



LIGHT ON THE LION'S FACE

A Reading of Baudrillard's *Seduction*

Tim Van Dyke

Argotist Ebooks

Cover image by Jukka-Pekka Kervinen

Copyright © Tim Van Dyke 2012
All rights reserved
Argotist Ebooks

Some of these poems were published in the following journals:

Muthafucka, Typo, The Nazim Hikmet Poetry Festival Chapbook, Red-headed Stepchild, Mipoesias, Cannibal, and E-ratio Postmodern.

A sound collaboration with Brian Howe will feature several of the poems in this collection. The collaboration is forthcoming.

LIGHT ON THE LION'S FACE

LET US ALIGN THE LIGHT ON THE LION'S FACE

The shape of light the lion's face
shape of a lion's face
face of glory light-breath
 the lion
breathe in the light of the lion
 breathe and break a face

below the seen pulse to pulse
its rhythm to rhythm's
erratic ratio erratic
 synapse
desire
 to desire
a desire to proximity to sense
to motion down
 to tilt down to
 perceive
in the presence of perception
an acquiescence to the sundering it proffers
to press what is sundered to light—

to breathe and break the lion's face
to breathe and break a single face
to breathe through a single face the lion's face
to break its face with pieces of your broken face

face flakes skin flakes
your broken face
slough-face
Lion-face
Lion of burnished asters-face
Lion at edge
down below
down there: screams
happy animal
I anoint your head
I say **glory** to you,
 glory
 Shivite
 glory
spill out and up
through
and through the skin
onto the ground where we walk—
onto calamity
the rock face

of a fire Blest—
imminent vibration dropping
bound to each body
rapt attention to boundary
body
bound to populace
naked
sitting
lying awake
seven eyes on the rock
who has seen
where is the other
in lamplight
it digests hard iron
 glory
at sky-turn, ellipse,
endless morning
endless flesh
what would now disappear
the light
the temple of the skull
full of tugging
 black holes

FOR EXTRAVAGANCE HAS PASSED INTO THINGS

the curvature of things
the way things try to disappear
in a screen of ecstatic refraction
the lion's face suddenly hidden by a cloud
the sun bearing down the moisture
my air is also glottal
no same note
but a release of tension
as when a lover straddles my neck
isthmus music plays
splayed words within a fish jaw
the suddenness of entry into another way
what dissolves truth and illusion
the lion's face, painted black, radios code to the hymnal
and, so doing, learns how to inhabit what is sung
manifold are the durations one becomes
the lion's face, of that which pertains to its moment,
fires, tilts, blasts, pounds, stabs, strafes, kills
death's little rattle
could I but taste the joy
cowboys riding an atom bomb
huffing syphylline letters, the lion's face,
This is war to extinction
cipher, work over the illusion
make it unreadable as a lion
makes of itself an erasure of its body
a false transparency
the lion's face shifts, cuts, it vibrates
the lion's face violates
breaks through rooms, letters falling in dense smoke
the lion's face calls to open fire
to spread terror at a stroke
of an end imperceptible, of having no end
the lion's face appears, an appearing
that emerges from nothing
what protects us from being
and disappearing
it protects us from death
all that is determined is condemned to be exterminated
lion's face like a virus let loose in the city
like a leper wrapped in parachutes
Sound and Cerement of the body
what relinquishes itself
and unravels, revealing each wound—

