

FEBRUARY 25



Year 2: Schuyler's Valentine
2024

PART 1: AFTER SCHUYLER
PART 2: AFTER MAYER

After Schuyler

February 13, 1975

“Mr. Kissinger flies from Cairo to Damascus
and then on to Jerusalem today.”

The moon is new, anyway.

Jameson Fitzpatrick

Sleep

On stage the people are talking about love.
The students are meant to come away
understanding something.
I remember the prompt,
having forgotten the dream.

FEBRUARY 11, 2024 // SLEEP

Tomorrow is the Super Bowl
tomorrow I'll think about
that. Always weepy, even
after enjoyment I feel as
though betrayed by tears. Clouds
breathe wind onto sprawling anti-
cipatory traffic and yestereven
it announced a new lunar phase
amid the grayly dotted vector
field. Dana is restless: parting
ways soon. And what then
will I do with myself? Some-
one resigns in bullet
chess; I'm not reduced to that
yet. I press my face against
the glass like a flower.

The lovers who text ahead
the lovers who don't.
The film on the laptop shows
analog desiderata like "lesions."
The mounting tension and the spasm.
A slow dolly shot tracks the boy.
Mandarins.
A day in February: ingot-
shaped dumplings on black vinegar.
On Dolores and 16th
of countertransference in the dyad
the fly trapped in the window screen
won. "DEAD END" says the sign.
Good night. I've forgotten
the chill of the outside air.
Give your love to, oh, anybody.

Brian Ng

Dusk

horizon calculating
its distance from sight
fractally setting on
a hotel plateau or plain
twenty years of yesterdays
then yesterday's Valentine
golumpki
in plain view of village
sweet youth

Kimberly Alidio

Dawn

something real seedy
in the valley pierogies
at the truck stop
hill snowcap tar-crumbled
an elegantly fallen jowl
crooning to morning
dead: give my love to
oh
anybody

February 13, 2024

feeble like-minded
gaunt and sad
yesterday's snow
makes for slow walking
into a fever dream
of warmth and friendship
concave bowl
bent reflection February

Nora Sullivan

Forcing Rhubarb

some gardeners grow rhubarb
under an upturned bucket
the plants shoot up
in search of light
time looked at me we became
people who wear costumes
to dance in my bright sun
don't call me selfless when I die

February 13, 2024

Time always happens sometimes:
My mother was driving. It felt
regressy to look out the window
from the backseat, the sun
shining shamelessly.
I could be much taller, shopping
on the internet. Watching TV.
Natasha will be in India
for three weeks next
Wednesday: And what
will I do with myself then?
I hate it when my flowers die.
Tomorrow is always Valentine's Day.

Sleep

What screws us up most
in life is the picture in our head.
The weather in the window.
Rigor and glamor.
You can't compete with the sun.
We all have bellybuttons.
Cookie dough.
A day in February: heart-
shaped pepperoni pizza
delivered on Valentine's Day.
My phone died in the parking lot.
"I am that I am.' Do you remember
that scripture?" I overheard
one student ask another.
I have zero interest in conquest.
I would love you
like a paintbrush.

Sophia Le Fraga

February 13, 2024

Within thirty minutes, how many.
We tally it up at the end. Words get
used; there are these categories.
We're all teenagers at halftime
or when the three little dots bubble
below your name. The rubble
is ash and iron, and I bring the fire
pit inside to keep the snow
from rusting it. The party gathered
to bring a new year, under
dragon's exhale. Beloveds text me
from every direction. My pleasure
reeks and claims me and I play the song.
I'm not over her. It's terrible to be able
to combine, to preserve, to summon
absolute magic worthlessness.
If this is not a prayer, what is.

Mia Kang

Vision

I lived inside of time and distance
until I became them.
My friends were dead
and I was my dead friends.
I don't mean
friend the way you hear it.
Jujube seeds sweeten the syrup
to bind the rice.
The table was laden
and we shared what we broke there,
yet we've got to get rid
of this furniture: the fear we'd never
find each other
if we destroyed everything.
I don't mean
destroy
the way you hear it.

