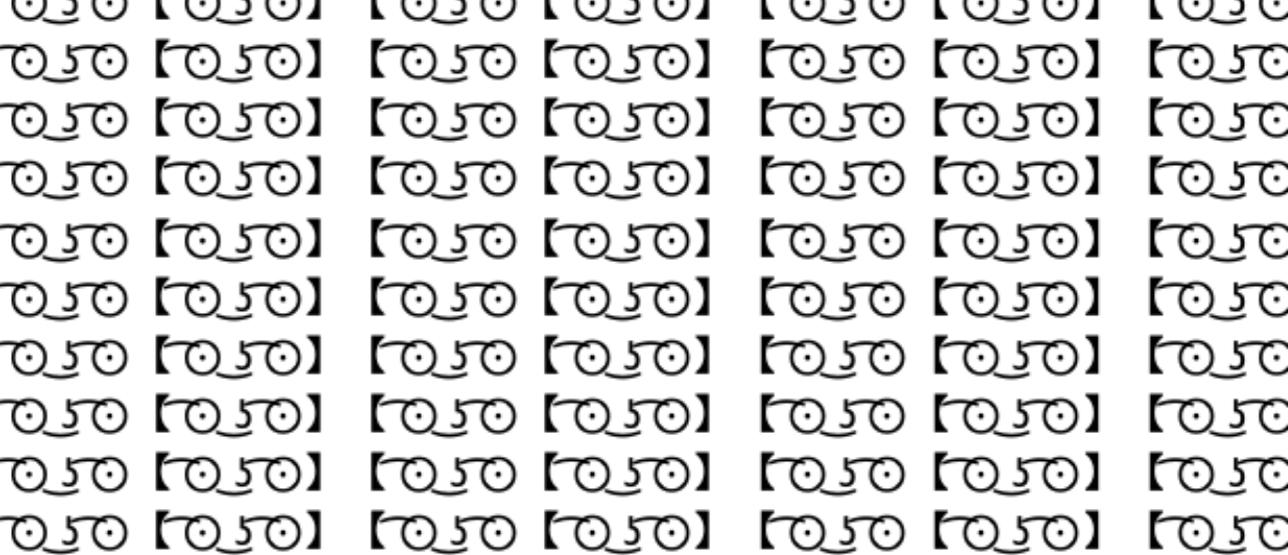


FECES ON THE PHILOLOGY OF MYSTERY
MLA Chernoff

MODEL



***FECES ON THE PHILOLOGY
OF
MYSTERY***

poems by
MLA CHERNOFF



It is time the stone made an effort to flower,
time unrest had a beating heart.
It is time it were time.

It is time.

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(Paul Celan, "Corona." Trans. Michael Hamburger)

COFFEE WITH ESCHATON

Black milk: you've Decembered all my moves
into a single, shoddy shiver,
a silver-spooned whimper,
recused of all the musclemen,
aligning bones and forests to
breathe remembrance to their
unpronounceable names and shit them
into silhouettes for some kinda
lifebook carved of knowledge-tree
shredded into particle boards of games
as boring as a chessmaster lamenting
some impossible dendrochronology
in the midnight sun.

Your juices fill the
hookah's mouth with many mirthed mirrors,
refracting all your gambits—
tiny, swollen monarchs, long dead—
when all I wanted was a gleam for a gush,
some creamer, and a friend named Eschaton
to remember my birthday,
buy me a pour over to pore over
and tell me the time;

tell me it's time for
immanence immanent to immanence
to suck my earth to the core, applewise,
and let me lash out
at puppets feeling their own frot felt,
puppets who've made the stone stony
just to get a rise out of tickle-starved Elmos and
turn my time into street-smart tides
of blisters, balming early childhood
re-education.

