

ALIENOCENE – SOUND & VISION

FROM
MAGNETIC ADVENTURES



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NOT YET PENTECOST

Flowers known locally
as the “wounds of Christ”
blossom brilliant red overnight
as a woman mourns her
betrayal by an entertaining
confidante. Every flower
on that tree was once
a kiss given. Every
trembling petal in the
faintest ripple of wind
is a flurry of what is.
The sun is replaced
by a penny, gummed-up
with pitch, a diminished
copper glint in the sky
over the coal-yard.
Isn’t the reason you hold
your head in your hands,
at the edge of the bed,
so spirits can hide
inside of it? Else just study
the instructions for your
Aimovig Sure Click
Auto Injector, itself
red and white with
a yellow safety-guard.
Is this where the needle goes,
in the gut or the upper arm?
Though the illustration
favors the thigh: a skirt

is pulled back, fingers
stretching the skin,
ready for the shot.
The sky's a mix of
purple and grey, yet bright.
Rain drops cling to the
door screen. That tiny
grid shimmers.

OLD MUSIC

Others, as perplexed as you, keep
arriving, well into the evening.
Meteors, seen only in the
Arctic, flare overhead.
Now that you have seen them
you can die, on ridge above
a river, at twilight, near
a yellow house where an
inkbrush creates a beyond
pouring over a mountain
beyond which the sky is
a quarry full of jewels.
Your faith was in sensation
as, through quiet streets, a truck
hauled what could be taken,
at a smoky distance, to be
Pharaonic coffins.

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Though I still feel I am of
solid substance, and one with
all that the light elects to fall on,
shadows cut through me
as a hammer breaks a brick
and dust rises. All falls away.
I am inside my body like
Antarctica is inside its ice.
A girl in a dark gown stands
barefoot reciting from the Koran.

A man kneels, kisses her feet.
The sky is dark, but glowing,
but the glowing ice is dark.
The hem of her gown brushes
the forehead of the man, his
lips pressed to her feet.
Whoever is dreaming this is
a ruin shining with rain.
Remarks lay waste to the heart.
Paths to perfection are lost.
Love, do not relent until
every living body is aflame.

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A dire circumstance having reduced
you to an angel in a picture
book for kids in hospice care,
a glass door is carried off
into a forest composed of chars.
On the side of the house once
called the lamasery, shadows die.
The wind hits the sea and stops.
From the muddy depth of
time's flow all your lives
swim up to the surface,
loose from any lesser love.
The Sufis from Istanbul had
welcomed you among
them, taught you the scales
of the oud. It will be devastating
never to play with them again.
Though months later, alone,
lonely, a knock at night.
Seemingly no one, only
echoes of falling fountain
water filling a stone courtyard.

A NEW LAW ON THE EARTH

The elite despair, pray,
floating on their backs
in swimming pools, while
sickness brings about, in
the afflicted, a telepathic state.
Devil winds lash the flames.
(This could be the near side
of the final mountain.)
In hand, a newly composed
mystical tract, in a tongue
the Beloved herself was ignorant of.
The title alone is English:
A New Law on Earth.
Hills and valleys shine
with a celestial ash.
(A phone call confirms
how hopelessly unhappy
you are.) Would that the last
leaves were yellow birds
riding a gust from Brazil,
alighting in a circular
descent amid others
otherwise plumed, red,
burnt-orange, flocks
gathering, discussing,
higher regions of being.
Tomorrow the forest will
turns into birds and fly
towards mountains
where winter hosts
the final sunset of an eon.
The pole tips into darkness.

Light bends around the horizon.
A Norwegian explorer, in 1893,
sees, at this moment, the
sun turn rectangular.
Others have seen, at this
moment, wavering ships,
icebergs, in the sky
an entire bay lifted up
into "column of dazzling
light shining upward
from the base of
a rose-colored sky
the sun itself sunk
to low latitudes but ice
crystals reflecting
the sun upward."

A NEW LAW ON THE EARTH

Vines pouring down
as tiles that touch the earth.
Glory is receding towards
the oculus of the absolute
in interlocking planes
as, looking up, you
tremble to be a slave
of the lord of love, at one
with the white and blue-green
marvel of all that shines overhead.
Such is wisdom. But now,
in this dark, there is only
an orange light flickering
across a black and
white photo: children
dance with upraised arms
beneath a mango tree,
next to the icehouse
at the bend in the river
where your father cut out
frozen chunks of flow,
to be stored and sold.
The family would pray
for a beautiful freeze,
hone the saws needed
for the hard art of hacking ice,
while readying the heart
for the abyss of spring.
Others in town praise
the sun not forsaking
them, but you each
quietly curse the

affirming warmth that
turns your livelihood back
into just a river breaking
silver at the falls.

WITHOUT RENT OR SEAM

The secret stays
secret, but keeps within it
the teller of the secret,
that other you,
abiding, like a low
mist floating
into a hollow, over
flowers disguised
as ice crystals.
A bird appreciates
a seed, studies it.
Brightness rebounds
from the snow.
A higher anonymity
is offered, like the Host
in the invisible

church of
a crucified world.
Then, as now,
now, as then,
a proto-planetary
disk of dust gathers
around a foaming star
considered too young
to have planets.
Nonetheless, then,
as now,
now, as then,
all is coming into being,
consummately
unuttered.
In this mood
your clothes and books
look like things
an estate
must dispose of.

You see them as if
from far away,
a final clarity,
as cherished
faces give way
to those of strangers.

WITHOUT RENT OR SEAM

Yes, the cure lessens desire, but you are tearful and need to be touched.

