought exhausted "black box,

'surdity" linear 'ment mention make
exponent (tial) //dropping (s) shit (s) implacable

(esque) earlier "it's not exhaust"
(lost sight) no ease "run freely?"
much nothing past "ok, tell me stunned

you, understand?" meeting at the
bushes over Wilshire (two unstressed syllables) caught
fire started smoking't 'emon drought
running stumble faculty possessing entirely a

cardboard sign reading "taken refuse all"
integument channeling (awe) tripped shoelace
faculty "with this moon the bottles shine,

distinctly" around the broken street
asphalt/concrete mixed shaking "just one, come'on"
planted in a pocket Bixel to Wilshire

nourishment in two blocks cap
covered in duct tape knocking door 5am
hand waves imagination out early

//drop

(in that current) instrument strung up
around "wished, well" 'timonious "sure, that's" consent

brushes ravel't notes from (yeah,
study) consent goodbye down wet /dry 'flux in

(gerund form (er)) using contrived
over simple lighted corner lids open

"cross it" should go! past reflects verbal
then clever "make it past"

window seldom acts out 'genuine inside
(in between) a note make't

//drop

unrecognized (you think connected) pull riding
to Echo Park "concerning, hearing, unconscious," extinct
(inner bulb inert) lake side

light "meaning 'likeness'" recognize't lack indifferent face'd
kneeling head over shoulder troche
to insert "of an oblique, angled

right" bubbling up attention (not layers, come
on!) one here the other
over there "headlights, on curb up steps,

grass to street" pulled out
touched extinct'd nerve turn around pace
potholed't bicycle tire blown "head, back into

the water" lumpy rutted made
indented "where?" blow stemmed doorstep house
(pattern of agreements(s)) written hasten

"weeds are not real" 'member? there
around the water disturbed out [inset] door
way "put it in a
talk, huh?" equilibrium see forced't anger posed
joke (ing) gripping a brick

//drop

"out by heat" overhang served in
hostile (remote) where two blocks away meet

mistake shaped limited by indistinct
sight agreeing sinking (just kneeling) shadow canopy

end fingertips scratching agree decided
yard lines "meter?" identify individual disused

"it's only an impression," away distant (way)
slab'd gray to grayer angle

to bus pole "the news stands'n the
way" redraw the line point

threadlike quiescent "just because you, that
hair" nails over bricks slowly (just lines)

colored gray less white against

red ordered have'd bright winging "just because
you, short pants" held there

//drop

making reacting cover slides back wind
makes importance "very attractive" underline it blown

over (not an embolism) perfectly
emetic done driveway open out full street
nose down laid stress attention

spread by wheels rolled't motion alternatives
understanding mouthing each person "don't tell me
I'm crossing wrong," entrance paper

thin line red (to the touch) hand
attachment lifted above the head

//postscript [on hernias]

Several years ago (greater than 10 more or less), I was hospitalized to repair two ventral hernias. "Harry you have several ripped muscles in your abdomen and they need to be repaired," hand waving pocket pencil, "those bulges are your intestines," and "yes, they will continue to expand, hurt and eventually, your intestines will be choked off."

I usually stare at my feet when confronted with new knowledge about my body, especially my lower abdomen. "What does that mean?," I asked. waving hand glasses pocket, "Harry, it's just minor surgery to repair the ripped muscles. No pain, you'll, uh, be out the same day and doing sit ups in a week."

I don't really care about sit ups, but definitely worried about other things for other reasons. I was thinking what would Charles Bernstein do? What would Charles Bukowski do? What would Charles Simic do? (no, not Simic). What would John Cage do?

Well then, Bernstein would write a children's book about the experience (sentences and hand drawn pictures); Charles Bukowski would've gotten drunk and said "fuck it, why not?," or maybe "FUCK NO, I'll just get a drink (type a poem about it, maybe) and forget it." glasses hand pocket waving, Cage would have said "Let me flip a coin, Tuesday's heads, Wednesday's tails, nothing determinate, just so." But then, I thought about what Glen Branca would do. Waving hands up and down,

Eventually, I looked up at the recovery nurse. "My eyes, my eyes won't track, left both right... huh?" Nurse L says, "You're in recovery." "Oh, ooooooh, I didn't know that, what?" Nurse L says, "cough into this pillow... hold it tight... remember to relax."

The anesthesia, the constipation, the codeine, and later itchy legs and arms, my penis was black'n'blue from the catheter. "just lay back & relax."

//about

harry k. stammer lives and works in Los Angeles and Santa Barbara. His poetry has been published in sidereality, dreamvirus, xStreme, Znine, blazeVOX, Moria, poetic inhalation, and xPress(ed). Harry recently finished a book for xPress(ed) publication in collaboration with Karri Kokko called 'beeasily.' <http://harrykstammer.blogspot.com>

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