



CAESURA



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"A sudden blow: the great wings beating still"

CAESURA

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Tel Aviv University
The Department of English
and American Studies
Literary Magazine

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We hope you enjoy this labour of love, and hope to hear
from you all soon.

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Leehu Sigler / Tar

I roll in beds of creeping tar pits
Forever stuck, encased in muck,
And enjoy myself to death.

I live in torrents of blackness, I am at sea.
Thunder booms in with the rainy gunk,
Words as sharp as caltrops are spread about the kneel,
They poke fun, gushing floods the hold,
Antiquity is covered by the shine of molten metal,
It is reflective, the lamp emblazons light,
What remains is a whole and conscious stream of liquid
thought,
Shattered, shards askew, fragments break upon the
global floor,
I am abandoned, wordless, reckless, spewing
The sharp tacks back upon the road,
Where they pinch at my feet as I trod.

*Aviva Betzer / Emily D meets Glenn G –
a lyrical confession*

i start reading. i'm appalled. god never wanted a girl too
Perfect. i cannot understand; or, rather, i understand
slightly too well, how she possessed language and space

(silence)

the gaps between the abysmal and the detrimental. it
leaves me speechless hollow

(completely inside my head)

wednesdays are mine. i'm silent because i'm tired just
losing you. sitting in the library on bialik street, listening
to a piano recital. Glenn is alone on stage with the piano,
the focus of a mass of people that for him may be (a) a
monster (b) beheaded mind-jewel about to devour him
alive (c) here's a satin blaze of a woman; (d) here's a
coin traveling in the gilded depth of this monster's great
hollow

(and the den is occupied by you)

your mind devours your limbs. what are you thinking
dearest Glenn? they're all looking at you. i raise my
hands to the piano. the first note, then the second. now
you're on the line, the right path that has only one
direction: no egress. and then the applause. no one
knows i screwed up tonight

(they didn't hear and they don't care)

Emily made Music: hers; Glenn made Poetry; his. i will
work and then re-work the words, the music.

then will i sparkle. tomorrow
(*tomorrow*)

Aviva Betzer / i'm a

i'm a tea maker
i'm a waiter
for dark
to fall
thicker
to become
letters
and
what really eats
me are books so
many books in
boxes so many
not in the right
place
*

i'm a washing
machine four
steps to go
and i'm done

i'm a coffee grinder
never
been on someone's
tongue never
existed outside the
kitchen

Aviva Betzer / the left bank (london is over)

wide-eyed and opened-mouthed
the blue-gray where
Egon Schiele trees stub
the frozen ground
the river running like
a mouth
spelling bee ee ai u o

Eden Amran / Autumn & Spring

Autumn has come
has come
upon the garden
of eden
dry and tasteless
like a long un
used vagine

Spring shall come
shall come
upon the lawns
of the good natured
vivid and fruitful
like the means and
manners of his beloved

Valeria Pouder / The smell of the forget-me-nots

I'm trying to gather all the memories of you, because at some point I stopped believing you've ever existed. Maybe I imagined you, made you up like the rest of my stories. As I'm going through the little tokens that hold the concept of you onto the carpet of reality, I can recall your face, and more importantly, your gestures; those little shrugs or waves of hand that are so utterly you. I can imagine your smell and awkward smile when you gave me the can of candies. There are so many stories I've written about you, but none of them can capture all of you. I guess that's why you left. There are so many parts of you I cannot give you, and you need to find them on your own. But here's a teddy bear you gave me, waving your hands awkwardly, refusing to look me in the eyes because "it's really just nothing special".

Now that you're gone I can say it freely - I love your smile, absolutely adore the polite happy sadness that you radiate. I wonder whether that's how it will be, people disappearing from your life without you noticing; leaving blank spaces and a feeling of something familiar that you cannot quite put your finger on, when you go near them, unless you have something material to fill those gaps. I've written so many stories about you, and you just slipped from the pages and walked away. I've written stories about others but apparently not enough for them to come to life.

There are our old pictures. Those were good times, weren't they? I remember how we walked and walked and you hugged me and it felt so weirdly comfortable. I miss you dearly, but no matter how many stories I'll write about you, you won't come back. It doesn't work like this anymore. I just hope that you've found the missing pieces to make you whole. I remember the first story that I wrote about you, sitting on a bench in the park. Half a year had passed until we met in that park again, this time in person.

There's a knock on the door and the nurse comes in.

"How are you and your friends today?" she asked.

"I'm drowning in nostalgia which is not quite healthy I presume. None of my friends came to visit.

My stories are too dull for them now." I shrugged

"The medications do their job well then." the nurse smiled, giving me the pills.

