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Morning's Porch

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MORNING'S PORCH

By

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
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May 2014

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THE GRADUATE COLLEGE

We recommend the dissertation prepared under our supervision by

Colby Gillette

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Morning's Porch

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Department of English

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May 2014

ABSTRACT

Morning's Porch

by

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Morning's Porch continues and follows the walking, waiting, watching that begins and ends off the page. It begins “underway,” with two already on the road, and ends in an eye wanting light. In between, childhood, Easter, Winter, Spring, Venice, asphalt, Summer, Fall, sunsets, moorhens, grackles, billboards, dogwoods and cottonwoods walk along the poems. They walk through the poems as they continue to walk in the world. In a similar way, the poems of René Char, George Herbert, Paul Celan, Emily Dickinson, William Blake, Arthur Rimbaud, Robert Creeley, Charles Olson, William Carlos Williams and Pierre Reverdy walk through the pages of *Morning's Porch* as they continue to walk in the world. The beauty of the world and of poetry is at once and underway as it continues to walk on. The poems in *Morning Porch* aim to keep pace as they walk to keep company.

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UNDERWAY

“Nous sommes deux sur le chemin”
Pierre Reverdy

fields are walking Spring
enters Summer

dawn distance
linger down the road

weigh in stars
gravel littered glass

heart's abundance steps
sunlight catches up

CHILDHOOD

what little sleep my hands
still carry carries the woods

J'AVAIS DIX ANS

braced by branches that ran their wave ahead of my
fate, the cottonwood buoyed me through noon. The sun
tallied in the leaves a fugitive face. Another day set,
unremembered our ceremony. The yards grew into new
hostilities. The whispers climbing through the leaves let
go their mark

WHITE LINEN

a bury of rabbits under the table
a day filled with animals
we are sweating perfect animals
cantered in their light

the sun curls
glances down your cheek
bright escape angels
lovely hymns
bent inside this sign

our eyes
atop all this noise

AM RADIO

One day the AM radio
I'd just learned the first words

said I believed in perfect pitch
I already carried

I turned to see the doorway
Various doorways

were looking at me
were asking a question

What will become of you
It was New Year's Day

It was the darkness
the hallway that stared

stated they were beginning
worried preparations

a present beforehand
I'd never open or touch

what was inside me
still longed to see daylight

ran around in a way
I wept mistakenly

said I was sick
I was tired I guess

moving up and down
amazed at the dial

LEFT TO WASTE

“Le grillon ne se tait que pour s'établir davantage.”

René Char

Summer nights through a childhood
the moon is warning
grows the ground dark again

So a window and an open one
left and let in crickets
stark and littered music

Our body's heft at another pace

V

With life a lizard under the skin.
Another birth lifted the rock, inflected its storm.
This was behind a wilder mouth, the porch
back of a first glimpse. The blonde nightshirt rose
her arms arched over her head. I rolled back through the world,
ignored the stars pounding at the window. They wanted
my eyes to recognize every other name,
my heart for their mud. Likewise Spring
delivered the news, neighbors roofed the moment
with their eyes, still joked about the backwoods.
Their story arched over my density was a color
that could sway me. A series of obstacles,
not enough for fun, enough for dynamics.

HIDE AND SEEK

a cow's end
isn't where he should be standing

this happens in the headlights
autumn

and a pumpkin crash
Elida 1989 the future's
an animal that burrows in the ground

a bland field and fallow color
patterns that break between sky

a pumpkin falls

a headlight from the hayride in
goes out in the field

infancy forfeits able hands

out of the dark
my brother never comes

NEAR EASTER

hyacinth alone
last snows uninnocent
corner shade and lower print
entire rabbits drink

a bury to come
sea ghosts rising stare
shining translate
dark under writing pent

paper between ink and table
the air bends
horizons first then mountains
green walks up trees

surprised to be standing
the entire air bleats

AN OWN GOAL IS OUR CYPRESS BOAT

While the moon's wanting a crib, sunny I sit
In the mouth of your wound, calm and avid
Drawing a picture in words of your shoe
English leather, stript and wept in the dark
It was the kind of day that made me think
Desire's inside trafficking: denting a can
Tickling the curb. Light wind in your clothes
On a line, night crosses the yard in five
Different places, the air cries to despite
The humidity, which means the moon
Can't wash away. Some of it stays, keeps in
The tension. My eyes wander, can wear
The look of stones. You were a light rock
I realize some kids innocently skipped
A puddle for toddlers to splash. It makes you
Lost, and makes me, too—a lucky pozzo.

