



CONJUNCTIONS: A Web Exclusive

Hum

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Gray metal box in the sideyard rumbled low into the warm soft around it. A boy standing on it, leaning to white-painted brickwork, would see, looking through a window, a boy in his bed.

Which one was looking and his whose.

One ear was on the pillow and one open to the air, so half the sounds were up against him, half deeper in and around. A droplet, bottom flattened, beaded briefly on the weave, saw the thread-grid of the pillowcase and was absorbed. Bead, bed, spread: gone, not gone, and as seen through.

Outside, the summer air seemed still. Streetlamps buzzed and floated. As always there used to be something gone now. The streetlamp buzzed as if the sound was made by the glow held in the curtains across the window on the wall two or three feet above his head, window he saw toward the back of his mind, where it stayed for a while after he had seen it with his eyes. Through another wall thicker voices held things as the floating began to relinquish him. He'd begun to wonder what.

Is

and if and away. Water rested on the skin of the fabric as if a now. Now he cried because someone the mother loved had died, or because she cried. This happened behind a film

the now was surrounded by. It's not that there was once no time and now there was. In the beginning there was no absence. Nothing but nothing missing become nothing and nothing missing. Or would become this once there were images of and time to.

In the first fabric, substance and duration were one. With division came time for things. A bubble sensed efficient tension along its inner surface and wondered without words for wonder where it had kept itself hidden from itself from, and for how long, except there was no long. There was only evenness throughout. There had been an arising although it was neither of something nor not of one.

Maybe one can find one's way back to it by feeling one's way down to the layer that's still immaterial as the first firstness is, since it's a continuation of it, as if in time, if there had been time there, where there always never was, or place. But at first there was nothing: at all. There would have been a uniform hum buzzing that was nothing at all if there had been time. There was not. There was neither, and the rising. There was a moment in mind and another floating nearby. There were voices that had been there before but came later, a flat street and a glow humming. Nothing but no-absence and a uniform hum, but it takes time to say so.

Mum-bletongue babbled every kind of sound before delineation numbed it to so many some. All me be pleas until some singled frequencies could seem foreseeable through wheeze, glotdrop, toothtangled spits, and alphabetic whisperstick forming wants and song. Retracing's done to rediscover nothingness's drone, and it went on.

On the other side of the wall she had no father now. She cried about this and he knew or didn't know this. The moment his absence to her, his whose, entered him there was no such thing as time, not anymore. This happened again and again. Back to there to find the clearing where everything seems to have started from from. Floating on magnolia-blossom perfume, above the yard out in front of the wood-and-brick house he was asleep inside of, from the pillow through soft cranium hum, drifting thinner at the ceiling and finding himself inside oneself again over the flat roof, above magnolia branches and below low purpled sky. Saw himself half-sleeping there and wondered where the world was. Snagged unhemmed edge of a beige blanket between his first two toes to feel its soft sharp nap against the tender skin there. Blanket threads trailed off, paused to puddle tangle at the baseboard, thicken into thinner voice, gurgle, rain-spray, ribbon, channeled, rise or lift.

The water the noise and the nothing, the floating the rising the fall, mother and father a third thing, far away and just down the hall. One was quiet the other was talky. The house hovered somewhere between. His walk in the world was quite awky. He grew indescribably lean. The wind in the trees scooped him up from the streets where the humming was buzz. He repeatedly sang to his brain stem to pass the time, to console, just because.

At the centers of the known worlds the unknown worlds. At the centers of the unknown worlds clouds of cohesion humming to themselves. They scattered and slipped. Beneath them someone slept. Under the covers he hovered between the window to the backyard and the small pillowed head. Outside each room was another room. Consciousness knew this but

refrained for a while from saying so. In the hallway familiar eyes paused. A kind of eternity intervened. There was such spaciousness there there was nothing to hold onto. She: see: and only later did the moment of me seem to have lasted forever. Pause hovered now where she just now was gone from now.

Here on the outer edge of the first film I think I can see I imagine I glimpse a glance of light on the bubble's concave exterior, making it appear afloat in the black which takes on a three-dimensional but vanishing depth in the contrast. From here time seems a slight but tight tether the mind relies on to stay in touch with whatever impels it.

Spheres contract, the out-there flattens, flaps, black on black, a slip of maroon along the dips of two-dimensional waves of the far gap. If it's in the mind it exists but is of what. Plain waters released to fill runnels, ideas, insistence, departing and merge, wide flatbeds of straight and surrounding and curve, all that they themselves form in being about to be arriving there, just to tell what was wondered or seemed to be seen.

He lay toward sleep. Through one wall their voices, water, ribbons, wood. Through one wall, behind his head, the windowed glow above it, a gray metal box two boys could sit comfortably side-by-side on, their dangly feet not quite touching the two-fold, up-toward, summer grass blades which edged past the poured concrete platform the gray metal box sat squarely on. Legs swayed and heels bounced against the steel mesh across the front of the metal box. Occasionally the box would thunk as if it had been thinking and thought of something and swallowed, bumped into, paused. The soft steel whirred a shimmy that steadied down into a humming buzz.

