

h a u n t

As Something Fallen From Its Own Naturalness

by Kelly Donahey

Whole. Whole but for the jointed. The bits don't match and I cannot make them fit, no matter how I pound them.

Arresting the motion - they float away. When did gravity need holding together with my imagination?

If I tie the articulations with thread it's almost as though they're solid mass.

And then time stops or at least - but where am I now? And you are there. So very far.

I think that I can see you if I look deep below my skin. Or gouge my eyes out with enough delicacy to survive it.

I want to know what's inside of you. When I look close. I think you've gone the wrong way round and the draft in the middle is enough to scare a German and the damp enough to sicken a Brit. And we Americans - Well, it looks too like an animal.

Perhaps if you should name him?

It must be alright then, if I should name him.

We'll pretend it's an extrusion.

He came out so very perfectly that we can stomach it just fine.

Somewhere there's a heap of too much that's too imperfect to be named. - Too nearly like an animal.

You wouldn't know it if you saw it in the subtle tones of sunset - the color is too ideal for anything to be otherwise and so you see it's just not worth looking, at any other time.

That same shade of fuchsia is cast by my television set on Sundays, when you can't go shopping in Bergen county or Berlin. But the television (which is really my computer) is lovely in that light and it's most egalitarian. It's too delicious not to be ideal. Anything is possible if you desire it through a pane of glass.

Nothing moves me but I move within the pane - my own horizon line.

How do I leave this place? Outside, kissing paving stones to remember their possibility. Velveteen flesh that can only be beyond their ruin.

How they make my movement more when I cannot help but find my footing lost.

Where they do not fit together. - They press me forward, to the side.

It is always there. I know this because I cannot really know that it exists and that lack is its essential realness.

I circumnavigate the room, take the path prescribed by its existence.

If I could touch it, feel its movement - does it move? If I could feel the articulations. Will I know it then or only know the time of it?

Why did you bring me here? And why must you bring - that? In such tiny pieces that you'll have to batter me by tapping out the message on my skin.

Mind the gap though, and the gash, as I go slipping through the panes. You are more outside than exterior, which can hardly be allowed without my say so. — It's just such a pretty color.

The funny thing about it coming to life is that we're frightened of it becoming in our world and give no consideration to its being taken away from where it was. Is its coming to life its own suicide? Its quiver gapping wound?

Iron oxide doesn't shimmer at the fissures. If it can rust though. - I'd rather never know if it can decompose.

You let it grow so old but it's hardly been long enough to rust except we let it. And now we shouldn't ever see it through the scaffolding, the constant newness of it.

It squirms, shorn up on unsteady ground. Too very like itself. Its every ooze entombs.

We must only see it in reflection, the bit of the thing that wouldn't blind us. I never look at you. Just as I always think the opposite when staring at the sun.

Inside. I cut the stones so that they are weeping and nothing was yours anyway. You've trickled beneath the pavement.

I cannot forget you; it's just that you're too soft to tear.

You refuse to let me near, and I cannot reach the depths of you since I am there already. You cannot crawl inside your own reflection.

I dream of you again, so that you can steal it. Otherwise, what's the use of it existing? If I cannot touch it or leave it to shatter beyond your hands. If it has no mass - what's the use of my imagination.

Can you see where you are tucked away? Scrape out the tether of your eyes so that I can return them. - Or some near approximation.

It's too sticky. But you could leak inside it if you let yourself get absolutely sopping.

Or bury the collapse below your skin.

It's too slippery to grasp. The moment that doesn't exist because it was never made. You cannot blame me for the weight of it. — But it's such a lovely color.

I want to know everything outside of you so that you'll stay there.

Would you like to know the story of your birth so that you won't have one? Come into being at the risk of your un-being's demise?

I stroll.

Why did I bring you here? Imperfect objects really are much easier to climb. You're too smooth and I cannot find the edges.

You can only see it through my eyes - what a monstrous notion. Even Frankenstein's monster got to keep them once he had them. He never had to share.

Isn't it funny that he frightens us so. Not a whole of parts. But as articulations. How terrified we are that he moves.

I'm never afraid of sharks except in chlorinated water.

Could we cut him perfectly along the seams? Really see him in that ruddy mess.
And then revive reanimated dead. The scent must be sweeter.

Would he still have a name?

He lived so well before we started looking and nous avons bien mangé parce que nous habitons en Angleterre. But to be English isn't England. You're being far too topographical.

I cannot find my footing among the unctuous accumulations or perhaps I cannot find the thing between the gaps. Ignore us anyway. A gentle tapping will empty out the seams.

And seep? I am left only with this mass that I am holding.

If everyone outside the British Isles believes it's German, who are the French to say it's France? An animal cannot escape the damp. I tour around.

They say that Balzac could explain a man through the description of his rooms. I have forgotten the voice of the creature that Frankenstein begot. - I remember only the bit of him that will not decompose, only his reflection.

You cannot see it but through my eyes - Or at least the ones I give you which, you'll have to pass around. — It's such a pretty color.

† Kelly Donahey lives and works in Los Angeles. She was born at Research Hospital in Kansas City, MO. Working primarily in photographic and filmic media she critiques the archival formations of hegemonic American culture and the art world through a polemic of poetics and catastrophe. Her ongoing research practice is attentive to: the dialectic of exhibition and obscurity in human exploitation; administered culture and conformism; ontology and experimental modes of consciousness; the sex which is not; colonialism and lived epistemic space; nationalism and the repression of collective memory; pseudo-Marxism and the commodification of anti-capitalist rhetoric; anti-intellectualism in contemporary art criticism and theory; history and freedom; radical sentimentalism and nostalgia; the sacred dread of the aesthetic, and the interrelation of landscape and technologies of control. She received her MFA from the University of California, Irvine where she taught in the Digital Arts Minor and her BFA in Photography from the San Francisco Art Institute. She is a current student in the PhD Program in Visual Studies at the University of California, Irvine. <http://www.kellydonahey.com/>

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