

University of Auckland, Aotearoa / New Zealand

Lisa Samuels

A copy of the sun

Biographical note:

Lisa Samuels is the author of *The Seven Voices* (1998), *Paradise for Everyone* (2005), *The Invention of Culture* (2008), *Tomorrowland* (2009), *Mama Mortality Corridos* (2010), *Gender City* (2011), *Wild Dialectics* (2012), *Anti M* (2013) and a 2-CD recording of *Tomorrowland* with soundscapes (2012). She has also published chapbooks, critical editing projects, and essays on poetry, cultural theory, and experimental critical practice. Born in Boston, she has lived in North America, Europe, the Middle East and Australasia. Her PhD is from the University of Virginia, and since 2006 she has taught literature, theory, and creative writing at the University of Auckland in Aotearoa / New Zealand.

1

After the movie in which she was without satisfactory answers, Girl dreamt the dead body. The lights shone orange and creased, the walls flat with the color we think of when we think of outside walls. Nothing happens without you. Light in the sky.

The sense of solitary walking absolute with visible change. The air quiet but with a very low suppressed shrill ringing noise and with humming in the buildings. Her purple dress flapped around her ankles in the dark.

The side of the building beginning to glow individually, her walking next to it very slowly. The side of the building very quiet, the sky seeming to be pressured back away from the light at the top. Girl walking with absolute quiet, listening for deviation from the hum and ring, her breath, her bones wet sheaving. Her standing still and looking with face to, waiting.

2

She explained to her new friend how much. Fortuitous hedge
I give the hands the feet leave away
I give the time again and here we are I give
the boy the door and his tilt grams I give the
particular amount I give
the way we say it she said
I give the peat down moss slopes, I give the wary hammers
of munificence, I give the strained waves turned toward you
tumbling there, I give a wave spread a wily chamber, given
she is sodden she reverts to the ultra wane,
the time we slaved and did not apprehend, like
there was a deal we didn't know we had struck.

You could stop anywhere and give your time
work in the kingdom of green fear.
The papers on the glass walls match
the thick bodies moving that economy.
This box has a set of wires, this box with lights on
and singing, this one with a tower ready to go
and this one "ugly as sin," this one she walks into,
and this one – she is ready to lean on the wall
to listen to the crows, she takes the book
and is leaning with it unprepared for
the friendliness of her co-workers, the hatches opening
on the mouths, the stories that fly gleaming
from the mouths. Ceaseless subdivisions of encounter.

All day long the throat is stroked with feeling,
 the walls pale and admonitory, the wales on the wallpaper
 think no thick and hedgy. She feels them
 for the particular stripe the glory worry
 trembled on a little, with the fingertips there by the side of
 the seating areas, plates and cups and peeling faces.
 She is not worried at all, she is waiting for a trial,
 an evidence panel, for the petri dishes to *front up*.

3

The decision comes down like a wolf on the gold of her lips
 (I have eaten and yet I thirst), she thought quickly:
I have hammered into the signal all the forecasts
 of the bed on which we sat and planned our breakfast.
 Thence oratory leading to demise.

Her microscopic hands folded gently but firmly into
 thinking *if thinking is accomplished by turbines nearby,*
by the welts of factories on my inner ears. Could we
 be made to think on the scale of burrowing wires
 very near the eyes that hover compromise.

The torso is shaft, the thighs are salt,
 the eyes are olives around which your tongue
 rolls, the skin is tearable, the penis is an island,
 the cartilage bendable, the hairs sifting out of
 the skin are tiny wires for pulling with your teeth.

We're all watching you, he said, a picture
 created by facsimile after all, a gorgeous temper
 burning small and bright *so like an angel* animate foreclosed.

I will start to make a future
stripped of confraternity figured
in the tightly laced mind
of someone else whose self-addicted laws
crash in and back a sound I recognize
with a memory, imposed: the fantasy of having arrived
 for somebody's approximation with a bigger fantasy nearby
 of songs and linkages, tried for going back, stone monuments
 carved out to keep the neural stock well-watered,
 shoots in the field with the enormous boulders
 where she heats the stones and knows who is not coming
 back. He won't come back.

4

A shift, a score, some kind of pipe, a phrase like animal announcement, a plaint, a rift, things not quite meeting together or rather not quite blending not ensemble exactly more like co-presented, that was when Girl actually liked the art, when nobody pretended harmony in the sense of parity or tight weave among the instruments.

Better yet was walking out and
several days later among the scrubby bushes
where the wind and the ringing in her head
hearers and the sound of her pores and breath
and hair rustling and the sound of the little branch
units shuffling and the theatrics of the sky made
little noises it was what Ramsey had absurdly called
absolutely quiet. When they were alone.
Her mouth blocks had rounded into firm sounds
she half-sang half-talked in acquired set pieces
that fit in the postured receptacles of human ears.

In this city they speak additive tongues, their lips curling
like clam sides the tongues nitrate and basalt.
Girl leaning forward to catch bits, her ears enormous shells
filled out. She had a pretty idea of that. She adjusted
her skirt and panted in the heat. Her skin subtending
implements with the rain she had saved in deeply.

5

The young person blind-sided, sterile to environment,
grew by edges. Cars went by faster than experience,
so one knew the objects sitting in front of her were positions.
The story-teller as a pose, his skin peeled
from its tomb embrasures lovely for the nonce.
So we were houses, and I was waiting with that still common voice.

Sure, sure. As birds too, they call them,
having met their antecedents, will try anything.
Not uncommon, such mickery she was finding.
He told her *the straps were not spared as I hitched to response*.
Not better than the teeth suddenly, she considered.
We'll call it doubled mercy applied to sentences:
he bent, she bent, you bent.

They entered the hospital's automatic doors.
Benediction, which means it's almost over and he is closer
to something he wants, the sky and the knees
tucked under her chin. "Wastrel" or "scoundrel"
waiting for narrative with open hearts, colloquy rush.

6

Now she would need oils and surfaces,
bottles and space. Which meant
borrowing, always borrowing the time = space =
something *feeling o.k.* in the value.

She is pragmatic in the value, doused in value
young in her offices. A relation of exchange
whose predicates were not embraced by Girl.

Touching the paint. The dread gorgeous
of the wound, purples and ochres for talisman.

The fusion machine was hard at work, comestible
exteriors part and parcel of a getting up
to make time what it would otherwise be.

That person's motto was *staying comfortable making a difference*,
but Girl knew half as well a code, a nothing-more then-something restraint that held
her brush flashing at the moment of contact.

Staccato and smooth, momenting it.
The canvas was a skin and oils tattoos,
the breaching was a dynamite expression
she was waiting to see again from beneath,
the disappearance of the whale and
reappearance in the rush. *Awa, stay with me.*
Ama. Weight the surface with a deep maternal
weight, twist in the disseminated aspects of the plan.

She got very good with a stapler gun, with the pieces of wood
and tight. It wasn't a plan to give time to the patch of land
bordered by roads, but there she went, the inkjet cartridges
fallen all over the junkyard where they also collect. Men in suits
got out of cars with guns and set up targets after removing
their jackets. Afterwards, men in jeans came round and picked
up cartridges for re-loading. In another part of the alternative
collective or the dump.

Many objects could be re-collected without plan or sentiment
as cloth with smells, kiddie dioramas, bits of carpet, broken chair
seats one could stack up for a ladder. Compensation could be made
for the far-awayness of the particles as one adjusted to
the organisms: Girl took her face close up and painted that.
She pressed in the grindings from her very small fragmenting
of things gathered from the dump.