A soundless orange
hum eased between head and window. Above the flat rooftop he saw himself above the
flat rooftop. The yard seemed smaller from up here than it did when he was in it. He was
seeing himself looking down at the house he was sleeping in, larger now and outside
himself in the sky he fit into from the outside. Inside each another each, and knew that if
he wondered whether he could be, then he must have to be, but somewhere inside he
knew better than to say so to himself until later, when he could be sure, be sure to be.

The
tapered tail of sleep-brain lay floorflat, tip lifted a moment, jerked gently, absently
fingered the not-it around it, touched and retreated. Nothing at first and then what
impulsed the wave. A moment beforehand selfsound was not even nothing, not yet. A
moment was a bubble with nothing inside it requisitely rounding it. Soft palate cradled
and lips puckered and tunneled. Rain drummed fingers on the metal box that whirled.
Boy pictured boy on the bed inside the room. Threads waved through violet-orange air
suspending him above the rooftop and lawn. Stumbled to a sound he could recognize so
he could start to be or be. Watery voices had carried him there for some time now.

Outside
the window a gray metal box on low concrete platform on a narrow strip of grass. Narrow
strip to wide driveway to street, street with a seam the length of its concrete crest, gray
flatness to walk the block: Hathaways, Goldsteins, Steins, Hellers, Mermels, Levits,
Roberts, down, up, Friedmans, Leuchters, Dows, Chews, Walters, Morrisises, Pfiffers,
Arons. One whom I am was born one time. All parts of me meet on the lawn in the sweet
needles of magnolia rain and streetlight spray-blossom cloud.

Skimmed the skin between
his toes with the blanket edge, finger, palm, and thumb-web, thumb-tip in pucker, tongue
tipping it, circuit, slack, a thread that kept him in the picture, eyes open so he wouldn't
see things that weren't going away or were they. Time eddied around him:

time emit time:
a swirl and accelerating along the baseboards, all possible motions trying out by-product
sounds and the room that emptied itself of them. All around were the waters that sipped
him and a dimpled rounding, world he would see as time came toward. Rooftop, lawn,
head below the glow in the window hum. Who is not here he thought he heard himself
say, but there was no one.

Later what started to seep in, water-colored the window-glow,
begun. Before what music started and startled, itself undone.

Then the idea of
endlessness, waiting and from where, kept on coming, the space of it. The inside before
he first spoke once he could speak, or saw her there, the quiet like noise, waters watching
and the mind of it slipped back, relented, slept. Someone is listening. He opened the door,
voices fuller a moment and stopped. The width of the edge of the door the small hand
held was the gap like a place where he stood in the doorway where their voices came
through from. Hers was the one. Most of what happens disappears. Crossed the gap as if
it wasn't there, nothing in the in-between. Pins inside where the front of his brain must
be, what he'd floated on, he cried, she asked him why, he asked her why he'd had to die,
he who. Her hand across the hair on his scalp, his hair between the skin of his head and
her hand. He could hear himself talking to her from inside of, what, there, where, hand of

her moving, across and gone. Eyes stitched the threads across the fabric on her, cheek and an ear down on, onto, to her. Her hand crowned him there.

Realm of room inside each room, head, hair, breast, breath, toe, skin, ribbonwater, window, shimmer, hum, and a continual receiving of.

Window says I am something which is nothing and will let you imagine going there. Lawn says I am placid availability and will remain in your mind when you've gone. Scent says I interlace the air and become it and tingle. Street says the lawn heartens us. Buzz says we're humming. Hum says gently jagged and runnel in a channeled place. Tingle says we rise gentle and hover, touch the leaving. Leaving says I begin with ending and a memory. Memory says I imagine time and take it in. Time says I see myself become me and diminish as I near. Near says right here. Saying says I crave the whisper of a moment's amplitude and yawn.

Wide streets and clear-cut lawns, squared allotments, and flat. There's a transparent sphere in an emptied-out place, or un-ended. Where did everything come from, can't get down there to find out, float downward which is sinking, swaying you as you as you go. Gone or not gone back of beyond. The floating's flattened like a ceiling against the sky. The seeing him see him there while from there he sees him down below. The metal-box rattle-whir and window-shimmy. Her hand across his hair, his back, some me between me and the purpled sky. Softens the sounds into one to remain fast sleeping even if he knows something from the outside, just enough to equalize, otherwise awake and nothing gone, nothing again, and gone. Only me saying so but I seem to remember him there. Each start starts, ripples back

and out toward. Something missing inside each missing thing. Something like memory, something like time, something like trying to say something to someone gone or what's given, not gone and again.

The blanket's edge, the sidewalk at the grass, hand on hair on head across, the lawn extended right toward sky, the driveway swelled and graded toward the street, its lengthwise seam a continuous peak.

Hum, home, place unrippled enough there's no need to say so. Wave amplitude was narrower there. The blanket was soothing static that bathed one. No recognizable thing had formed yet or emerged. Or one merged or emerged. There wasn't any difference yet between the two.
