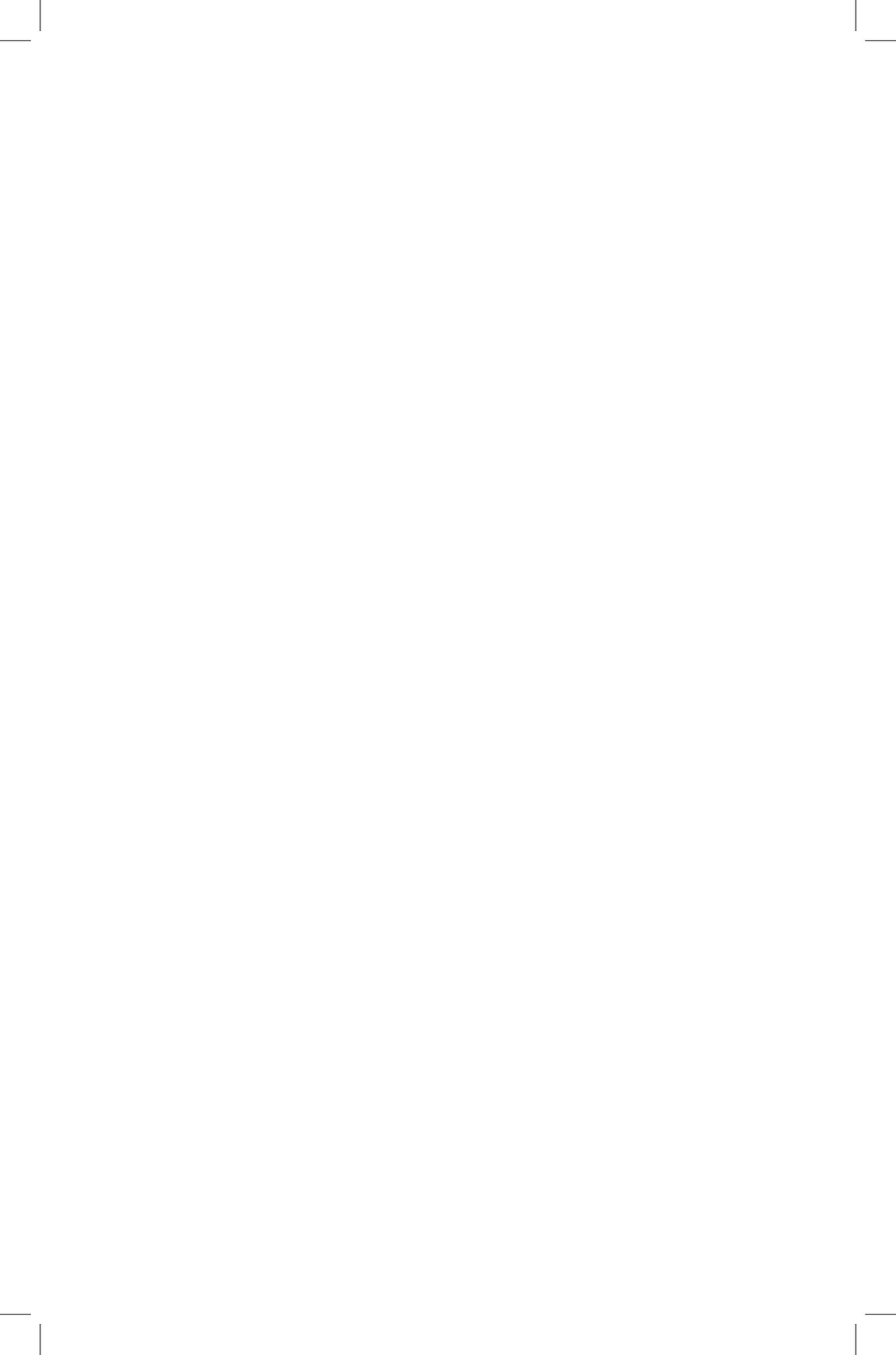




b o n e   a n d   d i a m o n d



bone

and diamond

J E F F R E Y   A L L E N



B O N E   A N D   D I A M O N D

BY JEFFREY ALLEN

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A H\_NGM\_N CHAPBOOK

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SET IN SCOTCH ROMAN AND NEXA

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the chicken and the fox

take the neck in your hand  
collar of thumb and bone

dawn  
twists yours  
for the fox  
that runs along the edge of elizabeth  
canyon

god those eyes  
of yours are sharp

quick now  
before he slips away  
twist your wrist

you don't want to see this

clawless

I want to be a wasteland.

I want to be a wood.

I want to be full of black sand  
belly-bursting with wolflowl  
linguistics and fairy-winged  
alphabets. I want my eyes

glowing  
at the edge of the clearing.

