

# spacecraftprojects

we are all astronauts

transmissions  
jonathan skinner

## **Darkness Weakened by Light**

“Blue is a darkness weakened by light”  
– Goethe

putting the g on litter  
in a silence workshop, walking  
with your eyes on a face in pixels  
crystallized darkening the gaze  
in waves of curling, the abyss listens

to chalk on lips, a sea of chalky  
blue across which robins  
notes skip and skim: black moth on tile  
a broken dream memory of blue  
scales on a butterfly’s wing

blue is a haze of earth a skin  
in the space between  
darkness at sky’s bottom  
and smoke lifting off the forest

floor, a delicate opulence  
a structural, scattered feint of  
color decayed in the feather’s lattice

lizards doing pushups on rocks  
understand the connection between sun  
and lightning, their sublunary

concerns our politics your dreams  
struck with the wren’s chant  
objecting beneath solar winds

the song on the altar, white rabbit  
scattered to all points making sky  
blue, an interval, depth cicada  
of unearthly lift toward velvet

lunar practice for the solar-born  
valedictory desert ramble  
selling the sand clues of blue  
lit out with the hummingbird's

odorless iridescent inedible  
colors, bluebirds the span  
between sun and earth  
strikes guts with the lightning

bugs of blue, an azure gray  
wood bank of brakes, awash with wet  
blue darkness of weakening light

## Intelligence

I wore a crow on my face  
like a broken umbrella  
to carefully enter the dream  
walking so as not  
to make the boards creak  
or disturb the heavy drapes  
to extract its glittering  
heart. A black telephone  
perched on the fence  
between night and day  
reports my whereabouts,  
intelligence crackles  
across the empty air,  
a strand of yarn dangles  
from the emperor's beak.  
Bubbling noises rising  
condensing, falling echo  
the vapor cycle. A thin  
plank floor separates  
the dream from sunlight.  
I won't let its darkness  
dampen my light. Cruel  
only in private, crows  
rarely appear as animals.  
A saloon car careens  
across the open country  
bearing a gift of coded  
conversations, maps  
and precious numbers.  
Useless as an umbrella  
planted in a garden  
making a broken call  
to flowers, my dream  
cannot tell you what  
it knows. Only crows  
speak it, from afar, darkly.

## Nectar

your gorgets flashing me  
three dimensional micro bubble  
feathers my hummer iridescent  
rise and dive in courtship attack

pollen alembic laboratories  
come to me thou footless god of  
high b.p.m. figure eights  
love me bill and flower the first

animal of the world, light, says  
the poet, the flashes striking  
retinal walls, trap-lines, leaf-  
rolling the crown in pollen

come poach my dripping well  
like a chuparosa nabs a crab  
spider me side-to-side head  
lights spoil me a fight or fuck

courtship-or-territorial defense  
your Us and your Js erecting  
brilliant gorget love buttons  
of sweet water nectar delivery

fan and close your tail feathers  
cupping a blast of techno  
blowing me over I'll grab  
your long curved toenails

between trembling fingers  
as you thread my flower  
alembic whip the grooved  
tongue about your ears

hawk me a brilliant insect  
glean me thought angels your  
emerald resonance shuttles  
do mesmerize me

display your freeze and calm  
seed your scalp with Ocotillo  
zooms to yellow skullcap  
refresh me in the burning desert

O fuck me hummer in a cool sky  
island beyond the sprinklers  
irrigation needle my soundscape  
pump me with your minimalist

beat your neck of air gorget  
your ruff and syllables of velvet  
drain me, plush sentences  
to ruby depths

## **At the Flooded Meadow I Dream of Oceans**

On charged blue rafts sailing toward coasts light years off  
an oceanic adventure when separated souls desire to join  
wanting to record every inch and moment with the fingers  
squeezed through bodies taking chunks of ocean with your paddle  
pushing around bends over horizons waiting for the doppler  
of the jet passing overhead to fade, to get the whole thing down  
not to just be a part of the music giving off sparks  
in the heat between synapses, not just the translation  
but the body of what the birds are saying, the twists  
and turns of their voices: can human ears fit inside a syrinx?

I want to write more than the inner reflection of the words  
in the sonnet of my desire, a vibratory communication  
like this countersong between blackbird and robin  
not a refrain but certainly a plane of consistency  
converging while we speak different languages  
even the deep razz of the passing firetrucks, and I  
wonder if my apartment is on fire? No cardinals to sing  
this meadow red.

In the new materialism the pursuit  
of vibrant matter might bring eros into contact with clarity:  
once the jangling of goldfinches enters our bloodstream  
through the stapes, the smallest and lightest human bone,  
does a concept stay with us like the vibratory key  
of those black and yellow bandits? Their signature  
lilt and trees that are never just trees in northeast summer  
but a goldfinch assemblage of leaf and wing.

In this flooded meadow across an ocean aliens sound  
our immigrant status—the echoing melancholy pitch  
of English blackbirds, so inventive, so bound  
to a wet bandwidth I will never own that hugs this island  
spritzing streets with its misty marine gusts even  
in the Midlands where you can't smell the ocean.

In the echo chamber between flood and sky  
broke open by a bit of sunbled evening light  
the splash of landing ducks, a grouse's rusty gate  
flutter of wings, heron croak, this raucous  
world carries its flapping costume through the human muck  
in terms carried on since before firetrucks  
or towns existed. I turn back, not wanting to unwind  
the water-protected fen.

Dreaming of a surreal  
mammalian arc, festooned with avian navigators,  
propelled by reptiles and other chthonic forces  
like the bacchanal beneath the bacchanal Poussin painted,  
I ride toward another's actual panting, clutching, swooning body  
gripped by the grip of wanting that's almost too strong  
for interlocked hands, fingers clasping pushing through  
to bedrock, all the ways that flesh becomes fire  
in pursuit of contact that is not just in our head  
the way the purring of a cat exists outside.