

Climate Change

1.

The prayers of the girls in the story begin,

Oh my Lord, my beloved

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A bird in the shape of an explosion hits the glass pane.

Her dusty blue under-parts

Her fulvous yellow body

Sprawled in the Alcazar palace—

No one will find her.

She's in her Courtyard of the Maidens—

Open your legs. It's getting too hot.

I go downtown to dance with my favorite drag queen,

The one who looks like an ordinary girl.

Her hand on my stomach

under my shirt.

Outside of the heat of the club

in the black sand, white flowers open

like miniature light bulbs

or a mirror of fluorescent tongues framing the girl's face.

There's a mineral lake in the valley below

lay out like a blue rubber bathmat.

The purple lupine, big as human thighs, dances into dusk.

Rumi says the light you gave off did not come from your pelvis.

I thought I'd stay but the economy collapsed.

2.

Dig through the potatoes
From her rigor mortis fingers
The wife of the detective points him
Pry the pin
in the right direction.

I was there first.
Any place

You will ever go will follow

Me. In my apartment,

I'll have your cadaver

In the coffee table

under a plate of carrot halva.

3.

The girl stole a rhododendron from the nursery's twenty acres of containment.

She labored out there alone, summer job watering plants, under clouds of cicadas.

Once a tarantula came out of the mulch. She saw it with her own eyes.

She drove down the road to the old general store to use the bathroom,

Its curtain-less window.

The owner stood in the frame and would not move, watching her.
She held her breath, again.

No one knew where in the world she was at that exact moment.

There was no good reason why

He should let her live.

4.

You'll get no way out, no Ariadne for you.

I made a collection of blades from the shoots of arrowroots.

Write the end of your story:

He becomes top-heavy with antlers—

His own hounds bring him down—

The shrike visits my window.

The cat chatters her incisors.

See that Cindy Sherman girl, lying on the couch, mascara smeared,

Red bull's-eye of lipstick?

Is that my reflection? From one angle, maybe.

At some transition, I began to mirror *you*.

I'm the bird in the Palestinian tale:

My body held together with pins—

Pull each one out—

And I turn back into

Myself.

5.

Bring the rhododendron home into the bedroom,
Desire keeps it alive, a whole childhood's own dense forest—
Crimson red flowers the color of a shadow's dark sex—
Like a cardinal come to nest between the legs.

Be careful.

A man in the Food Lion parking lot
Stuffs women into the trunk of his car.

And on the road to college a man pulled up

beside the truck of a Mennonite girl

And whispered into the speeding wind:

Your tire is flat and she heard his words and believed it.

6.

Pentecot, Arles: Watch out. Some are calm, tricky.

The water under the boat reflects aluminum,

a flat, hot sky, (*Calme plat*) dead calm—

She takes off her shirt: nipples the color of bubble gum.

She rows

Away from you.

Sunset: pastis colored,

Neon-lit by the Parti Communiste sign

Above the cobble-stoned square.

Tongue scented with anise.

Romanticism always leads to fascism, says the phrase book.

The United Kingdom Times writes:

Misogyny and French Lies Killed Mata Hari

She knows exactly what they mean.

Rise, rise, risen in the old fashioned elevator

Its bars clank shut, hitching its clasp,

He grabbed her under her skirt.

All she could do was wait sixty seconds

the door re-opens.

7.

You wanted to pay some kind of homage

But you got spooked

And the weather was some kind of bad business.

Driving down the river road, the owl's face rises in the headlights,

Hisses and thumps against the windshield, falling apart in feathers.

It wasn't your fault.

Tell me it wasn't your fault.

The news said she was twelve years old, it was hailing that night,

Stones cudgeling the columbine.

We were twelve once and we met in the ditch,

Knowing it was dangerous.

The smell of Noxema in the creek—

My stepfather said I had a

Tight little ass

As I ran out the door. Small leaves scattered on the sidewalk, like cats' tongues,

flaming pink—

But now it's your turn to try. remember something: touch:

How his finger seemed forked

Like an earwig,

Crawling, snatch, snatch

In the folds

Of the Yellow Lady's Slipper, their testicular sacs,

And in the cracks of talus slopes. Memory that shrinks back

When you dare to look.

8.

The seasons change, the sunlight blurs

To the snow's stroke-slurred hush.

Speak bird, speak again

How beautiful are your words.

The season's soundlessness:

There's nothing left to say—

The oaks are weighed down by winters' roosts of herons

Beneath the darkness of their thousands of shades fell

You can smell them, a taste on your tongue

of bellies and between their legs.