February 13, 2024

Tomorrow is another problem:
tomorrow I won't call you
either. But you'll hear anyway,
as we struggle through this blushing
month. False spring already
declared its insincerity, snow-
drops with hungover postures. I
meant everything I told you at the time
I said it. Nothing's worth airing
that wouldn't sound better in bed,
pressing our rumors like brier rose
petals. You plan to make me Valentine
baklava while I flake away in different
sheets. Reduce myself to starched razors,
honey-stained. What's left to say? I came
all this way. February's arrows wouldn't stay.

Rebecca Hawkes

Sleep

The songs we write about each other
and the ones we can never play again.
The toothpaste won't go back into the tube.
A septum ring over a cupid's bow.
The weighted blanket versus the hydraulic press.
A segment of blood orange in the fennel salad.
Destroying angels.
A February day: a huge rutabaga
moon stewed in the borscht for date night.
Like a peeled potato, trying to put its skin back on.
A girl who says to look but do not touch.
"Like eating poison, hoping someone else dies."
Branches reverse lightning on the sky all night.
After the wildfire, the forest again.
Winter passed my heart around so gladly –
I think I'd like to let it rest, now, please.

February 13, 2024

For a cozier feeding session
thoughtfully the invitee
arranges into quadrilles
the final tinge of the river:
I regret learning about heroism,
but like a bottle of milk
at a grave within a fence,
one can't be too rough, hard,
unforgiving, stern, critical of oneself.
I've draped the cover and covered
the drape, as they say, in the spring way,
not that I feel what is most pressing
partitions as it threads these tasks:
not falling is the goal, though if I had
in here a carpet, which I'd like to,
I would be tripping over its flowers.

Nora Fulton

February 13, 1975

And what is that, just the bison
figurine. holding it rump
down over the land of crystal waters
then tipping over
maybe *tomorrow* maybe *tomorrow*. maybe
that it's hard to see at an incline
aged or edged. pick your jelly
the tea I'm drinking that has
no caffeine. my birthday is an 8-watt
thought experiment. and the minnows lick
at the frayed neck of my sweater
I saw the pink smoke off the laundry pipe
above Fennimore Court
sounds like the hypodermics in the leaves
the table of elements. your name or
to be solitary, remember
the fabulous panic of being wasteful
and throwing things down on the ground

John Coletti

Sleep

When you don't. because
the gentleness in your throat, carries
no compromise
keep the dry caterpillars beside
snow, yours. our scribbled lashes
new titanium crescents inside your ear. I
abide to sleep, shoulders. smart
a fox I left in the parsley stems
being quiet enough. for you
to be successful, and
tell me so

February 13, 1975, Sleep

Tomorrow is St. Valentines':
the friends who come see you
will think about
the friends who don't.
I'm always nervous, like
the weather in the window
after a good sleep.
I'd like a pierced ear
to climb back into. The sun,
the mounting tension, and the spasm
shine on yesterday's new
paper-lace doily on a small plate.
Fallen snow and yestereven
tangerines
turn the world to pink.
Just a day in February, my heart.

Rose and steel-blue
shaped cookies on St. Valentine's
buildings. Helene is restless,
like Christopher the discarded saint.
Leaving soon! And what then
will a tough woman with black hair
do with me? Some
"I-gotta-set-my-wig-straight."
is watching morning,
gold and silver, begin to wane.
TV: I'm not reduced to that
crescent moon
yet. I wish one could press
ice on the window and
snowflakes in a book like flowers.
Give my love to, oh, anybody

Elena Comay del Junco

February 14, 2024

Valentine's day is in fact
today but it's not like I've
done much of anything
to observe it though I am
I think in love with a person
who also thinks it's stupid
not that I've actually asked
her which is on me but
really it seems too fussy
to bother with just an excuse
made by people who want
to replace sexiness with feeling
bad about false defeat
and unmet expectation go run
a marathon I get it as little as I get
how to write a good short poem.

Shiv Kotecha

Sleep

Unlikely friends appear
like Kaleem and Hannah.
Mhm, yep, they both say.
The hot spring.
They say I've chosen to visit.
Swim in it to win.
The revolution.
A day in February: heart-
shaped folds of a summer umbrella.
A waft of cold air a towel breaks.
A tough woman is named Jessica.
"This changes how I feel about Jessica."
The owl hit a window.
The poet is dead.
I should go dancing.
Give my love, to, oh, anybody.