THE LUDIC IS EVERYWHERE

Behind the screen of an ecstatic refraction
there is no longer any play—
no stakes, illusions, no representations
simply a matter of modulating the code
playing with it as one plays
with the tonalities and timbres of a stereo system—
No more Transgression, no more Transcendence—
Seduction in its radical sense: as dual, ritual, agonistic,
replaced by the seduction of an ambience,
the playful eroticism of a world without stakes
the cybernetic absorption of play into the Ludic
the polemic that organizes the space of the Law
the digitality of the signal, the polarity of the sign—
that we are living in a supple, curved universe
that no longer has any vanishing points—
The lion's face outside the domain of pointless science
The lion's face swallowing islands like pennies
The lion's face formed of the play of a ritual
The lion's face formed of that past, cruel order,
where the risks were never ending and the stakes absolute—
The Ludic formed of sheer aimlessness
The Ludic formed of the play of the Model
against the demand for the Game—
but even as transgression, spontaneity, or aesthetic distance,
play remains only a sublimated form of the old pedagogy
that gives it a meaning, assigns it an end,
and thereby purges it of its power to seduce—
one can no longer speak of a sphere of enchantment
one no longer speaks of seduction
instead, an era of fascination begins—
The lion's face an amnesiac
the amnesia consummated
in retrogressive fashion
raised to mass dimensions
The lion's face of forgetfulness, liquidation,
an annihilation of memory and history,
the same recessive irradiation, the same
echoless absorption, the same black hole
as Auschwitz—
an extermination that would then be deployed,
dissuaded by death, dissuaded unto death—
The lion's face a postmortem emotion
a tactile shudder that will enable them
to let the catastrophe slip into oblivion

LET IT BE RENDERED IN THE LIGHT OF A VISIBLE ENERGY

Let it seek its own death
Let its solitude be profoundly seductive
for power seduces
and seduction is stronger than power
bearing down the heft of Appearance
Kīrttimukha, Face of Glory, (*Xibalba*)
eats first his hands and feet, then his arms and legs
then his belly, then his chest, then his neck
until, inhabiting an obscene wall,
he digests himself as part of the unity of the world
the obscenity itself burns and consumes its object
the obscenity awakens
the obscenity within a dream of the sunset land America
where it is honey
where it bears up under the mind of each war
where its smallest rage brings water
the lion's face out burying the dead bird
the lion's face burnt from too much sun
The lion's face a cosmic star
that hunts by means of its own visibility
each distance implied by the gaze it takes
shot at it but missed it was noon it was just out of view
the light on the lion's face was an almost thing
it is scooped out now it rests on a dream its nature is nothing
there is no nature not taken its no-nature has none
a genocide of small things
its force mouthed over a shallow trench
you are its ferocity and I am its face
the bird is bone in under a minute
the bird is bone
the lion's face among rejectamenta in the earth
what is torn from the body and carried back
(*Xibalba*)
and in its synthesis, in its ceremony
a delirium of the perfect restitution of music
bodies traversed by a gaze sucked in by a vacuum of transparency
all the energy of the dead object and its last rites
passed into the living—

THE LION'S FACE WITH A LIMP GESTURE TURNS CORROSIVE AND EROTIC

a body is worked by artifice
a body seduced, a body
to be seduced, a body in its passion
separated from its truth
a body delivered to appearances
as a principle of uncertainty
The lion's face seems so beautiful
as it appears
so completely put on
The lion's face walking choking down childhoods
Take me to your room and fuck me
With tree limbs and lye, with magma
with harsh antiseptics poured into my asshole
with lilies, with meat cleavers, flay me with bullwhips
fuck me with a statement
that emanates something more than beauty
something more sublime, a different seduction—
a one-eyed doe eating grass out the window
is a totemic gesture of innocence and violence
a rapist skull-fucking a deer is part of a pantomime
at both ends the sign is fragility
the doe is fragile in its new environment
the rapist refuses to be seduced
and there is deception in all pantomime
whether it be "flutes and feathered fans" or "shields and axes"
The lion's face both a drag queen and a real woman
The lion's face like deer children
fresh out of their placenta, laid on white linen
in hospitals, who gouge a home into my stomach for fun
and devour my body, much the same
as when a voyeur devotes himself to a body *to be devouring*
a body's gaping voracity
The lion's face a throng of yellow and red stars
The lion's face of heart-shaped guts
The lion's face smelling like rotten mangoes, bug-eaten from the inside out
forms transversal to every power, the secret, virulent forms
that make everything speak, everything babble, everything climax—

THAT WHICH LOOKS ONTO NOTHING HAS EVERY REASON TO BE OPENED

(for Pyramus and Thisbe)

“Coming there, too late, saw tracks in the dust,
turned pale and paler, seeing the bloody veil.
One night will kill two lovers, and one of them,
most surely, deserved a longer life.”—

The lion’s face is a superficial abyss

The lion’s face is an abysmal suture

The lion’s face is the yaw of a chasm

The lion’s face is a sometimes death—

Death a rendez-vous that restores chance with a chance gesture

Death that advances a command, an aleatory sign behind

which another conjunction, marvelous or disastrous, remains to be seen—

At fault, “I am the murderer.”