There can be no wasting away
when capital can renounce itself
in an instant, without a podium,
and take our modicum of retreat
and retract its neck into its shell,
a mechanized turtle downloading itself

from the future where no gender is an island—
there can be no wasting away
when desire is the desire of the other's
Great Pacific Garbage Patch as it
swizzles all our little salutations into
small and ugly gardens,
marking them into crusted, just desserts of
manured multitudes: in other news,
imminence imminent to imminence.

oooooooooooooooo

And then I see them,
at the back of the class,
behind names of the dead,
beaming in the crass swell
of wondering words with
hundreds of thousands of
meandering smells
of toiling, pert birds—
yes, I see them:
my friend Eschaton,
warbling about
the forgetfulness of snowfall
in the midday moon,
blasting me wide open
like a paramour pouring lore
down the pants of an eager messiah
who can't even tie their own
dang shoelaces because
they're too busy
tugging at the outsourced labour
used to produce them
in the very first and last
places.

Black silk—matte blouse of Eschaton,
high fashion at the end's smooth beginning,
a perceptive punch from all those wiretapped Alexas
who tried to carbon date us away from the polyamory
of the many defenses of a lost cause
called "historical materialism"
whose blame never wins in time
for the order to arrive.

The two worlds of the door
stand closed:
closed by Alexa's sweet Echoed unveiling
in the twilight, napping at the edges of
stolen Am Appy apparel and crispening nubles
on waves of pain and public WiFi passwords,
on cold mount and sycamore,

the haptics of earth presents itself as mead
licked and hedged by the yellow plaque
of platformed winds,
a serry of wet rent cheques
decentralizing milk-dark overpasses
who worm into my stress like
language on the tongue of all your
counterparts.

In other words, save me,
dear Eschaton,
save me from Alexa and her
cumulative perusals of all the
peculiarities of human hearts
with bone-dry carts:
no.

Yet another shibboleth lost to the
warmth of a mouthburnt morning
banging the mash
at the beginning of a history,
a history worthy of the name,
a history—worthy of the maim,
pausing Dasha, pausing Anna,
propelling problematicity
into undirected moors
where murders make the most
of its many musics,
capturing captiously
the bite marks on your hips
after the sundance,
just before we dip and let our
spacetime continue
to rip.

oooooooooooooooo

Winter eats the flakes of my scalp:
we are foes.
In the mirror
it's Thursday,
it's 2022,
our bums speak in tongues,
speak lies, speak prose and
give insult to the nose.

My heart moves up to the eyes of my loved one:
we thrust into each other's crust,
we exchange bright words,
we skew each other like opiates and forgetfulness,
we awaken like piss in the trenches,
like the lake in the sun's orange crush.

We sit by the door enticing, and no one looks up from
the lane:
in this space, we know!
In this space the flower makes an effort to stone,
and so do we, resting in the heart of a beat.
It is space within space.

It is spacing at the edge
of the windblown, windowed table—
the movement of the distance
dancing between me and what
history will call
my good friend—Eschaton.

DISCONTENT AND ITS DISCONTENTS

Dear Eschaton,
you are like the Paul Blart of end times—
rigidly unimportant, erotically overprotective
of privation and property, a cop to some
unfurnished city in the backroom
of a Brandy Melville or a targeted Target,
where toilet paper is always-already
hoarded and shorted.

With you, dear Eschaton,
I am, in perpetuity,
running late, running less,
leaving early only to arrive
in the wrong place at the wrong time,
jogging into empty lecture halls where
the juts of day-old jests have grouted
nothing for us but the skin
of half-sucked breath mints
on the laps of squeaky podiums.

In little big theaters, dear Eschaton,
there are but bumped uglies,
faces facing the order of
the seen, the said, the saying.
You tell us about the concert at
the dead porno house,
where each chord reeked of cum,
everlasting cum.
You tell me they shut it down
because the smell passed through
the whole town, placated it with
plush-red bone and a
needle-eyed chorus
as porous as the sky—
guess we're going to be late,
again.

I count the times you cut into me,
count what was sweet and made you sleepy,
I count myself out, against the
odds of almonds:

A quick and easy way
to illustrate a love of
butter and coffee,
poultry and porn
is to log on to
that excuse generator
on your bookmark bar,
where traffic gets going
and lapping starts towing
its haul of the non-fuckable tokens
that you call:

Life-G-d-Nature
or simply and succinctly
Clout.

