

## *SPECIES*

How *did* the species originate, anyway? It's been so long I can barely remember. Birds travel from island to island with *things* in their beaks. Sound familiar? The next morning I returned to my apartment. Did I miss my cue? When the music stopped, I made a beeline for the nearest chair. Natural selection, his excellency has a point. Essentially it *is* a numbers game. Effective Monday, all is vanity.

## *DESIRE*

An adolescent girl pretending to be a boy becomes a woman. It's a useful metaphor. Like buried treasure. Along the way, [ecstasy] [joy] [more of the same]. Jenny Candler (blonde, freckles) charged me 20¢ to watch her pee. The Indians beached their canoes and disappeared beneath the thick forest canopy. Clod of earth, bunch of twigs, why didn't I think of that? In the crow's nest at night, high above the deck, the lonely "cabin boy" lets her hair down. The sea below, a quiet dark pool. Later, pirates return to a remote island for a tearful reunion with other pirates.

## *THOUGHT*

Little church around the corner, finally alone with my feelings. The pig is my friend. It would be helpful if I could speak to him about countertransference, me as opposed to not-really-me. Snow fell steadily on the terrace, piling up to the balustrade. We're a lot alike, we both have these *feelings*. At dusk the snow turned to slush. I'd like to see more of you, if possible. Getting on to eight, light traffic, making my way up I-25. In the capitol the first lights of

evening flickered. I observe the pig without fully grasping what makes him tick.

### *CLOUD*

Looking down from Olympus, the gods were jealous. I encountered bad vibes halfway through the makeout party, got dressed and left. You were obscured in the shadows and passed for someone else. Superfly. The relationship turned a corner, Ariadne gave Theseus the green light. Eating the virgins. The Minotaur was onto a good thing any way you looked at it, passages that returned them to each other. Let me walk you through it.

### *IDENTITY*

You don't hear the name Benedict Arnold in poetry anymore. That's it, we're out of here. Take 405 north to Sunset, Crescent Heights to Mt. Olympus. I wrote a very moving poem about him in a dream. He had women problems - also money problems. What can I tell you? He who is without sin, let him shoot the first brick. After getting loaded you go back to somebody's room and do it. This will only take a second.

### *FALL*

I'd like everything to remain suspended and beautiful. Against backlit infinity. Kindly acknowledge your agreement by signing where indicated below. Our review disclosed that two of the properties are LUST sites. Leaking Underground Storage Tanks. Where the elephants go to die. Where does that leave us? Alone in the dark. Hold it right there.

## WATER

I dreamed I invented a new perfume, *Michael Friedman's Night of Magic*. Fluted columns, pink clouds. Allen Ginsberg reviews formula in lab: "It just might work..." But when I woke up it was only water. Or pee. The day began inauspiciously enough with a body on the tracks. A dab behind the ear. Then, at the office, the gloves came off. Voice mail retrieval. After I cooled down, I put them back on and punched myself up to the next level. Dinner on the ground. Then another dream: frightwig, secretary of the treasury, edge of reef.

## MOUTH

I believe I have everything under control. Have not, want not. Notwithstanding the first sentence, send backup. I held an outtake of the face between my fingers, lifted it to the light, didn't like what I saw. But maybe that's just me. Entered into evidence, examined in camera. Then I fell apart. The more things stay the same, death of Arthur. Was the black hole part of the city or the city itself? The absence was real. When they put me back together there were stars on my ceiling.

## STATE

Several Frenchmen meet in the city square. Their conversation is lively and wide-ranging. At dusk, Diderot, Rousseau and Condorcet go their separate ways. A couple of days later I dropped by The Gauntlet in West Hollywood, where Bob worked. As I looked around, photos of something Bob called a "Prince Albert" caught my attention. He spent a few minutes explaining how it works and how much he had

been enjoying his own Prince Albert, etc. He was delighted when I said I planned to give serious consideration to getting one for myself.

## *PAIN*

Let me say this. There's a right way and a wrong way. As it turns out, I *did* get lost in the stand of bamboo outside the theater. Are the birds still asleep? Put another way, I simply underestimated the gravity of the situation. But here I am at customer service, only slightly the worse for wear. Light, dark, shadow. What can I do about these feet of clay? Deal with it. Who is this Cornell Woolrich? (These are *his* words I am writing.)