I am the poor girl told to come here in the night, to all this terror

to see the lion’s face in its claustrophobic den

and what beauty— the paths of flesh combed over in the terminal night—

“the height of seduction is to be without seduction”

The veil reduced. The face of the girl— the eyes—

the delicate tension of the gaze—

it has no meaning, its meaning being exhausted in the gaze

as a face with makeup is exhausted in its appearance

in the formal rigor of a senseless labor—

The girl’s face seems so beautiful as it appears so completely put on—

The lion’s face is without referent

The lion’s face is an empty shimmer

The lion’s face is senseless

The lion’s face is absurd

The lion’s face is emptied of its meaning by unflagging repetition

To wear it out, to tire it out in order to liberate its pure seduction

(such is the strength of incantation)

The lion’s face is a source of vertigo

The lion’s face is both Narcissus and the pool

The lion’s face is both boundary and absorption

The lion’s face is a hole in reality, a transfiguration

The lion’s face, its eye an immediate attraction of a song, a voice, or scent

“I was not here before you, to protect you.....”

“come tear my flesh; devour my guilty body,

come, lions, all of you, whose lairs lie hidden

under this rock.” To lift the veil and take it

into the shadow of the tree. To hear the lion

utter the discrete charm of a silent and immobile orgasm—

DEAD SEX OBJECT

Everything obeys the rule that dictates the sacrificial
between men and their gods
cultures of cruelty, relations of recognition
and dispensation of unlimited violence
entirely given over to an ephemeral but total credibility
as if bidding with themselves
leaving only the ultimatum of conversion
the absolute need to be believed, to disperse all other belief
in an hysterical combination of passion and assimilation —
The hysteric has no intimacy, emotion, no secrecy—
The lion's face succeeds in making its own body a barrier
a seductress paralyzed
who seeks to petrify others in turn—
That which would make us believe, make us speak,
make us come to things by dissuasion,
by suicide, turning suicide into a theatre of the Mind—
What remains immortal in this spectacular domain:
signs without faith, without affect or history,
signs terrified just as the hysterical is terror—
It invokes a passion for an abstraction that defies every moral law
To be deprived of seduction is the only true form of castration
The lion's face is a mirror that has been turned against the wall
by effacing the seductiveness of its own body—
The lion's face that draws our attention to Death
not in its organic and accidental form
but as something necessary and rigorous
the inevitable consequence of a rite that is violent
as the rules of a game are violent—
To seek one's rights over that dead object
with which one appeases a fetishist passion—
Reclusion and confinement, a collection unto one's self
The Collector is possessive
and is not distracted from His madness
His love, the amorous stratagems with which He surrounds it
that which emanates from Him, the dead sex object,
as beautiful as a butterfly with florescent wings
immortal and indestructible, as in every perversion—
The Collector has enclosed Himself within an insoluble logic
One can then only reward it with death
like the sun refracted by different layers of the horizon
crushed by its own mass, no longer obeying its own law

HE WHO IS NOT PAINTED IS STUPID

The body is covered with appearances—
illusions, traps, animals and sacrifice—
what Artaud termed metaphysical—
a sacrificial challenge to the world to exist
for nothing exists naturally
things exist because challenged
and because summoned to respond to that challenge—
The lion's face springs forth two long ganglia, whirls and turns,
mourning the late sweet chord—
Not a simple appearance nor a pure absence
but the eclipse of a presence—
a prism of another space, a refraction,
a flickering, a hypnotic mechanism that crystallizes attention—
The lion's face undoes them all by making of itself a shimmer
a reworking of the body
to provoke and deceive Desire
to burn for a moment and then flame out—
as if to say, "Tell me who I am"
when one is indifferent to what one is
when one is a blank, without age or history—
a gesture that creates a unity in the texture and color of the skin
effacing the eyes behind more beautiful eyes
cancelling the lips behind more beautiful lips—
to be attentive to one's body, to care for and paint it
to set oneself up as a rival of God in an ostentatious ceremony,
the signs gravitating irresistibly around each other
so as to reproduce themselves
as if by magnetic recurrence—
that face— a dizziness,
a loss of meaning, a sealing of an indestructible pact
where all resemblances have vanished—
rituals, masks, designs, mutilations, torture—
all to seduce the gods, the spirits, the dead—
absorbing all expression within its own surface,
without a trace of blood
so that death itself shines from its absence and insurgent cruelty,
the unspeakable cruelty of silence and its outrageous calculation