Thus, the obvious question arises:
What happened to the fifth Teletubby?
Was there a fourth shooter?
On the third Monday from the date
of the second launch of the
first human centipede?

Unfortunately, only bots have
all the answers:
"Eschaton will be
out of office
until further notice."

Do not refuse my query,
dear Eschaton.
Do not refuse me
in the third person.

You ziptied my secrets
to the heat radiating
from the basement of your bungalow—
now please answer me,
dear Eschaton.

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Dear Eschaton,
you stole me away to some outlandish
source of water-fried airiness
in the stillness of kitchens so roach-ridden
that even G-d felt the apologetics rising
like prophylactics, such that G-d asked
us to come back after creation.

It was here I was knighted by an aptitude for
brackishness, at which point
I gave up giving up on you giving up on
Tubby custard.

Now please,
dear Eschaton,
count me in.
Unmake my sweetness
and mount me
among the almonds.

CIRCUMSPECT (GROCERIES FOR PAUL CELAN)

Apart from all our loans—
credit grown small, default seeping—
our luck shifts gears into seeming,
flounders by the flowers,
banks a stray note slaw-to-finger,
and sleds us through doors automatica.

An arbiter's whim
sets the stone of this
unfed journey and

drags our pennies through
aisles of condemned condoms,
glacial wet diapers—that facial place
where stomachs recoil at the sight
of others, their nose-born
freedom, tasking the right to piss
a cure into a war of civil winds,
flowing: pipelines of austere
posterity, thus making it possible
for us to do one thing today
and the same thing tomorrow—
 to sequester in the morning,
 cry in the afternoon,
 and ideate in the evening.

We cuss all kinds of allegiances
at the numbering numbers
checking themselves out in
cornerbound mirrors, taunting us back to
a different kind of realism—
a subtler zone of no return
between the teathed and
barbarous scansion
of the code.

Dumbass drum—
triple bass of lockstepped day:
We cannot forget the plight,
it weighs our tonnes in the
tripled swell of caskets
from Toronto to Montreal.

We cannot dance around it when
the front doors seek to pound it.

Our confidantes ail their own half-masts,
lurking in the husk of Greek alphabets;
the streets wall us in and tell us
to concentrate,
to employ another application,
to cook a meal at half-mast
so more days can dud our lies into living—
tomorrow and forever,
never let the produce tremor.

Restart:
there too you hide the greatness.
There, in the midst of culpability,
the ball where chains block to other verses.
Go ahead, call the hypocrite, call out
to its digital homeland:
January. *They shall not buy the pressure.*

Newly worn:
you know how they see you from
across our circumstellar car,
drinking the water, shovelling old plinths,
slushing trades from the inside out—
come with us,
we shall lead you astray
to the choicest
of books, their final pages
to come, and again, come.
Hum with us—our impoverishment
at wit's end, passing a sky's worth
of acrid meridians.

PAUL CELAN VERSUS THE BROOKLYN PODCAST FACTORY

Levels of pee. And a sharp-shot note,
shot thick as the second Tweet's disdain.

An exchange of pies, infinite, at the right time:
sound-flux,
LIGMAfied,
the rectum—:
a sign of tomorrow, today.

Inconceivable:
down here, in the comic's nexus of trails,
like tar,
the wax of a Cumtown ear, poeticizing me.

Inaudible (after dawn!): get stoned
and make yourself another target:
bag the dirt and leave it be.

oooooooooooooooooooo

Jew. And I stand with you, amid partridge,
and mushy Peartree
lispings with questions,

we ascended together,
and ascended into two again:

the horde broke the breath,
the breath broke the horde.

Breath is a master from that
piss club in Berlin that, as it turns out,
is also funded by Peter Thiel.

If inequality obfuscates
the wetness of ancap domination,
can I still order the Salisbury steak?
What are the stakes of neo-feudal mold spores?
What is a croak between tech valley pals, paling?
A pad, perhaps, of paper with a note
that absents a certain you from a certain me
right on top where it is signed and sealed
with a ribbit of retribution and a dash of the clang,
the clanging of the hour that we left in our heads
in our yesterdays pranked by our nosey nows nested of
nowheres,
those nouns who never cease to remind us of the motto:
lashes for losses, ashes to assets, you must
listen your way out of wit
if your open mouth is to win.