LONG CANAL

News bearing illumination.
As we dry the table we see
every evening finds a singular honesty,
a corner without example. It fumes in the shadow,
it guides in the train. Authority comes
offering its blue poverty and we behave with much noise,
anoint the long dry mountains:
truly fine machinery without
any pilot units resting around.
An old man's laughing cans everything:
history, water, joy. The tips of your hair
hadn't heard. Sparks strike the air. It's destiny.
We see you in a terrific paint, a distinctive rain.

SIGNAL FIRES

live at the angel
bright obedience traces
various hearsay
poise in brimming pails
the sky interrupts
bit particle flies
drown in the lightning
firewood's gap
A's horses fine outstrip
shining whip
hitch overwhelms the rim
deciding night from tombstone disposition
deaf witness deadly weeping
O is thy rider

A PLACE WHERE THIS IS THE LANGUAGE

not water
offers directions
flames lead down the road

open windows staves
a language for sick ankles

green almonds
seen at the corner in trance
cotton dress

too large hands alone
ashes out of this place

ALL THE GRASS

taut strings tendered
faces to our face
sang another gaze
meant fate ran out
a singing fabric
moths ate time frayed
untwined people broke
lay split plums
atop deaf cement
anchored heaven
the sound the days
press out climb up
cordless distorted
voices upbraid
ready to teach futures
token pasts
the stick trails

I'M AT WAR WITH THE OBVIOUS

after William Eggleston

I

a fan a flame fluid
yellow light metal
blades tall metal flame
lighting fluid yellow
plastic bottle fan
an end table fan
tall loose flame
a strip of yellow red
ribbon blue ribbon
right upon the wall
black belt an enamel
coke bottle
red cap black cola
a wooden end table
metal fan lit
lighting fluid man

II

two outlets the socket
three white wires intersect
a little left of center
a bare dirty bulb
bulges dully reflects
the red ceiling
half black trim
the red red room
two walls make
a corner a poster
hot pink borders
yellow woman
and deep blue man
display the usual positions
from behind sixty-nine
standing on her head
the lightbulb

WALKING IN PLACE

Empty on a lit stove Flames
make anything speak Everything
speaks Leg work flares
acts as revelation Dry stainless steel

A spider threads a leap makes
two trees Copper strings light
through the dark keeps me
seeing myself in the window

Warnings to be spent to be
lines a spider leaves Signs
the heart runs in blood
The world as it walks

CARDINAL SUN AND SNOW

tremble of blood lift

frozen thin branches

hearing our absence

bristle light the leaves

LINTEL

is the land drinks up the cracks
swallows it whole
fireworks' child
the darker branches rain
crickets spring
make all directions summer weather
outside light
you step underwoods understory
lightning guides
leaves a black asterisk thin barks
find first the ferns the paths
they manage wildly to water
walk back into grass

BLUE EYELET

after Durer's Owl

near animal blue
lifts the eye aside
abruptly unopens

twice blooms the quiet
look surfaces another
purple figure stands

RED LINEN

sunset music sifts the hedges
is who walks edges speak through
branches leaves
light walking in place
my throat the hedges
upended
breath blowing up thorns
birds flare mouths blaze
highway vine voice ornament
breaking boundary hands
not a grave
empty lake spaces

SLIVER OF FLAX

a year rabid in their mouth
ruttet in each other
we were driven chewed
uneffaced night stopped up
clotted fog

a floating bone
tomorrow's ear
we sheltered our breath
slept till a light
long as your hair
drew us back through the fields
moved a fold
near blue silence