I want a child

to give me a fearsome new name          dragon-scaled and moon-clouded  
a vocal armor of wet tongues          heavy paws          tank treads.

I want my name to break the backs of ears.

I want my hands to be dark birds collecting dead things for nests  
drawing a doomtree blindfold from a hammerblow glove.

I want the world to make me king  
of the land  
of night

because I can't construct figures  
without legs shucked precariously together with black straw  
and stray hairs.

because I can only twine saliva to red-feathered words  
and hang them from the ceiling  
like chicken feet.

because I can only draw you down dim-bulbed hallways  
to cracked-open doors that always lead outside.

because I am only ever the shadow caught between broken toes  
lost in the noontime of a  
more-important-things kind of  
world.

## this is coyote's dream

sometimes nails are worn into dirt, sometimes pads fill their fleshy rifts with dust. Combust. powder smokes out behind the flurry of digging. there is a mealworm, a desperate consumption, that has burrowed before tectonically beneath. insect organs submarine through blood. a tiny ocean of fuel and to cricket through. wash it like a hand. wash it like the other hand. Combust. shells are shattered into stones, stones are crushed into powder. collected with nets. packed into pillboxes or bullet casings. sometimes driven through. there is sleep but the sun has a way of finding all the sides of dust. this is not the smallest geometry. the skin of this is hammerless. the fur of this is engineless. rain will mud this together. something to make a print.

## this is coyote's dream

a castle drops itself a cliff, parapets of an engine, the shipwrecks of a farsight. the woods are walls, branches brick, leaves moat the treeline. stretch a tongue in bridge, lick the refuge of an other side. Slide. sticks are snared and shaped to stand. furied, knee-snapped, kindled. a spark in a marlhouse is a lamb in a barrel. kick a darkness off a cliff, sometimes a fleet of waves. a thing can break into a weapon, this is a rule of solids. a root is not a sure thing. Slide. a house is a dogleaf under sun and over moon. an ocean is an eater and a shovel. sometimes a rock will drown, sometimes a feather fills. this is full of anchors, this is full of silt. growth is a current and a tide, the wraps of silk around.

# cloudtrigger

I.

and the remains of a woman who yet died at her dawn

thunderheads

thunderheads

with eyes

hissing buckshot a handful of pupils

rolling into each other polished

she steps into the plain, barrel-ready :

the clouds are whetted and edged

just below the brow early to temple those cheekbones adrift

stirred from the fen there is a flying

how can you not be seen by the growing night

that plucks the feathers from the sky

that hides on your plate shouldered up to the bone?

she sorrys like a gunshot

tonguing the iris to remove the wounding

ii.

sound out 'incisor'

storms are hiding in words tempests tucking in cheeks  
she sees

what is swallowed

pushing down

the low pressures driving rain  
like mercury she is friction-

less, cloud-eater

Rat God

spit zeus

choke on olympus

give them their fire

## this is coyote's dream

the sun is an accuser, will work for its armament. swallowing an anchor is tundra living. sometimes a barker is a planted manacle, tent-pole answers into umbrella beliefs. Seep. Shattered acids cinder, will decibel, will maintain. a smithy sprouts from virgin tackle, the heart banter, dries in applecore. kiss brown ankles without beltsand, empty every igloo. something seats a bastard tautology. lacquer the moon in caterwauled opulence, skittle dents in chandelier battlements. find a salivate in the cutter, in the keel. Seep. there is a doctor and a quarry, a tankard of golden adder teeth. sometimes a bleating nickelplate, always a midshipman. remove the tallow diamond studs, open blacker wrists.

## this is coyote's dream

compliments are not meant for skullduggery. the work of a winter is not the arsenic leadbelly of a chickadee's gizzard. sometimes there is a choke chain letterbomb, a piecemeal bitterness, a lazarus fiend and mentor. End. song of baggage, tune of leprosy. faulted in the owl and the tree and the incessant blindness of a half-sewn alimony. withstand inside intelligence, birth a jackhammer of outdoor breathwork. marigold is cloudbound clattering, palomino splits silted hooves. this is gothic medicine, this is roman blistering. salt-infused eyelash testimonies are mating calls, lenders. End. one is two is twenty months of finger-licking antigone, scoliosis blood eating, cannibal anemia. enter big and bitter lacerations, exit catalyst of undone love.