THE REAL IS RELINQUISHED BY THE VERY EXCESS OF ITS APPEARANCES

Everything is artifact
mere extras displaced from the scene
fruits, meats, or flowers—
the intractable opacity of Presence—
of an appearance prior to reality
(this mysterious light without origin)
something other than the sun shines on them
a brighter star, without atmosphere, without refraction
their shadows do not move with the sun
they do not grow with the evening
they appear as an inevitable edging
without movement
they suggest a black sun that appears as hallucinated Death
a seizure of scene and space—
Death illuminates these things—
in its privileged position the gaze turns on transgression
The lion's face is a kingly prerogative
a logos-thanatos object
a fragment like a nucleus of an ephemeral language destiny
The lion's face is a fatal particle
that shines an instant and disappears
a convergence of every point of view
an expansion of intervals, of pulsations—
The lion's face is the darkest zones of the sky
as Death's gaze is an exaltation of one's own image—
the equal of that of the suicide motels—
where I woke up today, my corpse beside me,
and the mirror showed an ideal mirage of resemblance—
The lion's face is letter-vomiting
drunk on the entrails of its own body
its own illusion – which is perhaps the illusion of its own death—
enchanted, I take on its desire
I come under the same lion and hunt for vestiginous blue orbs of the sun
I come as a suppliant to the knees of a fire-raked pool
I come to seduce the sea, to make it die, and reconstitute its illusion
as some milk soaked orifice of my dead sister
as anointment on the constellations of my father's wounds
as animal-psalm, the hands beating the ground like un-tethered hooves—
what comes from their not having a place in the sky

A GAME FOR OUR SKELETONS

To rid oneself of the idea
that all happiness derives from Nature
and all pleasure from the satisfaction of a desire—
The lion's face is not its Subject
The lion's face has no form of utterance
one does not decipher its meaning
nor derive pleasure from its comprehension
only the observance matters
only rituals abolish meaning
the endless, reversible cycle of the Rule
opposed to the progression of the Law—
to pursue the game to its end as one pursues a challenge
to proceed without believing in it
that by choosing the Rule one is delivered from the Law—
such is this game's fascination—
The lion's face remains composed
in a crystalline passion that erases all memory—
The lion's face shall be void of sin
as in a game in the jungle where Death
is the only inexorable ending—
the barrier between the finite and infinite insubstantial—
The lion's face is not a ghost given over to its own
ephemeral existence; like the insistence of a sweet
perfume it is both trumpet and bed sheet
of its own sorrow, if sorrows were the
rigorous endings of an opportune victory—
the stakes are constantly being consumed and reversed
while the Law floats above scattered individuals
like a terrorist of logical intent, a terrorism
that can only be dissipated by arbitrary signs
by Ritual itself, each sign tied to the others
not within the abstraction of Language
but within the senseless unfolding of a ceremony
where they echo each other and reduplicate themselves
as new diagonals of meaning, new sequences
engendered from the untamed flood tides of desire
the sudden, intensive gravitation of space and abolition of time
that implodes in a flash to become so dense that it escapes
its entire course, spiraling inwards towards the center
as if by magic—
a ritual for the maintenance of the world
where everything is linked and does not seek to fool us

