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From "Apart"

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small bees crawl from the ground by the handful. Dusty brown, not gold. Anxiety ticks its way. Processes don't unfold, but whirl. Days panic and stack up. There are no calamities, only more bees. Equilibrium's dishwater, turpentine. Turpentine's dishwater, a serpent. Road blocks are permanent despite the flagmen

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always inside inside a car. Even with the windows down, the fields and trees and people squatting in their yards are impossibly distant. You say, *the burning stump by the side of the road is still burning*. The children shift to watch it smoke over the split lip of the door. You are writing a letter in your head, a rubric of disavowal, at high speed, so you need to drive faster. The back seat lags behind you. The car might as well be a limousine with all that space back there. The letter you are writing spools out in loops and jags. The road gaps and buckles. Distantly, you hear the children say, faster, faster

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at night, there is a continent below me. The light is different. Yellow and watery like children's urine. Tire fires still smolder. Mountains hang upside down, pendulous blue lobes. The Sea splashes down on my face when I look north. The Southern Cross is nothing etched in air, but once, by accident, a lunar eclipse like a slow

amber bruise. Too slow. The world really was ending
and no one was there to explain it. Some were dancing
at a wedding behind me. Late night white men with
burnished faces drunkenly incanting, how can we dance
when the world is turning? The throb and their chorus.
I close my eyes behind the security system

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in the archives, boxed documents. Acid-free or not. In the
aquarium, box jellyfish pulse up the darkened tank.
The sign says they'll kill a man in three minutes. Spineless
anemone, unfurl the tendril. Predatory, rudimentary,
medusa, paralysis. (Behind the touch pool's watery arc,
the smiling docent days, *on your hand, only a prick.*)
Catalogue the earlobe: pinna, crura, scapha, concha,
intertragic notch. Close my eyes and. Paper, tissue, ash.
Come for me at closing. Cover me with clippings

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nobody, who are you? A fucking nation? Walcott I'm not. A
roseate universe, subcutaneous nipple, prismatic cd
playing cum and dust and Oum Kalsoum. National
identity's inevitable as sand, blood, a dark juggernaut
MLK refused to accept despair as the only response
to the ambiguities of history, but I can't, today, so far
from you, O Canada, who is asked to represent it.
Which I's slip the noose? Salim Halali's heart may have
been a foreign country, mine's a minefield for you,
h'bibi, skip the stones, centrifugal archipelago, ruin

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in time, confusion's nearly constant (like a lover), or at least recurs, a lunar phase where absence is illusion and sequence limns some consolation. To chart this fluid oscillation will take both story and aphasia. To say, *if I were him*, at once irreverent and divine. How can we disavow the godlike while still kneeling for the gesture? Give me some chirotic time, outside chronology, in front of the unknown, where explanations break down and experience meets documents in a longing for redemption. Then soak your kites in kerosene and let me be clear, this story twists on the stake of me and mine, where families bleed into nations and an ethics of identity meets multi-lingual trouble. Or leave that all behind and consider forgiveness (rhetorical or real) as I break into

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the necessity to explore form a bore Namibia's not a border, nor a country, but a cloud from 1915 forward, territory's contest goes under in some stories and some lives, both from above and below. Some days the farm is just a farm, some days an outpost, or a Bantustan, some days it is making someone's fortune, for my cousin, he was fighting on the border meant Angola. Namibia there, not there, Angola a light to die for. He saw action, the fraction, that divides, then what acronym remembers the other coast's Renamo v. Frelimo, a double dutch vision of the finger in two dikes, an opening for a joke in my world view from a satellite tracking you as you smoke in the back yard, relief a beeping star tracing yr beautiful assassin dreams my love, zoom in

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down a line of brown river, an eaglet screams a heron, where
your legs (logs) look in the same direction, quiet as
your walk, a stutter's a sign of desire. Or not. The
birds: the thread that's pulled. Gravel is (our) language.
Gravel is (no) language. Wakoski said *connecting past
to present is what earth is all about*. From that history
to this eros isn't only apparatus. From chaos to story
and back is meaning's green oscillation

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shun pain, say, 'tis of thee hegemony's damnation sings, of
coin and stamp's economy where city pools will break
yr heart while flags of the world are a placemat, or a
decal for a soldier's bloody hummer or caspir. There's
no letter stamped Camp Delta is an offshore world
outside the law of flowers. Still, we live both there (tied
to a wheelbarrow, in an orange jumpsuit) and in the
land of the free, some dual zone where *culture abhors
simplification*, where an Olympic orgy of simultaneous
reification and dissolution of nations fucks beneath the
torched bleachers, the *zone of occult instability where
the people dwell*, vertiginously, where everything must
be seen at once