Werewolf Weather

Larry Sawyer

Argotist Ebooks

Cover art by Gary Sullivan

Copyright © Larry Sawyer 2011
All rights reserved
Argotist Ebooks

Some of these poems first appeared in the National Poetry Review*,* Seven Corners*, and* Vanitas*.*

Thanks to the editors.

Werewolf Weather

Nights by the Encyclopedia

I loved you then, mostly for your tacos. They were like
small victories in the second Boer War (or Tweede Vryheidsoorlog).
I read *The New York Times* for the typos and
occasionally would run,
like a fool I know,
to the feed store to get more tangerines. And nothing could
quench our thirst for history

as explanations drifted through the streets like two discarded newspapers.

My path of snow that runs through night
could it be said that we were in love
she announced to the room as if asking for more salsa

as the television removed its clothes.

And what voices were so busy polishing our eyes
for another day of symmetry where the mountain sleeps?

Desire

Las Vegans plumb the deep,
our weeklies hum like earth's icing at the edge of
oligarchy. Indolent companions, the voyage
navigable and glistening.

Who notices
what objects grieve me?

Billiard ghoul, haunting tapas
quit Comcasting.

Lunar exile is a solitary and million wheeze.
Write about archers.
Surfeit of splay Americans.
Ill voyagers.

You resemble another evening
with stiletto ailments to where
the loaded hell of your mouth
yawns big as Wednesdays.

My drops of gypsy stars
blow it upward into birds.

What hissy fit
lent night this scrabulous query

cusps that polystyrene moment
blows it upward into birds?

Sortie

Frequently the ice

where thinnest weeps

another drop

upon
the
page

lest we seize and

die

before knowing.

Perhaps a shrug

from the sun

would melt that woe

yet

there must be

some mathematics, brother.

I can feel your

breath, says the reader.

Whatever,

says the bulb.

Humans

Racing to and fro,
Take a moment, think about Neufchâtel
Cheese, anything to breathe

Time is coming at you
Like a Cycloptic train, and the
Rain, neverending, runs

Leave tomorrow for the
Bees, inconsequential are the
Changing leaves

And their children, the chronically
Worried, grew up to be
The moon's executioner

Li Bai said he was a
Peach tree, but now I'm reading
Frank O'Hara again, and

The heart, not the ears
Most clearly hears the song,
Which isn't in Kafka

You can only get that
Here, spring's delicious clarity,
Manet's *Olympia*

Our ancestors nursed
Each night with a fire
Pacifier, and just

Consider this, in an Arthur
Sze poem owls quiver.
I'm not one to document

Aimlessly, these matters
Are important and

Hallelujah for dues,
Meanwhile a dragonfly with
An erection, mulls becoming a poet.

These Decibel Selves

Submarine hooves. The bright darkness
Is welded, too. There is no good
Reason for these words. My hands are plush
Heavens to reveal wild eyes. We sandpaper
The echoes to release operas in their wood.
Air, envy the window. Moon, shark
The sky. Our tongues are
Unleavened bread that
Peer out from between moments.
Night wraps its wounds.
Made of secrets, as if locked inside a safe, hear
Your watch's final forest.
All the world ignored that purring
While outside the storm passed,
Citing us for living shyly.
The silence in my veins is a corduroy
Civil war. Midwestern as a dyslexic
Car. Another ticking memory shows
Its movies in our blood.

Exiles and Asthmatics

As they float inside your poem.
That we should give praise
For these icebergs blue
And rejoice in their *teeth*
Says the Kingfisher,
Astride the Empire State building.
Bless this walking through the desert
Hand in hand with my reason
With the insomniacs who
Batting Kafka eyelashes
Load the ark with every known creature
From my dream of gourmet
Cameras, where we

Preciously await faith's unveiling.
Holding your hand inside
This paper museum
My kaboom and cerebral
Map. That we were witness
To that throbbing Vegas
And wrecked their caviar castles.

Each little bird now in
That spring-like yard
A piano key upon which I play
What sounds like rain.
Exiles and asthmatics,
On birth's label
What obscene ingredients
Wear out the corduroy typewriter?

Mystic Sweet Receiver

Peer into the apartment: where you'll find
that now your cheap cigar just isn't possible

Scientists have proven that beaches and teacups,
no longer considered to be desperate acts,

never answered the census and yet, each whorl
    of your finger.

I've come to crawl across new rugs, there

is a map of where you left me out in the rain
in that microscopic city of tarts.

  Matador of subtlety
    cross over to the wax figure James Dean

and resuscitate American vertigo,
 classify the new discoveries, behind a

  gentle curtain of rain, here where
concussive night

its octane decadence
  ratifies our inflatable languages.