February 15, 2024

Lyrik

for Marie

Yesterday was St. Valentine's:
yesterday I've forgotten about
you. Persistent love, uneven
on a better day, schlechte zeit
für lyrik. The lucky or happy ones
climb into tomorrow a compound
phase in Deutsch and by nightfall
the snowy morning will have mended
the sidewalks wet and cobalt and
manageable. Marie-Helene is away:
back today. And what then
will you do with yourself? Some
other morning is streaming sun
today. You could be too. You
are often reduced to only one of
you but there are many mornings.

To be in popular view 7:45AM
and modestly disliked by others.
A deleted image in the window.
Shabby backyards.
The morning builds toward leaving.
Crunchy plastic thrown away. 9:30AM
Snapple.
End of the work week: hours break 11:00AM
into momentary holidays.
Like Brecht, another cursed poet.
A knobby man with jagged hair.
"It's about finding the exact point 5:00PM
in a system where it's the most brutal
without endangering itself."
Snow forecast in the window.
The moon's name is James. 7:00PM

Ted Dodson

February 15th, 2024

Tomorrow marked in
As many days as
3 months. Wired,
the flowers, and reception,
And it's too early
for tulips. Charlotte
gone 2 days now, into
future. Flower receiving
future by proxy—
And I keep busy:
pretzels W/ Bahaar and
the piles of books to be
taken down. Too
late. I will in parallel,
stack books on
nervous perilla leaves.

Terrence Arjoon

Split the Bouquet

All friends cramped
in tiny collation.
Split the bouquet:
persimmon-dust
floats over the whole world.
Cheese on bed in the room.
Fold the paper
while her aluminum
petal tea ripens.
Chocolate spills from
everywhere and snow
melts in my eyes. But,
I realize later, as this all
happened a potful
of cabbage
cooked under
the worm moon.

Day 1, year 0

Ever was a glimpse of birth.
What's left a blink of round
fat. Once torn, a slanter
rest we never
really abide. Anybody. Somebody
butts up against the ever
News of the on-go never
sewed a jagged pink
or flush or filled-in
din. The child is reckless:
leaving soon. And then where
will we be the self? No one
is listening to the
radio. I slipped out of sound
myself. Laid still,
noise in the flesh like flowers.

Rebecca Kosick

Wake

The shadows that swallow you
and the shadows you you.
Dim threads slip the curtains.
A tiny clearing.
The trying to breathe and the canyon.
A rising, a rising arising in a small rib
and out.
A night in forever: cut
from the black on Nothing Day.
Like something, a leftover effort.
A soft child with black hair.
[you say something I can't understand]
The sound of breathing
a sound of breathing.
Breathing in the body.
Give my breath to, our, body.

February's Dramatic Persons

- Tomorrow:** The day by which the tulips will need to be thrown out
- Today:** The day I fail to change the tulips' water, despite noticing it has been soiled by the stems' decomposition
- Yesterday:** The day when, breathing heavily into the phone on my late-night ascent of Sunset Park's hill, I turned back to the skyline to please myself, and I remembered other recent physical pleasures: speeding up my stride to match Donna Summer's BPM, and pouring green tea over a bowl of plum rice, for Charles, the tulips' bearer, who was then sitting in the kitchen's sun
- Sleep:** The act of going out to purchase sweet potatoes
- Snow:** All my extant memories of cooking, birth to present
- Snowflake:** The section of cheese rind I added to this afternoon's broth
- Helene:** The avoided attempt to fit the real horrors of the moment into a lonely, domestic scene
- Morning TV:** Platitudes
- Colors:** Suddenly, I reject the false seriousness of despair, for love

Rainer Diana Hamilton

February 16th , 2024

It's Friday, my day off, and I'm opening my ear
I only really chatterbox
w/ you love. Exhibit a
soft exposé. Allow
a little negligence to show through.
A light blue couch cushion
and your pale foot toe up, like
someone's belly. Even if they
don't think of you, I do. Our
feelings run over and pool
then splash. Sailor is almost full
cat size and still satisfied
with life inside, we'll see. I
once bumped around and acted
the chatty cathy
I'm trying to remember that style
of play and burbling over more readily
Your lips are pooched, one over the other
Later, we'll undoubtedly dance

Lindsey Boldt

Sleep

How quickly melancholy
crowds the heart
I can't stop thinking of lines
about windows now
The cat's voice and company on the bed
A firm and succulent booty handful
spider plants
It's day 133 of the war in Gaza
~~A hummingbird appears just briefly~~
~~A hummingbird appears in and out of frame~~
I have nothing to compare it to

Feb. 17th

Waking up sick today or not quite.
A sore throat is as good
an excuse as any to stay inside.
Even with last night's snow fall
making the world seem somehow
more bearable, something to look
at as it blankets the cars
in the street below. Holly comes in
to show me a video she made
of kids in the park dragging their
sleds back up the hill from
our rooftop. To do nothing even
when distractions come
like someone petting a cat in the room I'm
writing to you in hopes this will
bring us similar pleasure someday.

