



Grounds

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Argotist Ebooks

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Thank you to good folks at *ucity review*, *A Few Lines Magazine*, *Unlikely 2.0*, and *Ishaan Literary Review*, in which parts of this book appear.

Grounds

Materialize the Moirae:
In Preparation for Olivia Cole

*The Fates, or Moirae, were the goddesses who controlled the destiny of everyone from the time they were born to the time they died. They were: **Clotho**, the spinner, who spun the thread of a person's life, **Lachesis**, the apportioner, who decided how much time was to be allowed each person, and **Atropos**, the inevitable, who cut the thread when you were supposed to die...The Moirae were supposed to appear three nights after a child's birth to determine the course of its life.*

It extends
a measure of illumination

a wick
exalted in transition
inducing conversation engorged with misconception

Eyes fixate
then follow

An exchange of pleasantries
the harbinger
abridged
to an innocuous advent

With less than urgency
utterings dissolve into noise
saturating orifices
under the pretense of importance

Inspired by disregard
the wick withers
light embarks on a journey
unhurried
to a nameless terminus

and this begins
the reasoning of your infamy

I am a bystander
a forced role

unfamiliar nonnegotiable

and it has to do with this picture

when

a noisy blink from the corner
arrests the motion of the goings on
Kept in a catalog
you stare without a blink
aging before our eyes
We seek reinforcements
to replace these heirlooms
having outgrown
being accustomed to

Your hairdo is vaguely menacing
and you stand just a bit out of place
inching your way to an escape
Your aversion to authority
you attempt to keep hidden
but emerges as we spiral away from

those resting adjacent

The
columns
are
telling
as
they
catalog

what was is shall become

Emptiness will be occupied
with syllables
of
multiple meaning
the vehicles of discourse

portrayed in a dim light

allowing for ambiguity

The route to you was empty less than scenic thought to possibly be barren
arrivals in droves were disappointed turned away sworn to secrecy
though not *deterred from entrance by their owlsh aspect*
but rather urged to a marathon of a joust with perseverance

Clotho – the spinner
PRENATAL

sustaining
sustenance

Patches of hair

reveal

patches of skin

you subconsciously announce to attention

The most remote of exteriors
align

conceal

reveal

the places they will soon become

territorial indifference troubles
by
condoning losing

I packed a persimmon

but it spoiled
the surprise in store

for when you retrace

trails seldom traveled
in permanent ink

And so she just floats away

Touched

is the result
of the journey
yet

we resurrect a wall

which just over

the pole of a pool-cleaning contraption
is visible

Vines crawl from left to right
and
roots reach
in search of sanctuary
from the shadows

The receipt of the scene
is with fervor
and
this optical infiltration
would be reciprocated
if not for the lack of the tapetum lucidum

So it stays
finds a home
wears out its welcome

That pole reaches up from the sky
vines crawl from right to left

And you speak to me

in unattainable lyrics

muffled

due to my lactose intolerance

To you clear
until clarity

so you continue

What will be cast away
now retains its power

a lure of convenient

blindness

you articulate

so I can articulate

This probation of your dialect

is given over
in isolation

with the permanence of ache

and
you begin to awe yourself

with narcissism

You sit centered

surrounded by

nothings

Presenting itself in intervals

is your voice

Utterance of the void

renews your substance

while

you repress the scene
within the frame of an enigma

Lachesis – the apportioner
PERINATAL

The Polaroid taken
captures what is now
twice removed
The vertical white lines
dispatch her eyes
to seek out the light between
a terrible love
and a place
seldom seen

These two pillars of vines
barnacles
ivory
enclose what was once sacred
only to become public domain

She remembers her home
standing in the front doorway
hoping the approaching headlights
were those of her father's
Ford Festiva
that had standard headlights
but
she knew
she always knew

She was once woke staring
at the framing of the door
to him sweating

his face

sweating

his hands

sweating

the glass holding his brown liquor

sweating

the salty fumes permeating a being

once of pleasantness

That now sits
quietly quiet on the edges of

a world succumb to those who
employ the tripod versus the free hand

The map has unfolded and
a once highlighted place
has lost its presence

She will run amok through the gauntlet
and come out dry

—hands offering towels will be
shunned with a cold shoulder—

she will be too experienced to
pick up bad habits

The misshapeness of the attempts
of the avidly avid
wounds these places by accident
that resists the healing purposely