Wichita Lineman

If the Wichita Lineman is still
on the line, shouldn't we get him
down? I mean what kind of
sad commentary on our society
is that when a close personal friend
of a recognized country music
star like

Normal on the Mediterranean

Make it easy on yourself
 raise the energy level of this engagement, the
  stiff will answer the phone

Those wonderful innocent fingertips
 will traverse the steppes of such
  fabulous Katherines

wearing ouzo overcoats
 unbeknownst to hush

the Big Man and his materialistic laughter
 shoves it.

Could there be some more ice to go with my
 blonde vacuity?

We, all so very normal, seem disgraceful, adrift upon
 the tempestuous furniture of our imaginations

making out with a Howitzer
faites vos jeux, messieurs

its gleaming fur suffers in the exact same shade of blue as the sky

The unsymbolic Denmark of its weight
 fulmigates in apparent brilliant implosions and

as the light is poured
 disloyal sardines and their effete claustrophobias
  compose, in the parallel fictions of their speech

a particular, and certainly awful, look but we are immune to their
 invisible intoxications:

With our typewriter teeth, adrift upon the
 HOW ARE YOU of this holy apostrophe

I do get it, they'd rather dance, as if.

On My Tongue

Orange do a dance as the chair in
which I sit, horrible shipwreck, swells like childhood to swallow my robbed

eventual roses.

Legs cross: I concur.

However, an overheard conversation, flawless and perfect,
is a shining cache
a renegade science.
But how to describe your ice? In your geometry lurks televised lightning.

Your aesthetic no mere words. Legions of Tuscan baristas.

Gloating, your skin riffing, definitely.
Your great paradoxes like wings

ply the air with such lush karate.

Cormorant

Speaking slowly over

the wide water

such black wings

like soft hands

upon the nape

of the water's neck

stretch out over

each syllable each

ripple in the

surface that glistens

black and cold

like the eyes

of a snake.

Clocks

Check your horologe before you miss the train she spoke, and I listened because of these words that she used, but to me, she continues, poetry is to be found only in the grilled sandwich consisting of slices of corned beef and Swiss cheese with a layer of sauerkraut on rye bread with you on some subtle day between Tuesday and Thursday in the time of day that follows morning: her name is synonymous with any of various mixtures of clay and oxides of iron and manganese, used as a pigment.

Her mind was that that could be hammered, or rolled, or extended into various shapes without being broken, a child of fragmented grammar. I spoke to her of various machines and compared her to them while in bed together. I enter her again and again repetitively, a fast ship moved by oars or lateen sails, or both, used along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, having reverted from domestication to the original or untamed state.

Histoire du Cinéma

I remember seeing *Star Wars* for the first time,
but it wasn't like seeing *Breathless* for the first time.
I was breathless when I watched *Raging Bull* for the first time,
but I was a raging bull when I watched *Clueless* for the first time.
I was clueless when I watched *8 1/2* for the first time.
I was 8 1/2 when I watched *Snow White* for the first time.
I was snow white when I saw *Halloween* for the first time.
It was Halloween when I watched *High Noon* for the first time.
I remember seeing *King Kong* for the first time.
It was in *The Apartment* that I saw *The Searchers* for the first time.
In *Modern Times*, a *Taxi Driver* should consider *The Graduate* and
go *Singin' in the Rain On the Waterfront* with *The African Queen*,
instead of this route I took classes with a *Psycho* from *Chinatown* on *The Grapes of Wrath.* Someday I'll be *An American in Paris* but
for now *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*? *Rocky* and *The Wild Bunch*
rode in on *The Streetcar Named Desire* to fill their *Jaws*
with *The Best Years of Our Lives*.

Werewolf Weather

Venezuela, sweet lightning
Perhaps you were too busy with your pistachio practice
Meanwhile, the trees—abuzz with symphonies.
Dark chargers roam the countryside like Venezuela,
Which is where we left off.
I'm trying to explain that the situation is dire.
Have a certain pride
Mysterious soul, smiling, you get around.
Laocoön warns of impending commercial breaks.
Free from the burdens of oratory
Clara rides along and, en route to
Tomahawk, joins Johnny in "Oh, What a Forward Young Man You Are."

Would it be counterproductive
To keep an accurate account of receipts and dispursements
Just as Washington kept his farm account?
Some artisans propose a shrug.

Spiffy thoughts of Bosnia
Won't suit us here in this sweltering climate
Where the shelves of lunacy,
Nearly collapsing, hold all your fireworks

Every first edition.

Wind Oak Fire Moment

Look how coveted Finland
Starves the opera tower

Felling famous dismantled surfaces
Exact in their screens, that hush and silk

Behind the nimble glass couch hide
Suitcases of hope, where a fork in the road
Sends forested messages home.

