

hello everyone! i think you and i all know one another by now, but just because it's too fun not to say it into a microphone, my name's jkatie b funk! during this semester's work, i dove back into a personal history of mine, but "dove" is really not the best descriptor. i timidly poked and prodded, got stuck, really really stuck, consulted the gods and goddesses of personal narrative under the direction and guidance of mentors, and tried my hardest not to drive straight into trite town. i have only now recently come to realize the power that lies in the relationship between fiction/non-fiction, and that science and facts can meld with art and emotions seamlessly. that being said, i want to bring your attention to the screen. i'm going to ask that while i take you down this rabbit hole, you focus your attention solely ahead of you and what you see, while you listen to the words i have chosen to pair with the images. this is only part of a story that is far from completion, with the evidence and words having many more debates ahead of them. i present to you, "forensic/poetic".

“ecdysis” – the process of shedding old skin or  
casing of the outer cuticle

do you s’pose the insect or animal experiencing  
the molting of itself  
can feel it as it’s happening?  
i can consider it a pain-laced  
process of ripping and rupturing,  
or perhaps more of a  
poetic gesture of transformation  
like a sigh of relief audible  
only to you.

summer blues are  
meant for the first few weeks or last,  
not the very intersection  
where middle stands it’s ground.  
but the timeline of this story is  
far from conventional,  
and hardly a clean break from the  
then and now it likes to  
lurk within.

“exuviae” – the skin or exoskeleton  
that remains

[CLICK]

“return to sender” – 1. a common phrase used  
when undeliverable mail is to be sent  
back to the indicated return address.  
2. A 1962 Elvis Presley song,  
the same year my father was born.

this regenerated creature  
soon discovered something was faltering  
in this newly formed epidermis  
it felt all at once heavy and lacking,  
dull, lucidly numb.  
there’s a funny thing that happens  
when you try to achieve perfection:  
all the solid formations in the garden start  
to roll down hill behind you,  
the most pathetic avalanche  
in a doldrums’ town that’s  
not really all that middle  
and by far not enough west.

it is only now that i’ve realized  
every single story someone tries to tell  
is automatically alien to everyone else  
it’s my job as the artist to  
*communicate* it to you  
leave enough of a light on  
and ample breathing room  
to let you inside the cocoon  
of all my facts and fiction

[CLICK]

“golden birthday” - a special, once-in-a-lifetime event  
that occurs when you turn the age similar  
to your birthdate. also referred to as a grand birthday,  
star birthday, lucky birthday, or champagne birthday.

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the date is august 25<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
and our darling is now 25 to match  
[CLICK]  
but even with a mask  
all orange and sparkle  
trimmed in gold  
with lipstick pinker  
than raw meat  
i know a fake smile when i see one

---

that toothy faux gleam continued  
and continued  
bone against bone  
grating away in an effort to look  
[CLICK]  
oh so happy for the newlywed couple  
they'd chosen labor day weekend for the  
big big celebration  
a newfound talking doctor advising right before  
to “try not to drink” and  
“notice how you feel”  
i noticed the feeling of metal  
jutting up all around me  
but not quite high enough  
to waste the jump

[CLICK]

biogeochemical cycle – in earth science,  
a substance turnover or cycling  
by which a chemical substance  
moves through both the biotic (biosphere)  
and abiotic (lithosphere, atmosphere, and hydrosphere)  
components of earth.

the thick shell of  
dull, numb doubt  
finally lifted way  
right along the soggy lakeshore  
that second november morning  
she feared if she declared  
it aloud  
it would come rushing back  
unforgiving and thicker yet  
with vengeance  
her mind was made up  
but the passing wind knew  
she was right to be afraid

---

and now our story shifts  
and boy does it shift [CLICK]

[SINGING]

*“there is, a house, in new orleans  
they call the rising sun  
and it’s been the ruin  
of many a poor boy  
and god, i know, i’m one”*

“yesterday’s food and spirits”  
they’ll feed you alright...

i know for fact that  
i cannot be the only soul in the room  
who comes across certain photographs  
that knock the wind right out  
instantly forming plaque hard dread  
that sits heavydead and  
just above the ribcage

you’re almost embarrassed  
to be seen looking at them  
but you’re the only one looking  
and a photograph can’t look back  
can it?

[CLICK]

---

she worked here almost half a decade  
and the last few years  
held this vantage point  
she could stir the cure  
for whatever ailed you  
sipping on some herself *here* more  
times than *there*  
insisting it was only to make sure  
the party venom was just right

hmm...what’s a party without a little cake?

[CLICK]

do you s'pose the insect or animal experiencing  
the molting of itself  
has to forgive itself too?  
forgive the wrongs of these two folks here,  
a conniving cunt and her letch of a husband  
she whirled in their web almost half a decade  
and all those years she tried  
as hard as she could to please and thank you  
and cover up their falsehoods

[CLICK]

and lie through her teeth

[CLICK]

and take all the egg to face

[CLICK]

and hide the evidence

[CLICK]

and stroke the ego

[CLICK]

and make up stories

[CLICK]

and "understand me! *under-stand me,*  
*this is my image! this is my image and reputation you're the face of!*"  
all of this masking and acting  
till suddenly [CLICK] thrust up as a pillar  
of the very foundation in a house-turned-restaurant  
assembled of 19<sup>th</sup> century splinters and secrets

[TURN TO LOOK AT IMAGE ON SCREEN]:

hmm...pretty sure that was the last moment  
caught on camera of her  
in any kind of balance  
sometimes mania appears a joyful bastard

[CLICK]

well well well,  
no surprise at all, our protagonist finds herself  
on friday the 13<sup>th</sup> no doubt  
it's valentine's day weekend  
and liquor has *only just today* been delivered  
we're far beyond the 11<sup>th</sup> hour now  
and you know she'll stuff this place  
like a roasted pig, hellbent on  
money, and image, and pride  
and all things good and catholic  
so good luck darlin'  
and good luck dear  
it's more than apparent  
and by far too clear  
this our final forensic poetry

[CLICK]

the rest of the night will run on  
the fuel of burnt roses  
and the white hot lightening  
coursing relentlessly through your veins  
you somehow make it through the  
most electrifyingly pendulant  
and razor sharp night of your life  
from laughing and cackling  
to suddenly doubled over so  
the wet evidence physically falls  
straight to the ground  
saving face right outside  
on the snow covered patio  
where waiting inside is a place  
packed full of people  
and all their spirit

do you s'pose the insect or animal experiencing  
the molting of itself  
can see it as it's happening?  
I submit into evidence  
photo 2onefour20-15

[CLICK]

all at once a poetic gesture of transformation  
pain-laced  
with all that ripping and rupturing  
still to come  
like a guttural noise  
audible only to you.

this is the last image  
taken that night  
proof to herself  
you're done,  
you're gone  
checkmate, mutherfucker  
you're damn right  
a photograph can look back

[RETURN LIGHTS TO MID]