

from *Swarms of Bees in High Court*

Nocturn/e/s

As always, there is
our black robe. Our tock-tock clocks
(y)our ga(i)t(e)s and g(r)avel.

As always, there is
this hill we climb—(y)our thicket
of (st)roll and (st)utter.

As always, there is...
just *is*. Was and will be? Y/Our
perennial (k)nots.

In/Somniloquies...

*Earthworms aren't maggots;
eating them ain't planting a
tree or a flag,*

she wants to shout at
her t.v. when some Sue gulps
earthworms from a cup.

She wants to shout at
this idea that there's p(l)ayback
for what's done/to come.

*Earthworms aren't de'-
composers nor dis'traction
from street corner noise.*

You'd think a woman
would know this, she thinks. This thought
a squirrel on a lawn.

You'd think a woman
—there are thoughts of other women.
More squirrels.

Her mother: “I’d
hate you to miss sex”—when she
wanted to be a nun.

Her mother: “I’d
like to hear *this*. What do *you*
know about a man?”

when she wrote home about her lover whose mother taught her to knit.
When she wrote home about knitting, she was still girl-incognizant,

still the girl writing “we are the faces we wear.” Where? In flashback,
still the girl with a face like a movie screen, who knit skullcaps with

yarn red as cartoon blood, as red as Mammy Two Shoes’ shoes, matchstick heads,
yarn red as cartoon lips and tongues, red as bandanas and pomegranates,

red as blood butterflyed across the seat and white of summer culottes,
red as blood that says woman, maybe mother, says watch and count,
red as red velvet cakes she thawed and ate over two months mo(u)rning times,
red as red velvet curtains she wanted to drape around this moment,
red as morning, as bluster, as bluff, as the flat of offering plates,
red as morning, as unheeded signal to stop, as sliced rare meat,
red as cherry now and later, as pickled pig's lips, as bruised knuckles,
red as cherry blow pops, as big red gum, as loitering before sleep,
red as distant Red Hook bees drunk on cherry fungicide cocktails,
red as distant space mapped bought and belonging to brutish say-so,
red as red squirrels, as maples, as districts set for and lit with wanting,
red as red squirrels—north American, Eurasian, native, migrant,
red, as red as red. Ass red as a baboon's ass is red. *Come on. Stop.*
...red as red-ass-red, as the seeping of coulda, woulda...you know.
Red as subjunctive being being the butt of taken and took down,
red as subjecting being's becoming to merchandising lines and limits,
this red-letter day in the red-light district of insomniac night,
this red letter day for seeing red scare the shit out of reason—
red culled from rubia or madder root lent the hermit majesty,
red culled from sawdust of the brazilwood tree primped a pope's robes,
red culled from clay, from crushed cochineal, kermes, from worms dried and ground,
red culled from cinnabar mined by the enslaved, the imprisoned,
red as was here, as becoming, as becoming not here,
red as not and note and gone...
each red a note the ear's noticing and gnawing, notational nothings,
each red a sheepish syllable counted in sleep's pursuit,
each red a sheepish syllable clocking the pursuit of shit,
each red a buzz, a buzz, a buzz, a buzz, a blazon of wanting
red as this loitering before...

Color that
the temporarily color-blind
first perceive—red.

Be utterly fly,
swims through corner voices.
To be is to be.

Be utterly fly.
Be itch, be road, be ache, be-
tween want have—reach.

Color that
dis'appears in early film—
black, boot-black, blue-black.

Yesterday swarms in
the marrow of (y)our thoughts (./.) as
s/he lies t/here (,) sleepless

yesterday swarms in.
To eat or not to? Then what?
She clears her throat.

*What s/he know 'bout
silence? How it settles in
a throat like swallow?*

How it settles like
swallowing water or seeds
some say might take root

How it settles like
feet into the dailyness
of their own falling

What she know 'bout
be coming to mind at times
she think she don't think:...