Could it be that these ripened reminiscences
With their ringing meanings

Are a raft upon which we world:

Where the palace of morning, in its suit of
Entrances, forever entrances?

A Belief in Canoes

Blue jeans
there
carry such
high
wires.
Where the
darkness,

its

world

dreams the
ease
with which,

stretched
out over the
eye,

beam
these
dire
times.

Expansive
empathies won't

but we
love you
Colorado says

(she goes under)

now we can,

let's talk about

snails in the country
the green jade
of Keats

our invisible canoes.

Comrade District Attorney

What else would you like us to
do? Comrade District Attorney,
you take them. Even in that
firing-squad you're wearing
I can almost see your conscience.
Comrade District Attorney,
get up. The engine no longer
runs like mud on headlines and
the fight is in the last round.
As for the other one he's a fake,
you'll see, it's what makes
our re-enactment believable.
Comrade District Attorney,
stretch out in the palm of my hand
where the nail sprouts upward
for the believers.

Mind Rib

These compass keys
Hang a wreath of fire on your door

The gyroscope spinning your days takes
Extra-terrestrial smoke breaks
An animal nuzzling awareness

Shadows unfolding, content to

Explain nothing.

Knitting a poem from
Sea water

The hieroglyphics of the spine
The formula of man, waking

Between languages.

Transatlantic Fuss

The certain sameness
a beingness, to achieve endlessness

a certain exquisiteness
must lower anchor into it
a summer hammockness

to escape cityness
and you take a lot of it
the quotient of mysteriousness
once divided by that meanness

but generally, the quiet day
bears our nostalgia on its barge
illumines our features
scrofulous and exact.

United States Whip Company Complex

But we, and the very tops of our hills
O, and if only for chance moments
But she shot me directly in the twig
And I'm a big dummy for believing it
But in those days even the music boxes.

Our cataclysm, our accessories
On a mission narrowly averted
Two precious self-portraits
Swabbing at our duhs, these
Excruciating thingies
But she kicked me in my speaking part
Squarely in the script
Should we be sitting still for portraits
Else moment-to-moment shrugs?
Autumn is such degradation
And I Europe and you do, too
Like we were nothing, birds are kind of not
Friendly, look they fly away.

On Your Person

You can't wait to hear what
the celebrity apprentice will
do next. Appalachians buzz
the terrace, askew with belief.
O, the lake is flooded by
now, but we're going to be
A-OK. Schubert's Piano Sonata in
F Minor tiles our morning in
calm. Silence can't put a price-
tag on atmospherics, but we
gendarmerie certainly try.

Baby Devils

Unattributed feelings sprout
yes, you know it well, how they
shout

these shopworn hooks
(midnight in the laundromat)
and the looks you sometimes get

although the projectionist
wants science fiction
and people just want presidents.

My beef with body doubles
how they resent direction
you know they want the lead:

I mourn surface tension
its sloppy assault on the senses.
Put this in parentheses
that all my words

those baby devils
part like daffodils
at the first sign of attention

and for all their flighty nonchalance
act untoward.

Overt Phenomena

But that they paint the room in terrors

and win at MEANWHILE,

still intrigues, their history-making

in the breakfast quadrant

while totally obscene, there are some who,

planet Earth in tow,
still gourmet oohs and ahs.

Aglow

Barbara reminds Fred of
Marco Polo's advice to Genghis Khan:

The inferno of the living is not something that will be; if there is one, it is what is already here, the inferno where we live every day, that we form by being together.

His reply:

That vestibule in Piraeus
was maximal horizontal camouflage upon that
journey to repair your perspective, well

we are those precise drawers that hold your pity,
collecting
sleep's littlest pieces.

From Promontory of Liminal Field

These embarrassments of elocution

The worn and morose grooves of existence
in their refrain

light the bee-eater's exclamations
like cigarettes

the sting of speech
plasticity of your rapid
confusions

whereby brute morning accordion-like
sweats, collects as rivers in the
chest

as a pimple of amber encases
Paleolithic flight from

promontory of liminal field in

endless sessions

the wing extends
its razor
millions of summers ago

meanwhile incalculable exits

open each night
the moon's Braille curtain.

Metaphysical Thermometer

Truant from sorrow
and fast circumstances, in
a word intention

.

What we love was
anywhere lucky, those
schizophrene flags

.

We press our
bodies, cloud-absent
hungry as silk for
twilit looms

Dining With the Yeti

Poetry as ultimate taxidermy
Metaphor has grown tiresome to the other diners
But our plates are confessors.
Pass the asparagus
No one knows we're here
Surrounding us, the snowy margins of the page

Letter to the Editor

Lying in the hammock of the new issue
at least the beautiful fountains work

Is Indiana the mill of the gods?
I think it is like a doorway to impossible mythologies

stringless cabs, terracotta deer

Because we secretly admire your no-hands
lower anchor into liberty.