That old saying goes
but is never quite gone

The wind passing through
failed to secure a grip
but
the table totters from that stilt
the folded subscription
card has slipped from under
Loudly
these edges form new edges
and shavings gather scatteredly
in the corner of the page
reminding her to be confidently
confident in her early choices
When the first real presence

is the awareness

of absence

The false bottoms

conceal
the hunger she represses
to be quenched yet again

the dichotomy is presented

though it is easily refuted

An inside pivot
allows for reflective revelation

while
she
concedes

to peer pressure with pleasure

and in perfect isolation
stimulation surrounds grievance

The
descent

lengthens

almost wantonly

in spite of the firmament

now hued in gray

in an attempt to

keep the lawn dry

in a desert's vein

as she sweats

drinks

soaks

The Fiero parked here
trains the eye

to divert from the leaking oil

This oasis may catch fire
reddening with its reach

how long will it stay ablaze?

There's more sky
in the sky
than usual

the one cloud

lends to this vision

though she tiptoes
closer to midnight

and

a reverberation
leads the way
to the division of sheep

There are lessons to be learned
around all corners
but these lizards scatter around the garden
like they own the place
damaging those fragile

branches not prepared for their weight

live and learn.

Landscapeers work loudly on hedges
the muffs they wear only come in bright colors

The blaring electric keyboard
tangles with the
one and two cylinder engines

and that hummingbird hovers in mute over
the pink hued hibiscus.

If she could close this space she would
with a mere reach
for an embrace
from a loving father
who uses this vehicle for pride

Sleeping under a tent
will provide minimal security

not like a rock would

The bite of a mosquito
a sting of a bee are
administered happily
their appetite heightens the senses
making it okay for solitude

the life we live in dreams.

On cold days these lizards go into hiding

The chime of the neighbor dog's collar keeps
an undeciphered rhythm
the sun uselessly stands still

and she sits surrounded by vacancy
telling her it's okay to move

Doors shrink to smaller versions of themselves
when days get cold
All huddled and moving slowly
people dismiss people
making chances to meet
frequently missed.

She will look up upon contact
since
once having that dream
when someone else was there.
They sat together
staring
though not at one another
before they stood and walked away

She often wonders
what those lizards are doing
when she doesn't see them

Are they stuck behind shrunken doors
anxiously waiting for expansion?

Does an assassin know how to add?
Multiply?

the silence holds still

mocking the silverfish

parked above the television
She may have dreamt it

but

she may have experienced

this world before
the vision was immediately

forgotten

but

she collects it again
out of the corner
of her eye

the swiftness with which this night dissolves
subtracts the days at an alarming rate

and

I have to wake without getting any sleep

Atropos – the inevitable
POSTNATAL

Life moves with an artifacts artifice

but now
this pulley system may be too
complex to work

and

the extension cords in the closet
seek an outlet to hold on to
for dear life

Who under these soft

white
fluorescent
lights

can recollect

or

manipulate

a trebuchet

The weight may be too light

too heavy

to close the spaces
we will soon pass through

Under the floorboards

are more floorboards

cosmetically conveying this cold place

To what shall we set the degrees?

You are a keyhole
but I long ago misplaced my keys

The postal annex – closed on Sundays –
has the only working Silca Matrix S

and a locksmith
will only feed me for today

There's no glass to break

or
screen to remove

but the tragedy is

these stitches are sewn in upside-down
roots are due to go underground
there's no "E" in that word
knitting is a different beast altogether
sprouts are the newness
that we bank on for the amazing
that we boast about to our neighbors

and those fine drops of water

split twigs in two

then

split twigs in two

then

split twigs in two

Before the cycle
comes a realization

and I exercise the demons
in the folds of my neck

muttering factoids
under a breath invisible
in freezing temperatures

In an ageless time
the adhesive loosens its grip
when the pillows horizontal stripes run vertical in repetition

There's a rupture in my post-existence
which functions with spontaneity

dormant quakes
erupts

obliteration obliterates obligation
The toll has been taken
sending shockwaves
for again

I become invisible to myself

yet you have educed from a shadow at night
to satiating my field of view

You move over the top of receding buildings
as you grow

engulfing gloomy visions
in your iridescent glow

There is now an open window

allowing you passage unattenuated

You are more than a thing

more than a pale thing

you are the world seen from my window

cows buildings mountains clouds

obstruct my view of the horizon

interruptions
obstacles in its path

attempting to negotiate their

interface

of source and destination

This combative

for my feelings

is coupled with

a retreating

to each's opposite

You are inserted here

between the lines

of this loose leaf

a less than ample
space for you to roam
there's a spontaneous expansion
as you shape-to-fit
in an act of accordance
a precession

to your arms
tied in a knot
and you standing in the way of a B-boy
bent in dismay

The pregnant pause precedes
you asking if I can roll my tongue

But which do you mean
the one with or without sound?