RED MOORHEN

shines the clean dive she leaves sleight
mounts a circumference

WITHOUT REPAIR

incident music grieves the weather
relationship walks
the wild of all living
keeps the world in two

loss in my chest sprawls
granite banks shrill parades
pitch out into space

a bird stammers the air
figures where to build then
shatters in the shade

silence
beyond the window flickers

BILLBOARD SONGS

Aloha Family

closer than the critical blue
we all piss in, the yellow pull,
some surf, we walk to the edge, forget
to fall forward for ever—
the low fares fetch us back, a g a i n

BILLBOARD SONGS

Tropicana

an orange straw or instruction we know
never contemplate on or pulp
images a porch full of IS
bites out of time, aren't you glad
I never said death is a liar

AT THE HEART OF IT ALL

speaks a breach
wades through the living room

the world's war
at home among us

stocked and squat houses
gun down dawn

ready to eat
strangle ties more space

to breed lots
convict lawns

fit each face
sits is a vacuum

IN DARKNESS

“Darkness is more of a feeling inside the drivers.”

James Tate

dearth hiding home
surrounds us with more
instance and name

is blue-black
grackles and sun encrusted
asphalt

is always talking
these things where we are now
parking lots

that walk in the garden
center fails
to disturb asymmetrical eyes

ENTANGLED IN FIRE

our digging shadows
opens some bottom
belief in others
some practice walked in
is praise in your hand
a pace fall hastens
the world pushes with
their horns our neighbors
part angry remiss
demands I or No
in all its branches
our actions hold forth
the sun bare letters
make choice of a stand
put lift in our hearts
know what freedom is
an abyss without
our can and cattle
adventure their lives
I am carried on
find and feel such strife
dresses the garden
we both hold upon

WALKING BACK

“Tis that tow'rds which at last we walk”

Thomas Traherne

red oleander
fits pigeons make
satellites

hinged in heaven
a vision
turns round the corner

is distance
a face hollers in
in shatters

Jesus his profile
two pops and pizza
with olives

eyeing the empty apartments

ROOFTOP OFFERS

morning quit
chocolate easter bunny eyes
one at a time rise
hide under their curve

the day's buoyant stretch
iridescent spaces
share and share alike
sequenced flight for applause

the corner cold rains
wear their own small peekaboos

tuned voices wind outsources

NOCTURNE

all night grass spills rabbits
climb in their throat
green and growing in traffic
a light singing not a song
our little white automobile

little difference a crystal
salt-light fires
sharp sharp stars divide
alphabets foxes
hide their throats dark air

spilled grass green traffic
run faster round birds
sharp sharp crystal a river
piled in five directions
rabbits back in light

ALL THE PLACE IS SAINTS

true blade of grass
no respecter of persons
though experimental an axe
in January sun and snow is
first simplicity

as may not be wielded
poplar leaf

quietly tall earth
manures inside
spreading power and drawing
up all things clear light

one flesh that is
in every humble and broken change
a crystal
more open less done

BLACK PHOEBE

a sieve
of flickering
and sleep

listen!
rings in the shade
it stays

MORNING'S PORCH

“The which do endless matrimony make.”

Spenser

begins in the legs
there are no bridges
windows fill the stones so high
our eyes hardly meet in hers
today lined with waiting
a repetition of peopled names butterflies
stutter along loop completely
a piece a wave
they raise as a house
to hear eternity passing trains
bound for the distant islands
one last name
remains in motion

there are no bridges
the water through passes
the sea acquires an entrance we ride
one iris lights the air
dawn's perfumed figure perplexed twinge
the signs it breeds from hurt
remains pieces of cloud
speak from her shoulders
a line built around quiet
speaks our lives

birthday flames in balloons
launched against sky blue-black light
washed in your body

a line built around quiet
butterflies flake from stone
enter the sea
children almost understand
first bloom shines
binds the days
three-storeyed music
morning's porch
makes of us tall spigots
shadows magic fails finds another figure
it happens in a cafe
waiting twenty minutes through waves
sharp ravishes violent light

children almost understand
planted evenly in names and horizon
shine clear through the dark
happened day's hard silence
grinds between presents
changes directions
shadows wild flowers
haul over pieces of the sea
a small lunch eats at our anger

loose crumbs left over
brilliant colors
broken waters whisper
to clouds

changes directions
marriage makes waves a mosaic
sets space in a tilted line
forever instant
rain walks the waste spaces
the next minute undresses at our window
our watergreen attention
winds ahead
tall spigot silence
our infant eyes pieces
surface in mountainous approach
an iris
lights the air everywhere fits the soul