You could take more chances.

Because it moves.

Exposé

We mean the meaning unseen. Easing insistence like weasels leaving freedom. Else evil exists exasperated, entering elsewhere. Eyes incite entrance ever after. Epigrams escape elaborate cages, line escarpments on ice easels. Afterward empires appease trustees, circumvene. Evenings we wean indulgences, etch escargot elands, tease exciting eyeteeth. Ebonics whispered near earwigs embrace embroidered emus. Emoticons enact esoteric effigies. Even expressive evidence erodes evangelical excursionists expecting exposition. Expect extinction.

Summary

Nevertheless, when both he, and she, decided to slip into
something more correlative, they suddenly felt awkward when she finally saw his conjunctive adverb.

Therefore, as long as she kept subordinating herself to his main clause,
her climaxes reached nearly subjunctive proportions.

Moreover, he thought that by straddling her subordinating gerund phrase,
he could bring her, and not merely himself, to conjunctive adverb.

Furthermore, her idea of a sudden linking verb caused his premature
interjection to explode, producing inside her an interrogative past participle.

Consequently, after their descriptive adjective, they relaxed upon their
meditative antecedents and she seemed to him then, in silhouette,
beautiful as a personal pronoun.

Nest of Forevers

Between my heart and lungs a tape recorder spools

the tiny rhythms of an exotic psalm withering.

There is a logic to all the excuses sprouting

like dust upon the panes of glass encasing curios

in a pawnshop where the longest day of the year

is a half-priced reminder to fuggedaboutit.

I'll go back to dreaming that I'm yours.

Watch a single black cloud sign its name in the sky.

Not So Wild West

Ferrari thought, baroque thought:

beneath the surface,
models in leisure suits flatten cities.

We'll sift among them, our gills billowing.

Lips chap, happy vampires.

Look up, notice the light
in which a great ship is riding.
Will it brave the deep and take us
over dormant lacquered waves?
Of what do I speak?

The receptor cells quake.

Taking in the last hours
businessmen roast on spits.

Worry is my tequila.

Prohibition Vignette

In cheetah-skin horror

The heft of embers
as words melt
(O, their impropriety)

A lyrical chain-link fence.
Just out walking my
chimerical self-deification.

II.

Turbocharged beach
in memory seems kindly

shriek of jets above
tractor the sky
in crimson plume

a cloud Kilimanjaro.

Poetry as ammunition
a song I must

chew.

The Accuracy of Niagara Falls

The hysterical footsteps of the modern

everything is poetry

it is bad

is it

rather that than it's bad, isn't it?

You see, grapes even reflect the days

ignorant rubies, autumn's locomotives

these colored lights disappear.

I must seem to you like sugar

actresses without genius, tumultuous

after-pasture cows on their way to burgers

think about your actions riding into the air

I love the soul's armor : although random

majestic milk trucks and the suburban contradictions

aren’t at the library to define attractive

because

so the heart cymbals clang do cymbals clang no crash

so many people staring down into pavement what is there

there is a scene in Titian I could describe

but I’d rather stay with you here inside

the negligent mane of Mexico

where we forgive each other our Sanskrit curtains.

My hands! My hands! They’re perfectly calm.

Art does need an operation, he says

the most substantial mammoth ever found

is capable of a submarine subtlety but these paradisal conundrums

reel endlessly ashore.

LARRY SAWYER curates the Myopic Poetry Series in Wicker Park, Chicago. He also edits milkmag.org with Lina ramona Vitkauskas. Poems and reviews have appeared in publications including *Action Yes, Chicago Tribune, Ygdrasil, Court Green, Tabacaria (Portugal), Paper Tiger (Australia), Exquisite Corpse, MiPOesias, Shampoo, Skanky Possum, Range, Versal (Holland), Jacket (Australia), Van Gogh's Ear (France), Vanitas, Verse Daily, VLAK (Czech Republic)* and elsewhere. His first full-length collection *UNABLE TO FULLY CALIFORNIA* (Otoliths) is available on lulu.com, of which David Shapiro writes: "I like even the quasi-Romantic dislocations here: 'There is a beauty to ice / only a statue understands.' I'm not a statue, so I only partially understand, but that should be more than enough for Sawyer's uncanny picnic on no grass … seemed as real as the Bronx, and I couldn't stop thinking: I am so lucky that this poetry is so good."

***

Poet and cartoonist GARY SULLIVAN shares his international music library and more at Bodega Pop (http://bodegapop.blogspot.com).