

Steffi Drewes

Girl, This Grassy Room

Out of every bomb threat is born a broken shadow shipwrecked diction split darling
or death each shatters at varying speeds a dozing dame a flesh-fed she-ra

what bookish daisy wouldn't give for yolk-colored locks tired I've had my fair share
of astral catastrophes under a blanket remember to always insist on seconds

waste words in good taste drip words that taste good if it wasn't a love of ice cream
or your peach skin catching sun we'd all row ourselves to sleep

which I'm told means birth backwards getting gravel in between our toes
grinding teeth will hardly heal us syllable-wed circles forming spot a flock of

helicopters hunting four armed men hijack a strip joint think carefully
was it Garden of Eden or Venus or just another walk in the park we're benched

but what a lot of lap dogs circling your dread of fur on furniture shelve it
see my pristine paws will claw the wretched city raw will watch you hatch

a pond of plums an orchard oozing vowels spilled ink to keep the silver polished
to carry stick figures close to our ribs until drawn in dirt will mean singing

—*for Peach*

In Terms Of Antennae

Getting real good now
at digging soft holes
and darning my own socks

Worming my way
from hand-me-down hardware
to stitched-in seascapes

Years of swiveling pine stilts
bred sequoia-fed horoscopes

Swift click of the heels
etched in bark
bathed in bronze light

Here I am growing
a giraffe frame of mind

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Backyard cartwheels
for the camera
asymmetrical antics

Taught mirth before mouth
a tongue-in-cheek puppet show
breeds lawn frenzy

Slip in a filthy word or two
say cheese

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Across the road to the heart
to my nearsighted nature

that rabbit's half-life
never made it to the woods

cement sprawling
one by one our body

cartography lay flat
try dodging that memory

•

Developing a thirst for
what comes from shelling

think sugar snap peas
his profundity sparks

sly punchlines pooling
inside our smiles

I've shimmied up a plate tectonic
devoured all my how-to greens

think he'd clap for me now
scattering seeds in a garden, ashes

Once upon an ocean
I found a steep hill

Bodies In Flight

i.

the girl I was
attached to dad's

clinging calf

imagine
moss-covered trunk

swings me

every step of the
little ages
danced

ii.

I make a pretty plastic head bend in dirt

because the bird bath's empty

because my nails need earth
and I am not afraid of worms

six or seven and

so sure he's off catching spiders

to magnify the same dark

hair we both brush nightly

from cotton-spun corners

iii.

Teach me worm wild mushrooms teach me meadow tiny mouse toe

caught peeping leaf and lost breadcrumbs

teach me sweet pond scum sand dauber wings threading dead branches

taut lines make meaning usable teach me

catbird calls not calligraphy

teach me tumbleweed not turpentine teach me

place is a petri dish world fits in hand and how to solve it

iv.

Inhabit the chalkboard where He is named Naturally and argues

The art of all Creatures microscopic Come swamp or sand dune

Able-toothed ancestors Cleaned my cellar Jogs me whole

His bio in the making Bookworms rancid bedlings Raise your right

feeble handkerchief Higher stakes to make the feet need less

Gravity the girl's not adept at Identifying conch circuit capillaries

Sound from a shell

v.

If what is wrong is what you think of me changing how I always thought

I wrote small pictures a mummy catching fire a fourteen-legged horse

a child with umbrella arms it's not matter if you can't touch it textbook born

or brain coat broadcloth did you know dad details speak immeasurable song

vi.

One eye is not of this

who will hunt

reclusive languagemaking

her habitat

what doesn't crutch on equations

say it sponge say it cell say it swallows information

vii.

If fences inevitable then
If marked fragile then
If this side's logic then

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She's blue branch void
Uprooted, radio the animals
Tell them it's not a good time

viii.

Some science finds

unmeasured flesh

goes head first

inherited hook

his own hard-wired

heart chokes

under a microscope

her sources could be endless

no one needs to know

about the buried apples

or ions went uncounted

his soft softening hands

ix.

Blinking father

bitter sun scrapes

heart plugs in or harness me

draw up and empties

balloons know airtight as options one two and three

forget that this is for

chosen method of burial

fossil shard or footprint

number of waking days

rendered in air

his breath begetting

naught

toggles and tremors me

clutching at solids

rusty hawk on a wire weathered barn swallows horizon

what we've hidden in hindsight

half startled with thistle breath his last

beakers break and end's the entry into

brittle

be it all she's still

speaking thin tongues