

spacecraftprojects

we are all astronauts

transmissions
kay syrad

Nomenclature

bird's-claw beard-moss
 oblique-mouthed beardless-moss
 swan-necked apple-moss
mamillate plait-moss
 level-pearl
 depressed feathermoss
slender mouse-tail moss
 slender cruet-moss
 lance-leaved pottia
 pellucid four-tooth moss
 herzog's pocketmoss
 turgid scorpion-moss
silky forklet-moss
 nervéd leskéa

pseudotaxiphyllum elegance (elegant silk-moss)
 rhytidiadelphus squarrosus (springy turf-moss)
 entosthodon obtusus (blunt cord-moss)

I call your name
 summon your name
 I summon your name in the dreaming air

summon your name from Silesian velvet
 a down bonnet
 arrayed with stars

or call up—mouth(e)—your name

hold my eye's memory

of protrusion (nipple, notch, scallop)

ah—our fresh fingertips

Listening to moss

I take a blindfold, lie down and listen
to a half-globe of star-green star moss,
hear dense hairs ease up, and reflecting
leaf tips brace, catch narrow fronds sly
slowing the air, slow air lip a long leaf
*and I just couldn't remember humanness
even though or especially because she died
and I wasn't there, nor she, all so very late*
while the star-green star moss sips dew
in the breath-seed between air and rock
*as if in death all were air and moss and fresh
floating love and death itself dissolved*
until the powder-spores are lifted high,
full-free on breezy swirls and vortices.

Nomenclature II

or, Linnaeus takes (to) his bed

Carolus Linnaeus,
 also known as Carolus Linneus,
 remembered as Carl Linnaeus,
and ennobled as Carl von Linné,
 made a journey through Lapland in 1732
 with a portable bed made from a roll of moss
(carpet moss, *Mnium hornum*, presumably)

noting how birch leaves,
 gathered up at midsummer,
 were boiled with *Lycopodium Complanatum*
(Dwarf-Cypress moss)
 in the traditional dyeing of yarn
 for jackets and woollen leg-wraps
to a colour now known as
 New York Taxi Cab Yellow,

and wondering at babies asleep on *Spaghnum palustre*
 in smooth leather cradles
 lined with the hair of reindeer
herded by a dog and an agile maid-servant
 in heel-less boots,

also, counting hares and grey gnats
 and tuft-horned eagle owls,
 and eating coarse bread
made from the inner bark of pine trees
collected as the sap rises,

and, despite quite correctly distinguishing the male
 Bryum binum moss (stem and leaves
 of a blood-red hue, oblong,
pointed, and alternately imbricated)
 from the female

(a long purple stalk,
pear-shaped pendulous head and very small veil)—
foiling thereby the Hedwigian theory
of the fructification of mosses—

Linnaeus Linneus von Linné
later bowed to the eminence of Dillenius
(family name formerly Dillen)
who died of apoplexy only six years after
his natural history of mosses
Historia muscorum appeared,

so giving the ruby-red imbrication
to the female and the tiny veil to the male
and apparently with ‘amiable deference’—

(cushioned, no doubt, by his six-month long, two thousand
kilometer
clockwise expedition round the misty Gulf of Bothnia
with the moss bed,
finding silver mines *Gubbsilfver* and violet clay
and country folk keeping sea-watch
in the war with the Russians
and naming one hundred previously unidentified
plant species—)
but later, probably, with regret.