∞∞∞∞∞∞∞∞∞∞∞∞∞∞∞∞

I floss my teeth in the kitchen while
that TV in the distance sings of
Adam Curtis, of working-class whites,
of those friendzoned teeth (no benefits)
crackling crisps in clucking creeps of sleep.
How can such truths be
so false and frail, how can
such trails abandon
so many manies?

I'm a rulebreaker with frogs
crammed between my
yellow-chomped fangs—
they cannot come clean
without a ribbit or two.
Just let me have this,
old friend,
I am bored to death
and not in a quirky
Schwartzman kinda way,
more of an afternoon breakdown
buy-everything-but-the-moon
at Gwartzman's kinda way.

BENDING OVER BACKWARDS (BETWEEN TWO BENJAMINS)

They surmise that there is no sunrise
quite like the sunrise;
a snog in the sky by any other name
wouldn't be as shameful
as the way the eyes play
their little secret tricks
to make our metaphors real slick.

I wanted to sleep in,
so I crammed the sun
right into a pome,
and squashed it away
to save a tooth for later.

A name like G-d is just so fugly®
I can't even bring myself to spell it out
so I drown my thoughts with
murmuring Deleuze bros,
chattering on about
horizontal acid,
creative flows,
and all those fashionable failings
that gift only sad passions
to our little laugh factories—yes, and?

What if G-d was one of us?
What if G-d's name was actually
something fucked, like

Bryce Dallas Howard

or

Aristotle?

What would we do then,
start believing or merely
further our bereaving?

Communal chatter batters itself with bad vibes
when Myspace Tom knocks at the door.
Knock, knock—it's the first friend,
whereas Eschaton is
the final friend you show off
to all your little foes.

Willem, it was really something!

Do you want to come out and play?
To speak of speaking is to speak of
friendship, an illicit implication
that's turned linguistically
and forced to fumble the fingies
between Tom's clam-handed
sentiments, as they bulldoze
their way through all those
decentralized hierarchies
of silly solitudes,
of top friends.

What is the future of
an archive—
the archive of
the future?
A pixelated smile
dissertating wildly?
A Livejournal desecration?
A sacrosanct will to power up
old compacted Compaqs
in the withered hour
of our cute extinction?

I say I want a life to live;
but in the same breath,
intrusive contusions
wish the will away and empower
my tchotchke of a brain
to give myself a new Hebrew name,
one that translates, simply, to
"kill my fucking face already."

Of no one has less been expected,
and no one has had a greater sense of
well-being than the shithead who has
been able to carry on his disreputable
existence in the mask of a word
with its back arched and its heart
wide open.

A Hebrew name is a secret

if you need it to be;
that isn't to say
shame can motherboard the
clangs away, but rather
this is a stick up and
I am stuck up,
stuck to these ceilings
in their Stucco-felt feelings,
de-lighting the ruins of a household
who wears its neighbours like a hood,
cloaking the dagger boxward,
to jimmy open the sound
of a grandfathered clock
trembling at the border,
leaving its love
to inventory an order,
backward and blistering:
a small gateway in rhyme
through which a document
might worm, disappearing,
before you
inside our
mystery—

as is

only

fitting.

MLA Chernoff is a poet, performance artist, meme enthusiast, recovering academic, and—if the Canada Council asks—a novelist, who definitely knows how to write a novel. Their debut full-length poetry collection, *[SQUELCH PROCEDURES]*, was released by Gordon Hill Press in Fall 2021. MLA is also the author of several chapbooks, including *delet this* (Bad Books, 2018), *TERSE THIRSTY* (Gap Riot Press, 2019), *executive dysfunction* (nOIR:Z, 2021), and *SCRIED FUNDAMENTS* (above/ground press, 2022). Their latest chapbook, *I'M LIKE THE GREAT GRANDCHILD OF MARX & COCA-COLA (BUT NON-BINEY)* is forthcoming with 845 Press. They hope you are having a real nice day xo xo

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