AN UNBRIDLED IMPROVISATION OF DESIRE

Of Continual Provocation, Of a Game—
there is no question of belief in all this—
Game as chance, as always a challenge
freed of combination, an immanent drifting
a constant dissociation of orders and appearance—
The lion's face establishes a Law
against the arbitrary rituals of the Rule
because he no longer exposes himself
to the seduction of games
because he refuses the vertigo of seduction
cheating the game's own artificial death,
its own space
it resembles an incest:
rules broken to the sole profit of an unnatural body
The lion's face cheats in order to escape seduction
The lion's face cheats because he is afraid of being seduced
and reducing God to nothing
is always a source of pleasure—
the lion challenges the sucker
and the sucker challenges Fate
while a dumb faith remains—
a challenge to God Himself
God's very existence,
a challenge to God to exist
and in return to disappear—
One seduces God with faith,
and He cannot but respond
And He responds a hundredfold
by His grace to the challenge—
Belief being an absurd concept
a facile tautology that hides from us
the fact that our actions are never grounded
in belief, but in stakes, in a deadly game—
the resumption of ties with these other circuits
of unmediated and immoderate bidding
which concern the seduction of the order of things

TO BLESS

to bless how, how not bless
how not consent to the unblinking eyelid of breaking,
shunted postlude to the body's upchuck of landscapes?
The lion's face turns monstrously visible
(to liberate, to give pleasure, to give speech to)
To materialize by force what belongs to another order
for there is never a body, the body is "all face"
too brutal to be true, too impolite to be dishonest
obscenity as challenge and as seduction
the lion's face is "all the sun stored on the wrong side of disaster"
as the primitive, too, seduces the language
which has as its concern the sacred horizon of appearances
"sacred suit of each beast the boast solemn awe beholds us extatic"
It is substantial. *Substantia nigra*, bridge interior unto the uproar—
the obscene seduces the pleasure borne of imminent catastrophe
the lion's face is two dead stars stalking each other's last glimmer
I salute the old lion and his stony wrath
They are turned against themselves, they dissolve into a different game
The lion's face is necrotic
The lion's face is a spectacle inexorably left to a surface that swallows
"We do not believe that the truth remains true once the veil has been lifted"
The lion's face, of light
a joyful window
The lion's face vomited by flame
radiant against the market and marker of the saber
and more pathetic companies bearing dividends
bearing bodies flowered as lucidities—
how not bless
the lion's face pregnant with perilous frother's language
everything dreamt, laid against the cracking piles
of scythed sows lensed in Byzantine sunshine
clutched to cow-skulled focus, bodies
black against mounted mouths untouched:
buckled under discharges, incense of you and I—

"I COME FROM A DIZZY LAND....."

The Rule functions as the parodic simulacrum of the Law—
The lion's face has turned its entire edifice upside down,
and echoed those cultures where ludic and sumptuary
practices generated the essential forms of an all pervasive exchange
in order to turn them into a song for the ideal indeterminacy—
an ideal desire composed of endless occurrences
so violently attracted to each other
they no longer leave any room for meaning
they no longer live by the potential of a return
the eternal return of a ritual form—
that a ritual is the enactment of a myth
and myth is a projection of the depth wisdom of the psyche—
but in truth our unconscious is found
in our incomprehension
before the vertiginous indetermination
that rules the sacred disorder of things—
for Desire may well be the Law of the universe
but the eternal return is its Rule;
the Law is a prisoner of a recurring series of events
ululating disaster in every space,
a phantasy wheel emblazoned with the adipose
of a preternatural resurrection—
The lion's face as every repetitive figure of meaning
The lion's face as a figure of Death
that disregards the assumptions of affect or representation
as easily as it releases pleasure borne of a meaningless recurrence
one that proceeds from neither
a conscious order nor an unconscious disorder—
this other vision being tragic
the willed reconstitution of an arbitrary configuration
where each sign seeks out the next relentlessly,
as in the course of a ceremonial—
and when Fate raises its bid
when Fate itself throws a challenge to the order of things
when Fate enters into a frenzy of ritual vertigo:
then the passions are unleashed
then the spirits are seized by a truly deadly fascination
then the spirits are given liberty to speak

