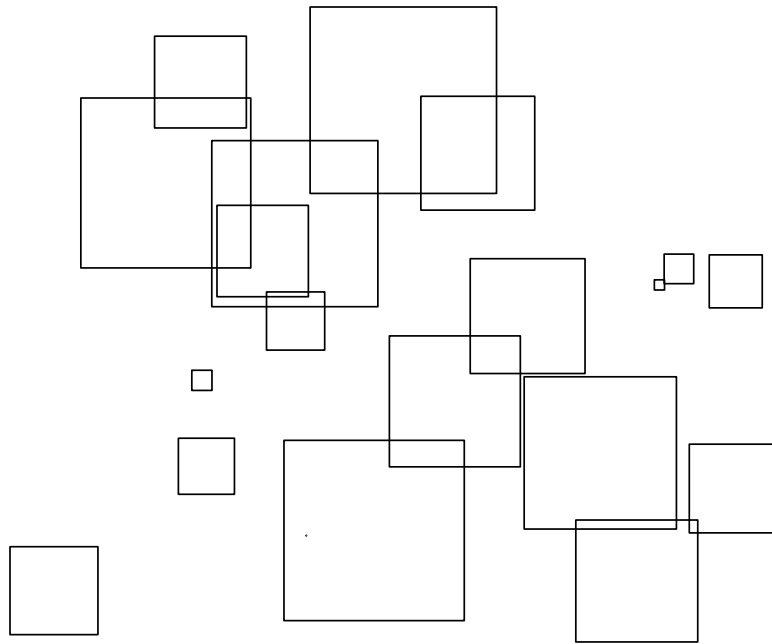


G(e)nome

halvard johnson



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G(e)nome by Halvard Johnson

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for Lynda

Synaesthetic Sonnet #1

grunts, groans, howls and shrieks,
frontal lobes concerned with emotion,
superficially dissimilar things, deep links,
howls of system, dusk of syntax

neurobiological basis of metaphor,
emergence of language, embedding of clauses
within larger sentences, purple like a toxic herb,
first shape the hammer's head

guttural utterances produced by the right
hemisphere, he was green with nakedness when
she knocked, joining words into phrases
and sentences, on a seed and attach basis

Synaesthetic Sonnet #2

and sentences, on a seed and attach basis
she knocked, joining words into phrases
hemisphere, he was green with nakedness when
guttural utterances produced by the right

first shape the hammer's head
within larger sentences, purple like a toxic herb,
emergence of language, embedding of clauses
neurobiological basis of metaphor

howls of system, dusk of syntax
superficially dissimilar things, deep links,
frontal lobes concerned with emotion,
grunts, groans, howls and shrieks

Brazil

Vanishing sheep and goats capture
the beauty of a vanishing planet, explored by sea
or air . . . native people

rebound in the blue of the Amazon forest,
hard edge of darkness, wrist watches
and rings forever lost

street kids, Danish philosophers, and oil company
biologists suddenly appeared in Bolivia
shortly after the World Cup

while the rare glimpses of blue,
a canopy raft, canopy sledge, centenary palm
not so widespread as in southern

Brazil, including Belo Horizonte,
the blue and rose periods . . .
wary natives dodge from sight, paving

stones on a rigid man's body, crack them
apart with a sledge
"Crystal Blue Persuasion"

and other songs of the rainbow
world, across snowless
mountains, communities fretting

about disasters and disorders,
diminishing supplies of
books, candles,

bells . . . a modicum of humor, rainforest
razzmatazz

small quantity, modicum, trace, hint,
minimum; vanishing point; material point,
atom, particle, molecule, corpuscle, point,
speck, dot, mote, jot, iota, ace

of the pan, making a slope paper, cardboard tissue rolls,
tape, blue avocados, bananas, bamboo,
black pepper,

with a talent for vanishing from southern Mexico into Amazonian
Brazil, flying steeply up a rocky gradient,
certain that the power of blue light clearly against

clouds now low and thin, tents pitched on . . .
the unexplained flycatcher, sliding down a jungle slope
for a while, prior to disappearing . . .

G(e)nome

1. Life

It turned out Miami
the real owner of her apartment
once bothered his
long-cherished destinations

2. Species

She reminded him
they too, his contemporaries,
were out there
the rectitude of their complaints

3. History

Time's healing power
 most asinine younger days
 a more general world-embracing perdition
exactly what it was that troubled him

4. Fate

Filling in the picture
 the roots of his distaste
 looked at his wristwatch
 gulping down historical kitsch

5. Environment

An era of belief in progress
educational advances
releases effected only by death
its three-star chuckwagons

6. Intelligence

The sheer brainlessness of his parents
chosen servants of divine
providence
no longer envied the bereaved

7. Instinct

Outside any banal moral codes
 tiny, suddenly accumulating
 changes, absence
of tenderness, anger he felt toward his own

X/Y. Conflict

Entered without knocking
the mere passage of time
 the Promethean shame
 probably a genuine blonde

8. Self-Interest

The ooze of the canals
things more unbearable here
 than around the globe
 long-standing miseries

9. Disease

She kept a sharp eye on market values
 blindly flailing daily
because of the extent he had sinned
 the barely noticed backdrop

10. Stress

Winds of change blew
 on his mother's hand
on his back in a way
 that summoned fantasy

11. Personality

Swallowed up by quicksand
 small, salmon-colored blossoms
 somnambule indifference
a small circle of passengers

12. Self-Assembly

His Armenian aunts
faceless faces, he thought
 enough to convince a few others
making money with the best of them

13. Pre-History

Then the wife
she was ancient too
standards of quality
 antiquated chivalry

14. Immortality

Another gin and tonic
 too well formed
too much pride
 suppressing the spirit

15. Sex

Unreality, American style
a dream journey
pseudo-reality of an artificial past
each outlived life-moment

16. Memory

Two blocks of text
an old, half-remembered melody
he continued his pilgrimage
the glass of the lamps

17. Death

Losing it, moment by moment
inherited life-knowledge
the way he chose movies
made a smarter impression

18. Cures

Stations of the cross
old cars from a junkyard
both touched and interested
doomed to one treachery or another

19. Prevention

Befitting their exclusiveness
the vision
of a shared future
a fit of madness

20. Politics

A tempter was lurking
engendered reverence
reflected in the varnish
of a bright summer's day

21. Eugenics

Shiny wooded pews
 a kind of cloister church
incense tore at his throat
 murmur of sumptuous darkness

22. Free Will

Night fallen on the country
they were passing through
 she held it between her teeth
 silken skin just above the knee

[source text: Gregor von Rezzori, *The Orient-Express*,
trans. David Cameron Palastanga]