She turned to leave but then said "Oh, almost forgot. There's a letter for you."

I took and opened it.

There was a picture of your smile.

Valeria Pouder / I Miss the Concept

I miss the concept
I guess
Of the rose-chocolate bus ride
And the blessed
God forsaken beginnings

A sense of utter misplacement was then
I was hiding behind all the things that I meant
And I knew it was only a question of when
To write a letter that has never been sent
All the letters are lost in the meaning.

Hadas Blum / Untitled

Fifteen on the right arm, five of them still fresh. None on the left arm. Some more on either side and a trail of about forty or fifty connecting them. The ones on the legs are barely visible. She wrote it all down, scribbling a number under the printed word “weight,” and squeezed the paper back into the not yet wide folder. She gave me my new belongings, of course only after I gave up what was mine until that moment. She smiled at me and opened the door. The air was cold, frozen, I could almost see it; a grayish dusty color, dancing around forming whirlwinds above everyone’s heads, mocking how cold we are, even though we are inside.

Walking along the fully housed, almost market-like never ending hallway, I felt sad at the loss of what was previously my own, yet I was hopeful for whatever new I would acquire. Through the polluted, gray air I heard shouts. Other people were arguing, some noticing me, some not. The hallway came to its end, opening a large cafeteria space. She continued pushing me through the buzz of children and teens waiting for their food, and so we finished our adventure in a quiet room, in which I was forced to change into my freshly washed pajamas in front of her; a top that looked like the sky on a summer morning, terribly emphasizing my mood and size, and wide yellow pants, completing the outfit like the sun completes the sky. My mood, having already been a

cloudy autumn afternoon, quickly deteriorated into a gloomy night carefully polished by Poe. Hollow as can be, I let her open my bags, and lock the few things that were still mine in a blue locker. I was ready for lunch;

Maiyse Abuleil / Social Life

And what do you know of my selfishness and pride
what do you know of waking up in a cage inside a cage

What do you know of silent cries and tear soaked navy
sleeves
of worn out heart strings and dry heaves
of eyes that can't differentiate between the truth and their
lies

These eyes that can't tell time because time doesn't fly
but stands still and makes the lights dim more with each
passing night.

what do you know of darkness so loud it lights fires of
kerosene not of passion and teenage highs
And what do you know of Space?
of an unbounded promise bounded by borders and dollar
signs.

How, how can I tell you of wild nights that never last?
of hidden laughs and friends that never seem to
understand
That I am not an I but an apostrophe s meant to be a part
of something to never be detached.

By a hip or a hand

Always linked with a man, with a plan, but never mine.
Always thine

How can I show you a life to which you are blind?

Mika Moreh / The Walls Are Leaking

The walls are leaking.

Though not very profoundly.
It is actually
Rather seldom.

I have not counted the seconds
Between each drop.

Perhaps I ought to.
It could be important.

The walls are swelling.
They are morphing,
Evolving. I am also
Evolving.

The walls aren't strong enough
To resist their antagonist,
Their fabled arch-nemesis;
They give in to its temptation,

Which tempts,
Like water,
On the tip of the tongue.

They give in in forlorn.
They mourn their gradual surrender.

Each drop slaps noisily against the floor.
Rudely announcing its presence,
Its conquest.
They each gloat to my face;

Shameless.
Shameless and godless.
As if threatening they shall make a conquest
Of me also.
I blot them with a smelly rag

But do not pity them
As they die.
I think in time
The rain shall enslave me as well.

I am strong. Clad in my armor plate
"I fight the drop with my prudent arrows?"
I fight the drops with my fleeting self.

And I shall win many battles,
And my loss is imminent.
It is timeless.

The rain is merciless

At first.
It is also relentless. Yet in time
It gentles.
Relentlessly gentle;
Such a foreign concept.

But not unpleasant.
The rain shall win at some point.

But— I do not mind.

Daniel Nisinman / The Cold Night's Air

With the cold night's air and with –
The tremulous certainty of a dawning premonition,
Bury your face in your hands.
But, stand. Stand and watch how the memory recedes
With every lost good morning kiss.
Cringe at the sudden prospect, without a surprise:
You knew.

I was never a dreamer.

When the clock strikes twelve, fill –
Fill your lungs to the brim with the cold night's air
And whisper “how they should have been together,”
Ambling hand in hand, in the cold night's air
Preparing for a hindsight departure – his departure.

With your half-uttered valediction join, join
The legion of a thousandfold outcasts, that would have
no past
Or future pedigree.
But step, step into the cold night's air and wonder –

If we ever walked through that unknown, unremembered
gate.