LIKE THE SLOW MOTION FILM OF A FALL

Everything that wishes to speak
in that place where meaning should be
where sex should occur
where words point to
and where others think it to be – there is nothing—
Seduction flows beneath the obscenity of speech
the lion's face flows in the daylight as a psalm
and in the night as a deaf mountain—
the void— that hole burned out by the return of the flame
beneath the golden onslaught of cities piled on top of each other
The lion's face is raised up above and below, at all points
the solar visibility of a singular hatred drifting in the forests of Hades
the visible love of an insanity borne by a vertiginous absence
inscribed in stone or the sky, or in one's heart
It is what touches us first, before the sentences
arrive, in the time it takes for them to fall away
It is a power of attraction and distraction
It is a power of absorption and fascination
a power of defiance
an escalation of violence and grace
a black Cash fucking the modern menses chorus
The lion's face—The lion's face—The lion's face—The lion's face
at the foot of stammering
that mythic scent
simply the epicenter
of death
The lion's face from which subtle fragrances emerge
in an instantaneous passion that exhausts itself in the dead
The lion's face crossbreeding germs of an ardent song
tipped in the sickness of flesh the color of granite
The lion's face a "refusal to accept the single, individuated body"—
so we seduce and are seduced by our deaths,
by our vulnerability, with the void that haunts us—
we are "spokesmen of oblivion knotting and unknotting"
we are circle jerks, gene defoliators, dervish sticks whirling
in a stream of furious piling tumors and appalling dreams—
we are reliquaries for the siren song hissing out of every aperture
and snapping at the boundaries of desire
for the dead are only dead when there are no longer any echoes
to seduce them, and no longer any rites to challenge them to exist

TO MERGE WITH THE MIRROR ON THE OPPOSITE WALL

The lion's face is an instrument of a larger fate
obeying the commands of a divinity
who wants every force to be overturned
to be sacrificed
be it that of power or that of a natural seduction—
for all force, and that of beauty, is sacrilegious—
it turns itself into an appearance in order to disturb appearances—
The lion's face is the object of a savage challenge
one that must be destroyed
the last word cannot be left to nature
it must be mythic, it must acquire its own dimensions—
To seduce is to make both the figure and the sign
play amongst themselves, thus confusing Desire—
To render it indistinct, a slight giddiness that proceeds
from a superior indifference and from the laughter
that undermines its still too serious entanglement—
for seduction puts an end to every fixed opposition—
the real catastrophes, the real revolutions
consist in the implosion, transistory
circuits of meaning to melt, to merge with the mirror
on the opposite wall—
you do not forget its sidelong gaze
you wear your own face against all confusion
against all clouds of confusion
that wear the false face, the one the lion
never wears— Whose is terrible?
Whose perfection?
For the lion's face is sovereign
and is sacrificed to its own sovereignty
a challenge which can only be met by its death—
the script of a perfect crime;
seduction ends with a murder—
a spiritual murder,
the reflection itself
an entirely different, more subtle rapture
the exuberant, secret joy—
a machete blow against metal lips

IT IS NIGHT, BUT WITHIN IT IS LUMINOUS DAY

Within the heated imagination of an inflamed desire—
a vision of God—
the trophy in some intimate and devastating plot,
the object of a spiritual abduction—
that the highest conceivable enjoyment lies in being loved—
to have death taste like bread and earth and the sea
to have one's sex be inscribed in the spurt of blood
anarchistically hailed by a barrage of poisonous vipers
encircling the face of a superficial pock
To poetize oneself into a young girl again
as an indirect reverberation will poetize a hypnosis,
a psychic mirror in which one is reflected
without awareness, under a different gaze—
Eyes close, and it is night; but within it is luminous day—
Within, the obliquity of a dream
one that traverses the universe in a single diagonal,
in order to touch the unknown blind spot,
the secret that lies sealed, the enigma
that constitutes the gaze, even unto itself—
a gaze that is marked out, that shall be run down—
To keep one's distance from it, to put off, to disenchant and deceive—
The lion's face engages a fate that must be completely free
as the girl must also be completely free
and in their freedom must reach out toward their own fall—
"to the zenith, dust of milk, a noon is with me"
and a strict sky of lawlessness hunches over
the electric divinations of children mired
beneath the supreme archways crisscrossing vaginal abysses
still mute with murderous energies trampling the thick of the land—
That the girl's fascination is exorcised, of a mythical figure,
an enigmatic partner, a protagonist in the liturgy,
for seduction proceeds by absence; it invents a curved space
where the signs are deflected from their trajectory, their destination—
in this the lion's face lives without understanding, deprived
of every reaction, muzzled, circumvented
as a nothingness, as emptiness—
the final moment before passion's illumination—
for it is here, in nullity, in the absence,
in the mirror's face, that its triumph is assured—
that stroke that ties a movement
of the soul to its destiny and its unmarked grave