I can do both
my mother can do both

I leave you with a blemish
to remind you to find me
under the ficus
where the cat sleeps

the blowfish suckles

I lost my way

in a wordy wind

walking parallel
to lines of longitude

you couldn't follow

nonetheless you request an audience

Sphered:

What is the only way to accurately represent the true shape of the earth?

Located in the northeastern portion of the San Francisco Bay Area in Solano County. The city is nearly half way between Sacramento and San Francisco on I-80. The city was founded in 1852 by William McDaniel, on a part of the 1843 Mexican land grant Rancho Los Potos purchased from Manuel Cabeza Vaca. The city was a Pony Express stop and was home to many large produce companies and local farms which flourished due to the Vaca Valley's rich soil, including The Nut Tree. At one time an Onion Festival was held annually. This stopped in 2000 due to the onion processing plant being closed down. Two state prisons are located here: California State Prison, Solano and California Medical Facility. The latter prison houses inmates undergoing medical treatments.

The path to this place

is coarse

resistant

and you travel

because you can't get back to your feet

After a loss of traction

you have grabbed for a meaning

The word

memory

may be too heavy

the opposite of forget

misplacement

loss

We often lose the paths we travel

then retrace our steps

Migration begins with a destination

to and from

a new frontier

a detached entity

Porcupine Creek maybe

where the search will begin

end

There's a barge leaving at 2pm that you might want to be on. The next one comes next month.

When you consider the small place you occupy, there must be more than the one *pay streak*.

The infinite immensity here hides what you've come for – the man across the river says, *look there*.

This place knows nothing of you, and the fixed-wing you passengered on the second leg is now inoperable.

You take fright in the amazement of here, now – just as a grizzly wanders into your line of sight.

The faux presentation of an emptiness of life you realize with the urgency of urgency.

Is there a single word for this place?

A rationale sits
listless
on a park bench

unassuming

waiting
for your return

The populations of
rodents
birds
break from this grandiose arena
having grown out of being patient

Rationally speaking
you too
sit there

The bends start to set in
upon your rapid ascension

you find shade

is dearer than none

as if when sun hit
I didn't provide shelter

There's an alternative to this consumer imperative
which navigates its way diligently

suggesting a potential for failure

In a solitary stance

you move

providing fodder
for the expanse of the generic

You emerge in a historical context
a unique subject of repetition

irreducible

and down to the spinal
of a said place

Over the horizontal you trip
with the expectation of summering well
potential seasons awaiting anxiously

adjacent to stigmatic

translucent skies

It rains here

only when the sun is away

You speak to me

only once eye contact is lost

There's water

less than clear

blue

leading to geographic blind spots
securing your visible obscurity

longing

writhing

pulling us into the deepest core
of liminal abandonment

Its latitude at 64°08' N makes it the world's northernmost capital of a sovereign state. It is located in southwestern Iceland, on the southern shore of Faxaflói Bay. The location of the first permanent settlement in Iceland, which Ingólfur Arnarson is it said to have established around 870. Until the 18th century, there was no urban development in the city location. The city was founded in 1786 as an official trading town. It is often dubbed "the nightlife capital of the north."

There's an interconnectedness realized as we arrive

Your Speedos on display

under your pea coat

places

you

on

a

pedestal

that screams at those who pass by

and doesn't turn away

upon eye contact

You should have lied down

to disguise

your disgust

while black-eyed angels

sang a pyramid song

yielding the weakness you attempt to conceal

less than honorably

under the guise of an outsider

You are forced into
the diction of alienation

an estrangement from our community

The tradition of climbing standing

dominates

while we sit as the minority

Adrift you are ambitious

your experience

our hindrance

The world is dying
as you attempt to live
leaving footprints on its decaying crust

Sturdy as it may seem
the scaffold is a transient

Place

behooves constancy
with incessant still
ness

There's an unspooling

a lengthening

defenseless

backed by an infused fatigue

a derivation of

your chase for sturdiness

Pinched from a piece of clay

the asphalt

an unconscious recipient of a

place

acts to regulate temperature

as the attendant author

ity

You pose as a figure of entry

poised

in

brevity

a marker for shelter
from the pounding

tracks

in search of a view

of potential landscape

Located in the northeast portion of the state, it is situated on the west bank of the Missouri River. As of the 2010 census, the city population was 35,251. Founded in 1854, was the first incorporated city in Kansas. Beneath the city appears to be another one entirely: a recently publicized underground series of "vaults" is thought to have been used for commerce, fugitives, or slavery. It is home to University of Saint Mary (Kansas), operated by the Sisters of Charity. Is sister city to the city of Wagga Wagga in the Australian state of New South Wales as well as the city of Omihachiman, Japan. Home of Leavenworth Federal Prison.