*Daniel Nisinman / A Lonely Tarmac at the Edge
of the World*

If a lonely tarmac could deflect the moon's rays
Then it would send the sun her beams, as means to
An end.

But instead, hiding its many furrowed face in a mucky
puddle,

It only seeks to understand why distant objects are
unfathomable as

Memories of dried tires and falling stars under frowning
skies.

Guilty of tears and sublunary fears, it sighs – for another
Million years.

Yusra Rabi / Burnt

Their eyes bore into her, hatred and malice coating her dirty body. Her bare feet scraping over the filthy ground of the village square, rocks and twigs cutting her, leaving bloody footprints behind her. Blood dripping down her face from a cut on her temple, a result of a rock thrown at her from one of the angry men standing at the sidelines, shouting and screaming.

The rope that was tied around her wrists was too tight, blood was not reaching her fingers, she could feel them tingling, like needles pricking under the skin.

Her relatively simple white dress, looking at her you wouldn't have guessed its color though, flowed around her feet, mud and spit mixed with her own blood coating the hem and neckline.

A necklace of black crystals swinging around her neck.

Satan's Whore!

The Devil's Mistress!

Witch!

Burn in hell!

Burn the witch!

Insults and screams pouring over her.

They think they are weakening her, breaking her. Little did they know that their anger was making her stronger.

Waking the dark entity living inside of her.

Looking around, she saw the red faces but beyond them she saw it; her beginning and their end. A platform, with a wooden pole in the middle of it, stood erect. Twigs and logs circled around it. Smiling, she could feel the blood rushing faster through her body.

He's coming...

The man dragging her towards it through the hordes of angry town's people pulled her forward, when he heard her quite laugh.

“MOVE!” grumbling at her without turning to look at her. “And shut your mouth, you filthy whore.” Stumbling over the wooden steps, her dress caught on a splinter in the wood. The man pulling her got even more impatient than he already was when she stopped to release her dress, so he yanked her back a bit too hard which resulted in ripping her dress, revealing her silky white thigh.

“Go on, feast your eyes.” she teased, laughing at the horror in his eyes. He felt his blood start to boil, so he grabbed her upper arm tightly and dragged her towards the wooden pole roughly.

The smell of blood.

Burning of flesh.

Young innocent screams of agony.

The horror and realization of the end.

Her body vibrating with the power washing over her, trembling with the excitement of what's to come.

Scream, cry out, bleed for me...

The man had her secured at the pole now, stepping back to take the light torch from a little child.

Her head tilting to the side, absorbing the sight of the fire's reflection in his blue innocent eyes.

Give me your strength.

Tears burned in her eyes, a dark and powerful force moving through her body, searching for a way out.

Wait... patience...

The man was now looking out towards the people gathered to watch her death, raising the torch high up. The platform shook under her feet with the force of the cheers he got from the crowd. Smiling, she caught the child with the blue eyes' gaze.

I will see you in hell, I will smell your flesh burn and melt, those blue eyes will not save you now.

Throwing her head back, laughing at the terror in his pure blue eye, when he realized that she was speaking to him in his quiet mind. The man with the torch was now standing in front of her, lowering the torch to her feet.

“Well get on with it, my master is waiting.” she said tauntingly. “And does not like to be kept waiting, he's impatient like that.”

Growling at her, he dropped the torch down and hurried back to the safety of his people.

“Ha ha ha..” her manic laughter reaching their ears, when the fire at her feet caressed her softly and then started moving outwards. Realizing what was about to happen, and the death that was reaching out to them, the

crowds started scrambling back. Not getting far when suddenly with the flick of her fingers and a soft whisper, hellish fire rose from the ground and consumed with hunger everything in its path.

“Hush now, he’s coming... scream now, he’s coming... die now, he’s coming...”

The smell of melted human flesh washed over her, shrugging out of the burnt rope now that bound her wrists to the pole.

Walking down to the screams of agony, a smile stretching her bleeding mouth, she sat in the middle of the chaos. Watching her master do his magic.

“Thought you could get rid of me that easily.” she was saying to the burning humans around her. “You could *never* touch me, my master is always with me, inside me... Now *burn!*”

As the fire was dying, she reached out and gave it a last caress before it fizzled out.

“Was my gift to your pleasure?”

You did well...now come home.

Smearing blood on her face from a puddle on the ground, she lay on her back and moaned in pleasure as a hand of fire reached to her and consumed her body in mere seconds. Leaving behind the necklace of black crystals, with blood coating it

Omri Shabath / The Politician

A public servant? When it suits my need
For wealth or power, else I just mislead.
Suspicious rise? I fiercely wave the flag!
As pups, with cheap distractions them I wag.