“ANYTHING WITHOUT ANYTHING IS A CORPSE IN THE MOUTH”

The body itself is operated by remote control
no more than its own terminal connection
has no other concern than the optimal
self-management of its memory banks—
A corpse is seduced and eroticized
by the instantaneous report it has of itself
not simply to speak of it as a mere screen or form
but as a myth, something that still resembles
a double, a mirror, a fantasy, a dream—
For it is in the extortion of speech
that a cold seduction governs the spheres—
The lion’s face is a peculiar form of “You”
“you beasts hissing over the face of a dead woman”
you lipping the forms of a marvelous rite
over the sediment sucking at non-functioning mouths
jammed with coteries whose residue
resides in an edible Heaven—
That is to say the lion’s face is the advent of good news—
The news invaded by a phantom content, a transplant, a walking dream—
A circular construction where one presents
a corpse with what it wants:
the integration of labile meanings
though the corpse remains unaware of the immense energies spent
maintaining it, to avoid the brutal dissimulation that occurs
when the reality of a radical loss becomes evident—
“Anything without anything is a corpse in the mouth”—
Anything arrests. Anything arrests anything.
The lion’s face is a fake, a fraud
that invokes the same fascination as if there
were an image with which to seduce it
a terminal circuit that would open of itself—
And such seduction has no more meaning than anything else
seduction as only a kind of ludic adhesion
to accumulated simulation
a kind of tactile attraction maintained by models of speech:
“One plays at speaking and listening” “If it speaks, then it speaks”
But in effect it no longer speaks
And that discovery is a symptom of the need
to speak tirelessly in order to render language possible
to take a desperate situation and make it wondrous
“Contact for contact’s sake” turning the empty form
with which language seduces itself
into a terminal beauty raised up
in a position of mass extermination

WHEN ONE BECOMES ONE'S OWN CHILD

When one becomes one's own child
one is still the child of someone—
Here is where
one finds
one's truth:
in the indefinite repetition of one's
cold narcissism, a self seduction
without even that minimal distance
necessary for the experience
of one's own illusion—
both the Father and Mother have disappeared—
what marks the end of the body
this singular being called the Body
this singular configuration
that cannot be segmented any further?
The necrotic seep of a menstrual woman?
The impotent estuaries of spermatozoa?
The lion's face materializes and cuts short
the possibility of playing with these images
and, thereby, playing with Death
a figure that, like the soul or one's shadow
or one's image in a mirror, haunts to the point of fainting—
The lion's face a hermaphroditic monster that pulls from its bodice
the blood of an executioner's wife
and with the blood carves her name into the table—
What shouts forth, that Death is so imminent?
Its very image, without the symbolic illusion
that once gave it its charm—
that to materialize this phantasy
by force and by way of total confusion
changes the play of it on the screen
from a subtle exchange into an eternity of the same
just as each cell of a hologram
becomes a matrix of its whole
all the information being contained
in each of its scattered fragments—
The lion's face abolished
marking the end of its dream
of a narcissistic projection
that remains ecstatic under a glance
that supposes a mirror shorn of Deity
that on an embankment stares out at a river
shivering, bereft of any reflection