elizabeth laid a frost  
that sent him to the dirt  
she told him how every plot of earth  
is just a grave waiting to be dug

i found my brother and his bow  
drawn out in a half moon still  
his eyes looking up took me in a constellation

as everything tends to do  
inches from the ground

b a i t

s w i t c h

today calls you

*horseshoe*

and gives you lines  
about wanderlust  
dusty roads

fireplace inns

there might be a bed with a room around it  
like how you picture the tongue

( i can

lessen the blow by cutting  
three-quarters  
through

the legs )

tomorrow calls you

*sanction*

after the red stripes across your back

everything has to turn around  
even you

( show me the lookingglass

beneath your shingled

stomach )

think *electron*

set yourself spinning around a center

this is why  
i peel triangles of chrome from faucets  
( swallow them whole )

yesterday calls you

*prism*

and means to throw

you down my throat

## this is coyote's dream

cauterize this elegant vigil, this delayed honeypot. sink a sharktooth into salivating canters, allow for muddled amelioration. this is never a chrysalis, a hidden cocoon, a nest of shucking knees and tinderbox sandmen. Damn. sometimes an ear is a heart and heads are tremors in the ground. every dungeon is a secret, every crime a middleman. summer is a sprinting ablation, a cattleprod interdiction. paint a stump in warface, pant a sickled lionskin. god in the peaches canned. Damn. find this invisible earth in anvil, under desert, behind plateau. fester in the eyeless snakepit, blow a candle to the mad one's princess. crane-neck to snapdragon, untie winter shallows, invest nails here, in the unfound chest.

## this is coyote's dream

in the habit of a hoof, ingest neck-first and flurried. these snows are not implosions,  
yield houses and their stilts. relieve the ungulates of protrusion, of bone and diamond.  
Rewind. there might be a hart beneath clay bricks, sometimes a pulse through a  
canal. divide into three parts, watch october to the ground. there must be a cloth,  
there will be one red spot. throw a hammer into a room, birth the many windows.  
monsters swallow clotted things, divers are. fist the head of snake to ground and  
pull a pack of flintknives. **R**ewind. a grapeshot wriggles in a wind of worms, exhales  
black back into night. embalm an eye, a coat of camphor. this will not be burial, this  
is headstand logic. cast a mother into lead and bring a pallid doll to bed.

## saliva and iodine

i take you ice fishing  
in elizabeth's aorta  
little scalpel boiled clean

i take your hands in mine  
cut a bit of eyelid slit  
everything with the stink of paint  
slab comes off like a tongue  
swallows up your hands  
your nailbeds stained violet

i'm talking about science  
say *hypothesis*

elizabeth's naked current sounds  
like the tongue  
sucking at your shoulders

when you finally lie down  
like you too are damned  
i take inventory  
of the stones  
you missed  
and stack them  
like a ghost would  
drunk with translucence

three quarters round

your prone  
shrinking figure

elizabeth's teeth without  
elizabeth's skull

there was a city

here

we know because the air rolls  
across our pupils like a whetstone

we know because the trees aren't hungry anymore  
they ate all the buildings

they are fat  
and asleep heavy with glass  
and concrete and steel

their beds are lined

in hospital rows

because the trees are getting sick

they have become concerned

with the sky

they exhale everything  
nails and plaster and rebar

solid steel  
beams bloom out  
in thorns

we know because the sky hangs caught  
in the rustweb of this digested city

held up by its pale shoulders  
dragged across our cheeks  
thrown into the backs of our  
eyes

the light comes through now in dirty red bricks  
slipping through a crosshatch of tangled veins

as if the sky were a body

with the flesh of a ghost

## this is coyote's dream

a stair is an opening to the ways things are done above. a child and a child will run after mice and the carpet is their fur and everything is brown. a baking. a digging. this must be what looking-ups call fireside. Divide. melt after the runners into granite gardens, into parades of constellation. the butcher is a sunbeam, the plow just negates. there is a dragon in the weight, this lamp is light with earthcore. call the beach away, catapult the moontide. Divide. sometimes a father is a grail, a mother holding swords. pick a star from the coalsack sky, find grandfather falcon cradled in dark clouds, mountain snow. this is red. this is violet. mouse feeds itself to itself and beetle waits. there is a whole sky above everything, allthing. below the red, under the violet.

## this is coyote's dream

find a twin in the twist, a friend in the truckbed. a cry is a sun dipped in chocolate, wax. graverub a bitterness onto palm leaves. the oil around their roots is a fortune, is a teller. there are bits of nothing here, there are nothings in the way. Pay. the bald barrel of a riverboat replacement is the only way to reach the mountain, its heart. a taste for pork, a tongue for dogs. this is a broken cannon and a sedimentary reason to encase in brass. a scent, hair pulled, the under-nail dirt and its dryness. crosshaired down the bends of a brain and something like only one eye. oh discordia. Pay. there is a jet engine godbomb, twigbreaker atomic, a hunger in the many-mouthed dirt. teeth unsnapped, invisible hands of gravity's girl. dragged down, into.

monster

AFTER JOHN VALLIANT'S

"THE TIGER"