Idealist? At such I scoff and scorn;
I trade the principles to which I'm sworn.
I steal, I trick, distort, pretend and cheat —
I squirmed on saintly soil to seize my seat.

Who am I? Many names conceal my brow,
I feign a smile and fabled fibs I vow,
Forbidden means of payoff is my art,
I got a lot of practice since the start.

But hate me not for what I did and do,
Forsooth, I live in every one of you.

Omri Shabath / Lord Prop and Countess Ganda

Our ever-blessed Lord and Countess know
What's best for us, mere average jane and joe.
The deific foresight only they possess,
By goad or rod we're often taught we're less.

The Lord abhors that foe (whom we not met);
With sulfur eyes to battle prompt we're set.
From Wargs, The Countess bellows, she's our shield;
Aghast, our basic rights to her we yield.

All sinful skeptics swiftly shall we shun;
To terror orcs, we're told, they give new gun.
Our Nobles steer the ship, we paddle blind;
They ruled we should not irk our simple mind.

But why we toil, yet still our bellies cry,
While they on gilded bedding gorge and lie?

Ethan Dvir / Feast

When I was a little kid my father taught me how to peel garlic cloves. He took them between his thick hands, rough from years of work at sea, and smashed the base of his palms on top of the little white things. I used to imagine the meaty part inside being squashed to death, forced to leave the warm grip of its shell. I could hear it release a shriek while the crushed lungs exploded and gave way to a wheeze of unused air it just took in moments ago. He handed me the bodies of his victims for examination and clean up. I was the mortician of garlicks, exposing the crushed insides in a makeshift autopsy, declaring the cause of death and throwing the peels to the garbage. They weren't necessary anymore. After I was done with my procedure he would snatch the corpses and throw them inside the pan, or pot. There they would simmer in a pool of boiling oil, forgetting the pearly color that painted their flesh up to that moment and taking on a deeper brown one, descending from their inherent angelic purity to a dirt like nothingness. I'd refuse to taste them. He would get angry.

Food is a big thing in our house. I remember the hours spent bent under the edge of the table, refusing to satisfy his need for me to consume what he worked on. The taste wasn't that of food, it was of war, and I was the voice of peace sounding my sullen grief for the fallen. When he walked into the kitchen he put on war

paint, he took on the knives and tools of destruction and started stirring. Breaking apart the limbs of the defrosted various meats, working the flame to the brink of a household fire, throwing, slapping, tearing into pieces and watching them swim in the juices of their dead brothers. The ground beneath him was a battlefield which he decorated with a clear glass ashtray that was stained with spices and dirt, and a glass filled with whatever overshadowed the burned flesh with its strong smell. It's feeding that's the center of this whole act, feeding his own self-importance and strength, feeding his need to be god, to choose who lives, who dies, and who will nourish the next exploit of war. It's feeding that pulled us apart, that silence that surrounded him whole and consumed him. He was god in his own kitchen, but he was a mere pray in every other way, and while I felt sorry for the dishes he made, I gloated in his slow descent into nothing.

I had this dream where I was standing over the trash can, holding a few garlic cloves in my hand, picking the ones to go back to their basket untouched, and the ones to be used. I chose one. I crushed it. I heard the screams of pain. I saw it try to move its immobile body in vein. I opened it to reveal its rotten insides. I threw it away.

Now that he's gone I think of him more so. I can see his reflection in my own clear glass ashtray, grinning as if he won, as if he succeeded in passing his own

image to me, cheating death every time I inhale the nicotine. I can see him in the mirror pointing out my feminine posture, my inner battles, my face which is a sculpture of his features made possible only by chance. I read him out loud every time I speak the name I worked so hard to change. I wonder if he wanted me to be condemned to carry his memory in me, I wonder if he thought that maybe I'd do it justice. I'm scared he can still see me, if he could still occupy my living room as his own, if he could walk by me as a god of little powers, shifting the course I chose to walk for a different one in his direction. I can feel him in the silence that fed on him and I battle it with my own screams. I walk this earth with the ammo of my words, of my sentences. I create like the god he wanted to be, and I rule my creations steadily. I feel the same need for control, I know I'm always just a step away from being surrounded myself in self-doubt, in the need to feed on someone else, but instead I go to the market and I buy a bunch of cloves. Already peeled. Whole. Perfect.

Tamar Thein / Reflection

The mirror is smeared –
I merely took a glance
For an instant,
But all I saw is a stencil
Of myself.
I stand still,
Fill the emptiness
With my reveries.
No memories come to mind,
At the moment, at least.
Through the looking glass
Much is untold,
So at last –
I speak