OVER ALL POSSIBLE BODIES

So the work of art loses itself—
the unique quality of its aesthetic form
no longer destined for seduction
and in its new destiny it takes on a political form
with only nostalgia to restore it—
the lion's face turns on its nocturnal endocrine system
the lion's face becomes "the cordial of an instant of an invented Dawn"
the lion's face projects a body devoured to oblivion
the apex of its jaw inverted, hissing serpents
the lion's face becomes
an embryonic prosthesis of its entire body
For the code is not natural—
a lion's face is abstracted
the body is rendered autonomous
as a cell alters the whole by substituting itself for the whole—
the lion's face is an artifact, an artificial matrix, a simulation
from which will proceed by pure and simple repetition
identical bodies assigned to the same commands:
This is what happens when one is conceived over all possible bodies—
a generation of identical beings without a return to an original—
the lion's face ascends and waves a farewell that no one hears
the lion's face ascends breaking the hearts of phoenixes
the lion's face ascends into the closest hell
the lion's face dreams of skeleton hands holding phosphorescent infants—
and when simulation reaches the point of no return
when the prosthesis infiltrates the body's anonymity
when it forces itself on the body as its matrix
and burns out all succeeding circuits
then the body will be only an immutable factory of clones
then the body and its history will come to an end
then the body becomes no more than a cancer
an aggravated redundancy of the same cells and the same signals
the body, at the nuclear level
the command cell
the directive level of the entire code
around which a phantasmagoria orbits

BIONIC MIRROR STAGE

The first glimmerings—
the first glimmerings
of mass subjectivity at the dawn of revolution—
the first glimmerings
of the fact that the masses
could manage their own servitude
under the sign of their own desires—
flesh of my flesh, O hallucinatory resemblances
Love is total, a total self-seduction—
the lion's face eats up its own anus to see if it has diamonds
the lion's face is the pure carbon of an anguished and impetuous silence
the lion's face endlessly chews its brain its liver
the lion's face is a simple refraction of an emptiness
about which they speak—
all drives expelled, vomited out into the countryside
everything interior let outside
as a prosthesis that constitutes
an ideal corpus orbiting around the body
every nucleus enucleated and projected into space
the lion's face goes out exposed
into the nervous stomachs of schoolchildren
the lion's face is charmed by the anticipation
of the weaving spider's swill—
all the body's secrets
everything that you do not
and do not want to know
turned and returned to you as a bionic mirror
that constitutes itself into integrated circuits
given over to manipulation and seduction
a malleable network lubricated by magnetic impulses
for the world is no longer driven by power
but by fascination
no longer by production but by seduction
a psychologized seduction
that results from its vulgarization
of the imaginary figure of Desire
this figure produced by the oppressed
under the sign of their own liberation
deepened by the failure of successive revolutions—
dominated—
the subject of desire must be seduced

WE ARE LIVING AMONGST PURE FORMS

We are living amongst pure forms
in a radical obscenity
in the visible obscenity of figures
that were once secret and discrete—
the theoretical hallucination of desire
with its diffuse libido—
it is no longer a matter of seduction as passion
but of a demand for seduction
of an invocation of desire
its realization taking the place of the faltering meditations
on power and knowledge that inhere in love—
What remains of the enchantment
of that labyrinthine structure
within which one could lose oneself?
That universe where gods and men sought to please each other
even by the violent seduction of sacrifice?
The degenerated metalanguage of seduction
combined with the degenerated metalanguage
of politics is everywhere operative
and we can no longer speak of that form of absorption
of potential engulfment
that fateful distraction
from which no one can ever be completely safe
nor even of the corruption of innocence or virtue
for there is no longer any morality or perversion to speak of—
we are no longer speaking about a violence
committed against meaning and its silent extermination
but about what is left to language
when it no longer has anything to say—
a discursive libidinal striptease—
no longer a vertiginous loss
but the minimalist form of mutual gratification
two beings can give each other
which is neither attractive nor dangerous
this specter of seduction that haunts our circuits
without secrets, our phantasies
without affect, our contact networks
without contacts
that this is its pure form
the seductive shadow that hovers over the desert of power itself—
the lion's face above the temple door
guardian monstrous mouth blackened with sacrificial teeth
O lion, light-breath of amber, do not seek to leave us

About the Author

Tim Van Dyke grew up in Colombia, South America, until guerilla warfare forced him back to the United States. Since then, he has worked in several insane asylums. In 2011, Lavender Ink published his first book, *Topographies Drawn with a Divine Chain of Birds*, and he has a chapbook, *Fugue Engine*, published by Cannibal Books. His work has appeared in *Fascicle*, *Typo*, *Octopus Magazine* and elsewhere.