Your surroundings once consisted of
terms of lesser intensity
and you were receptive
to your acceptable stillness

Movement and stasis
must work at regular intervals

you prefer the former

and you have yet to speak to other forms about their motion

Your action is based on speculation

a pressurized speculation
an accord signed in invisible ink

and you conform blindly

Your home

on the back of the third
shelf of the pantry
next to the Italian Vegetable Progresso

Our home
a two-way mirror
its beauty polluted by emptiness

A military airport in Spain, near Madrid. It was used by the United States Air Force until 1996. Now it is used as a military airport by the Spanish Air Force and as the commercial Madrid-Torrejón Airport. During the Cold War the facility was headquarters of the Sixteenth Air Force (16 AF) of United States Air Forces in Europe (USAFE), as well as home to the 401st Tactical Fighter Wing (401 TFW). It is now a major Spanish Air Force base and a secondary civilian airport for Madrid.

I like being the only stranger

you proclaim in a voice slightly strained

I can be anybody I want

You the perpetrator

Yourself the victim

waiting to be found

Your memories of yourself

accumulate randomly

not correlating

Would you be conversant
if the ground shook
and I appeared suddenly before
you in a crowded foyer?

Would you ignore me
like the phonemes that are a necessity
in the construct of your world?

In praxis
circuitously seeking a freedom
you deem essential

An adventure
funneled as abortive
creates in its wake
a radiance
bordering on obscurity

a diphthong
leering at your hiatus

An emblem

masking absence

shackles your grief

just as I

again

become audible

and speak to you

in unimportant tones

A living rotation
 completes the habitation
of a creative circuit
while you seem uninclined
 to disclose your fixation of
 limbo

Dominant with tension
 is the perplexity of

 place

as I come as the last line of where you began

The capital of the region of Campania. Known for its rich history, art, culture, architecture, music, and gastronomy. Located halfway between two volcanic areas, Mount Vesuvius and the Phlegraean Fields. Founded in the 9th-8th century BC as a Greek colony, it is one of the oldest cities in the world. Part of the Roman Republic as a major cultural center; the premiere Latin poet, Virgil, received part of his education there and later resided in its environs. Beneath it sits a series of caves and structures created by centuries of mining, which is in part of an underground geothermal zone.

You are center less

as you go out on your own

reads only

The compass you employ

East to West

North has been eliminated
from direction

and South has been scratched out
with vivid prescriptiveness

A run-on commentary

overlays as equivocation
with the size to replace a vernacular

A population of 66,194. The principal city of the Portland-South Portland-Biddeford metropolitan area, which includes Cumberland, York, and Sagadahoc counties. The city seal depicts a phoenix rising from ashes, which aligns with the city's motto, Resurgam, Latin for "I will rise again." The first European settler was Capt. Christopher Levett. Was first permanently settled in 1633 as a fishing and trading village named Casco. An independent film studio called the Maine Studios, located here, is home to the largest green screen in New England.

A weeping
with an encompassing magnetism

I incorporate into the day to day

Your instantaneous aversion
to the laboriousness
of my personal struggle
with your absence
resides as socially cathartic

I acknowledge your absence

with enormous complexity

filling this nothingness with indefinites

and move under

a canopy of fragments

Outside of myself

in consequence

I linger

I should have
 given you access
to roam
 across nomadic crossroads

without a body

 while staying within the limits
of normal human mobility

Calvin Pennix lives with his wife and daughter in Mission Viejo, CA. He has holds an MFA in Creative Writing from Chapman University and he currently completing his MA in English. Calvin is currently an instructor at Everest College, where he teaches Composition, Literature and Algebra. His primary interests lie in the intersections of the production of music, visual art and poetry. He is in constant pursuit to portray that imagination, art, and literature are as real as experience. Calvin's poetry has appeared in *UCity Review*, *A Few Lines Magazine*, *Unlikely 2.0*, *Counterexample Poetics*, *Ishaan Literary Review* and *Truck*.