Yes, a large boat pulls up to the gazebo, you wish the sun was out, but it's not.

Yes, you want a smoke so bad, but there is no one around to hit up.

Yes, they are encased in metal, but they shine in some other way.

Yes, the world began with an assurance, but then qualifications arose.

Yes, I am avoiding you, but an email from you fills my day with fervor.

Yes, the prison was built on a swamp, but then it began to sink.

Yes, the girl scorns playground antics, but delights in ludicrous logic.

Yes, the cops seem lighthearted, but the ambulance crew is not.

Yes, your sons will be at your deathbed, but you will not bless them.

Yes, the playground is loud and full, but the bell rings and all will be quiet.

Yes, past lives stepped forward and spoke within you, but not ones you had lived.

Yes, that was a debacle, but retrospect has lent it grandeur.

Yes, that all would be otherwise, but already it has begun to be so.

Yes, rain, all glistens, most leaves gone, but those left, somber in their blaze.

Yes, crevices in the earth, but today they pulse with a cold grey flow.

Yes, quite alone, but guests are coming, bearing warm greetings and gifts.

Yes, the surgery ahead is arduous, but you will have more life.

Yes, prurient, but then bound and flayed by laughing schoolgirls.

Yes, that picture, a wonderful moment, but now, on the desk, it fills you with grief.

Yes, at the crest of the ellipse the light lessens. But a reckoning is coming.

Yes, you turn your back on those in pain, but such is your character.

Yes, in my mind we're all there, and none have died, but then, my mind wanders.

Yes, my hair is now mermaid length, but a friend is about to shear me.

Yes, even sundered you are still betrothed, but now to your abandonment.

Yes, but they carried black coffins, dressed as corpses, and chanted for justice.

Yes, the pen would keep weeping the same letter, but the hand moves it along.

Yes, the wind helps you imagine you are on the high seas, but you're not.

Yes, the face is hard to draw, but knowing where the sternum is helps.

Yes, all at the table were stunned by the vitriol. One turned red but kept silent.

Yes, you think you have that illness, but the illness is in how you think.

Yes, the dream was a light comedy, but, as it starred a dead friend, you wept.

Yes, rain is blowing in the window, but when you look up, the sky is clear.

Yes, the avenue a stream of ambulances but sometimes all the sirens stop.

Yes, the flock bursts into air from the roof and veer off, but not until you notice them.

Yes, the meeting went well, but you waited a week and never heard back.

Yes, the stars are circles, but a parallelogram of purple glows in the upper left.

Yes, the yes comes to a final end, but the qualifications go on forever.

Yes, you think of yourself as just, but justice would find you condemned.

Yes, you are envious of their intimacy, but they themselves crave solitude.

Yes, winter solstice is the longest night, but when all's over, a longer night begins.

Yes, the door is a photo on a wall, but you go through it and are gone.

THE BREEZE BEHIND THE BREEZE

From a gasping
lack atop
a torso, each
martyr,
each lover
of the One, having just
been beheaded,
sings of
immortal
beauty.

*

Pity the living, who must make due
with words that, nowhere
else to go, bounce
around their brains.
(It was your first
real date, since
your divorce,
a candlelit dinner.
But, the dog got loose,
savaged a nearby
pit-bull, which,
as you pried them
apart, re-clamped
on your arm,
tearing out
a chunk.)

*

Amid what more desolate mayhem
were you to see her, speak
to her, her hair as black
as ever, her eyes,
sorrowful, dismissive,
stricken, aloof, in a dream
where she has slept in gnarls
of deep blue bedding,
in the mire, with others
amid clutter, at a campsite,
in a valley, olive green
and damp, like the ground
it seems she lay on, rose from,
disappeared before dawn?
Not yet pure enough, it seems,
to be where she is now,
but you've advanced,
sufficiently, from
the abyss you
embodied before
desire found you,
so that she might, at
some future point,
be seen, as might you,
as she turns to you,
and begins a conversation.

*

However, transcendent
your love may yet be, for now,
you're no more than a carbonized scroll
hacked from a library, from
flakes once the flow
of a volcano, a scroll,
the ink itself carbon based,
so, the same science that

reads a charred lump
dug from a ruin
won't work here,
because, it turns out,
you, too, are carbon.
Love burns the words.
The words burn the paper.
X-rays find, in the ashes,
no trace of what you felt.
(This because you are
still in flames.)

*

Since, as we are now, the intellect
can only appear as red,
as a punctured screen
thrown into creek,
or as a plastic gas can
in roadside weeds.
The sadly enamored
look around, puzzled, in
a lithium simulation of
the life they thought
they would have,
where a woman
raises her hand
and enters the depths
below the city,
and two immense,
charcoal-colored snakes,
having dropped from
clouds of final grey,
are dipped in bronze, as if
about to be pressed
to high quality paper.

*

The first of the breezes
behind the breeze,
wingbeat of a divine bird.
But now a blue planet, floating
in gold light, and a curved band of
red radiance intrudes from somewhere,
making the day feel more hopeful.
Alas, you ride a current
called the Transpolar Drift.
A Russian ice-cutter
clears a path to the floe.
You'll live there a year,
the northern Laptev Sea,
part of a multi-disciplinary,
intentionally meandering,
observatory, with you
its only resident.
Were you less erratic
in your discipline, more
serenely annihilated in
your asceticism,
the leaf blower
would not sound like
a cow looking at its dead calf.
The unity of all would
announce itself
like light from the sun
beyond the sun,
like the blaze of the mountain of
your true home, where
you were, once,
a falcon speaking to
other falcons, under
the shade of the Tuba tree.