I. "...[Monsters] will occasionally kill...solely on something that we might recognize as principle."

i am not a hunter

i wasn't fathered or brothered

to be finger-bound to wintertrack

to be silent to snowbreath

lungs heavy with crystal and drift

disgorging words like

so much heavy trash

i am not a hunter

but i can still see the gates of the trail

not tall not iron

just two

narrow golden

eyes

i am swordless yet

sundered

disarmed

by the gunpowder panting of Her

cannibal hands

ii. *“Death for its own sake is seldom an objective in nature...the reason prey is killed is not to kill it per se, but to keep it still long enough to be eaten.”*

in the woods

She muddies herself in moonlight stripe

primal    scented                    a camouflaged obliteration

She is a ripple

along the current of the earth

wings and cloud                    dust

little birds would build Her in nests

if their beaks were but quicker in snap

their spines learned of the difference  
between a shuddering  
canine

and the unhungry drift  
of a leaf-fingered wind

don't    inhale

III. *“The only beasts that enter the myth complex are those that kill the hunter  
and those into which he is transformed.”* JOSEPH FONTENBOSE

always sudden

a bloodshot eye revealed  
a peeled back  
curtain of dark tassled skin

She is undone from her jungle dress  
naked upon me in the dirt

inkquill teeth  
staining my shoulders  
lettering my exposed neck marking  
the beating that hides there

this rabbit in the brush  
its heart

is so very small  
is so very unhidden

iv. “*[The monster] smelled something in there that belonged to [Her], that enraged [Her]...*”

I walk now underwater

a hush    a claimed kill

I shed My mark constantly

fingerprints like rings of boulders

all that paths fates

My cold leaking touch

“**Black Mark Black Mark**  
come away from the grove  
Your shadow is a tether  
to a brittle barbed tongue  
hooked around a knotted  
burl of granite flesh

You are not the moon”

I walk like the first white  
tooth  
of the last black mouth

v. *"A human being could not have engineered a more bitter revenge scenario."*

friend in the road

do not ask for My hand

let it sit like a drowned man  
in the black pool of My pocket

friend at My side

do not kiss My face

let it keep its heavy mask  
of inkwell scars and old equatored heat

Friend in My eyes

please look away

please

run from me and her trailing throat

vi. "... [He] was already in the [monster's] thrall... [t]he [monster] had  
already taken [H]is soul."

You remove the door to Your home

allow the wind to guest

to carry seeds and dirt through Your quiet rooms

a pebble at the foot of a mountain

we see the elephant rise from the grass

but not the building of the red house

we see the crows land in the tree

but not the carving into its bark

there is a prairie in the prairie

vii. *“Successful hunting...is an act of terminal empathy...”*

She filled the under(your)bed  
with skinny letters  
and roseless stems

She filled your empty closets  
with shorn barbs  
and dark shallow dresses

unseen as red stains in black cloth

the rabbit of your neck  
is entwined  
in murmuring gut

“hostage hostage  
you will wear  
Her jaws in fetters”

you and i  
(friend)  
are no hunters

our eyes   wasted

on the White Book

viii. *“In a very real sense, these two beings were now fully integrated.”*

Her claws grown from the meat of you

Her eyes wet with your blood

my    scent    over    you    into    Her

devour

devour

the fueling of a heart that constantly spills  
that constantly hungers

you are now the ink  
of a mark  
on a page

the bile of an ellipsis

in every book

IX. *In the taiga there are no witnesses.*" V . K . A N S E N I E V

this is hunting as a shape  
on the page

stories written in bloodline  
in shadow  
this is the stain that holds the table  
to the floor

what can one own under the falling snow

She  
is under the falling snow

between Her eyes and the sun

is always another passing  
shadow

with room enough for a monster

i believe in violence FOR KELLY

in the way it hangs its paper sons  
from dusty ceilings  
and pipes full of running water

i've been scared to open doors before  
afraid of hanging inches from the ground  
but the tiny gargoyle on the other side  
turns my fists to bees

and sends them away to die

i hold a paper limb out to you  
and tongue my mouth to pieces  
white blood and brown teeth come together

like chicken feathers

like a gunshot

and resemble a catastrophe

look at me then :

one old torso

with two sets of knees

i can't decide if its souls or bodies that are tools  
used to make simple the way feet come off a floor  
to either hit it again hard or stay stuck in the air  
like little sunspots in your eyes

i'm becoming aware of the things fingernails want :

to fall in love with yellow seraphs made of hair

to be mistaken for crescent moons

to fill your face with every single star and galaxy

because we just can't say infinity

# the flowering

they say  
the sowing wind knows the spear along its fracture

and will shatter kings  
into seeds

but let's just call a spade a spade :  
these rolling tongues of foxglove and primrose  
repay few debts

i've sent my hands to lose themselves  
in the deepest pockets

it's your own whole fist that barely fits  
in your mouth

o  
little sowing wind

find a face like a cliff

and throw yourself against it



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