SLEEPING IS WAKING

a single pane of
and moving, a kitten is
an instrument of absence, glass
grinding animal daylight to rest

while the cat walks, a digest
of carnivorous intention,
guitar strings
linger in a corner of the ceiling

in perspectives asleep
around the rim of noon, a cat's
eating absence, wakes rest
from its single pain. Instruments play

OPEN EYE

blue diamonds the stock
sawed-off they distract
a morning elephant song
the sun meant never to forget

cherry bombs off cigarettes
potty breaks in between sex
is conversation
one brilliant pig rued by the blast

a child's fast pulling murder
the roots bright weeds
sews fights overhead
morning and inside diamonds

death hires time to tell a joke
rifles through the rain and it's past

A MUSIC

whisper's green hinges
open blood and flecked feathers
face flared
the pavement waters pause
a can gleams
this a music
between broken breath leaf branches
plastic bags ripe air
the pink stones
wild mountain edges
lean noises in the morning

ALMOST SOLID

lawnchair satellite sits heaven in
a message a murmur of
breeze brings back the lyrics think
it has happened before in crystal
thick air and cut grass
so as not to end the sun
in a puddle of orange juice
up in the yard first gardeners trim
their aspirations grey green olives
arbor vitae and day
continues its distance with pigeons
grackles coos of turtle doves
distill and loop fine crystal
black mountain pink houses
bleed from the branches we break
and scent the air together
it stands in this dissonant light

SUN IN THE COTTONWOOD LEAVES

a single word from under
splits each leaf-face
a hand a wave
lifted up to another

sifts your speaking
silence the leaves
already lit faces
stammer in sun in the wind

WAVES THROUGH THE DUST

calls through hurried space
the honest delay rain brings
orphaned hours wake
you leap out of its little light
I land in no time
in close and enthralled in your ceiling
your being in sight

want is a museum
this airport I land in
landscapes that leap as they hurry
enthralled and with answers
are light in its ceiling
the rain climbs down
a flower you tie into pain

space delayed
unorphaned in rain
is it here or there I am
you call in moments of arrangement
this day doesn't end
the light curves and you answer
I land when I wake

WALKING

slant grass
the trace of a bee

aims your bent shoulders
lavender presence

what rests you and I
exalted flare

each scattered handshake
a captive stumble

bees in honey
we bother we wake

a wide gait
the landscape that gains

what we walk
in sharp articulations

dawn sings

WALKING AT SUNSET

song a scarlet cut
just the tip of a branch sings
flickers then distance

falls mountain-pitched
a cometary blaze
in the shape of a naked waist

walking I arrive
through the middle of a kiss
wander in bright erasure

blossoming air picks up
what I cut in the sun
lives in this whirlwind

ASCENSION

white linens
lovely golden hymns
in the pull of new noises

and flowers
they make of it a face
enough not to think

all aim and straight up
some fuller breaking
a bruise so bright I can't miss

seeing here
an olive and a robin
fast for their face
brings the world in

ONCE OF BEAUTY

always the wrong direction crickets
spring the mountain's lost
marigold's gone brown and upside down
spiders volcanoes
all day walking never leaving morning's breach
lower lip impatient
breath heaped high the east end stone
a useless linden
the sky reaching from our feet
strangers deer
spill through the local gawk
their animal testament

a day of domes lentil green volcanoes
wakefulness spills
dream script rains
anchored in trees the blackberries
sweet mute ability
kneading pulse
at large and in chains
noon brings another river
our hollow salvage
fireflies intricate make
fields unfold
shadows open recess on the plain

green chains the volcanoes
high grass drags in rain
deer walk down the road
part sentence part bone the sky
between trees
a trace we salvage without finding
wide alarm
continues to unfold
select listening
bell towers and spires
being uneven

DOGWOOD

walks in branches
bird green
earth white shares

this side of dying
night sifts
underground morning

feeds the air
unhealing light
put it in my eye

VITA

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"Sleeping is Waking," *Inter/rupture*

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