# Fantasies and Terrors of Becoming

Brendan Reeves

English 92 Final Portfolio

### love, /ləv/, verb, noun

By Brendan Reeves

'Love' is a word impeccably built for confusion. The dictionary should include a warning label

for us fools. love, /ləv/, verb, noun: to friends – a throwaway line

: to lovers – a chilling confession that renders naked our devotion

in which we forget ourselves and learn the weight of holding.

But lexicographers, love songs, nor last goodbyes prepare you to be so utterly possessed with life

that makes eternity feel like silence and silence feel like eternity

and be made brutally aware of time and its stubborn vocation

which, naturally, compels us to seek refuge beneath words and plant our anxieties in definitions,

but labels and commitment are mere ritual made sacred by giving it voice

like a blade cleaving a slab of Earth to the surface to be laid bare – we endure

for a chance in this life if only for a moment.

### Phosphene

**Brendan Reeves** 

Oh, fuzzy nighttime kaleidoscopic hues that dance when I close my eyes you constellations seldom go unnoticed, forcing sight on eyes closed. when I seek darkness' quiet I get a pointillistic rave. you steal the little joy of blindness

Pixelated tide pools strobing phantom light; God's free painting. Squint and push them push hard enough I see blood veins, though I'm sure it's not healthy for my eyes weakens them in Sun's time when eyes are windows but at night eyes are mirrors.

Help, is this meditation? Yes. A ritually glorified waiting room with a static movie playing bridging one world and the next; I'm captively audienced by my superconscious' eyes they whisper wickedly to me: nothingness has a horizon.

I fixate on a fuzzy line, now it's a clarinet's effigy, now music, now it's an idea. I spot it it's horrible, it's the comeback that would've killed yesterday... articulated in my eyes twenty-nine hours too late, now it's a petty regret guiding me to gallows you build.

Jon said he hopes he dies in his sleep so there's no pain, no witnesses but you know he's wrong. That's when you'll dig into your prey's eyes concentrating so long life into a single fuzzy line full of what I didn't see. you steal the little joy of blindness



Phosphene Painting - Peter Serebrovskyi

I realized this poem was really ekphrastic, responding to the visual artistic stimulus in our own eyes. This is one artist's depiction that rang true to me.

#### **Vignettes of a Wanderer**

**Brendan Reeves** 

— NYC Pigeon —

I saw a newborn pigeon, with his couple plastic twigs, rent-stabilized aluminum nest on a 19<sup>th</sup> floor AC unit in Gramercy – Nature's man or man's nature?

--- Superstition ----

I have a superstition that showing a project to someone jinxes it – that perhaps appearance in the world at all is a subtle, venial kind of demise.

— Covered —

empty ritual is to wisdom what a blanket is to fire; swallowing numbing agents makes you feel nothing, not better.

- Shattered -

If something is worth holding, you must be willing to let it break or else it will surely shatter – to forget is the folly of lovers and lunatics.

— Love Scars —

I see blood dripping from your palms and scars you haven't noticed and yet I fell – fell like a knife falls from a hand with nothing to hold.

## **The Cynical Bartender**

#### **Brendan Reeves**

he fills your glass as high as it will go but turns you away when he knows you've had enough he's seen a thousand faces, a thousand liars,

and he's had to learn a thousand tricks to convince you he did put a full shot in that daiquiri but he always lets his eyes find a familiar face,

that he might honor with a smile or a thought a moment – he has no patience for a grand gesture

but sometimes affection isn't so much a grand gesture as much as a detailed attention. And as he faithfully washes his glass

staring out at everyone and no one I wonder if his thoughts, might wander back to me.