Joey Yearous-Algozin

Sunset Park

Three Sutras or The Making of
the Pre By Francis Ponge. Riding
the N train to write a second poem.
Whether I can avoid anger or misplaced
resentment. I wish I knew what you
were feeling. Allowing the other
their own mind, my analyst says.
Bright days are cold in February,
Allowing them to be complicated
just as pigeons sleeping on
a streetlight on 5th avenue in
the morning, walking later to
the same train, or in flight are
beautiful and knowing they are.

February 13-19, 2024

What am I waiting for? Some day
to sweep over the glaze. The cat
breathes, her small body rises
and falls. I put my face in it.
“So / beautiful and / things keep getting /
in between.” That’s Jimmy, and it rains
today. I write for friends, but also you—
at Payne Whitney, while I in another
timeline, sit on a bench at John George.
A woman handles my intake. I remember you.
Out of comprehension. Still raining
five years later. A fork in the hand.
Another day of whatever you call it—
sustenance, on the drive to Marin
where the wild-
flowers bloom.

Syd Staiti

Fork

Norm said a nickel used to
mean something. Umbrella shakes
out of my hand, well, what are we
waiting for? Something quaint,
a little quibble, someone wants to be
given a chance. The hunger chomps
through this diptych, yeah, I don’t see it.
I’m not trying to be difficult.
I love my friends.
The friends who come see you
and the friends who don’t.
But the reverse?
It’s okay, I want to say,
you can give your needs a break.
The rain on a dark blue night.
I say, hush. I say it’s okay.

FEBRUARY 23, 2024

afterward is much as before
the sky comes on like a mood
writing my name to fill out
the afternoon's worksheet
"I have a blah de vivre"
so I come into the air
alone with one earbud
(the other listening to Music
for 18 Musicians on the tracks
of the **B Q**) and the air comes
into me as the day rubs off
must I take the physical world
so personally? at this, a raccoon
tiptoes across the frozen pond
I'd like very much
for that to have to do with me

charles theonia

PERSONALLY

the room without us in it
one miniature plate with orange
uncountable cat fur
coxcomb seeds
a thumbprint on a cup of water
subway flowers, in a bag, between feet
a non-representational portrait of the day's
companion, a fire escape garden
our glasses spooning on the sink
I want a warm room for everyone
sweat on upper lip, the kind
you get free, just from being
residues on hands
a hair dried in paint
where we've been
that's where we'll meet

February 23, [YYYY]

Tomorrow is Earl Sweatshirt's birthday. A real big heavy mirror painted gold. Painful to move, & of course not spaced right for studs so you need to improvise to hang it up. Like a giant phone you can talk to yourself on. Or someone right behind you.

Coffee-filter-colored moon tonight. "Like" doesn't really enter into it, like speaking roles cut from a play. I've typed something dangerous in the message box to Kyle. I'll look at it tomorrow & see if I still want to send.

Loose Februaries falling from the stack of tea towels. A score ago would have been the first time I saw you. Your hair was silly and I wanted it. On that angle, that sharp turn from not having seen to having seen, you could miter a perfect corner of my life.

Tom Snarsky

February 23rd, 2024

Tomorrow is the Paradiso
event I might attend
that. All the way up
California till University
and a little past. The sun
it will be 69 says the
weather a valentine
we'll all suck dick across
the lawns. Violet worries
Drew has covid. So
what do we do with the
friend who would crash
on our couch? Sliver the
window. I'm the same size
I was. Tomorrow's sun's lace's
flat between the pages shines.

Sophia Dahlin

Quit Your Art Job

The friends who commandeer you
and the friends who won't.
Whatever's in the window.
A bit tongue.
Actually my back has felt okay.
Plated girl scout cookies two kinds.
Nails white at the tip.
Kari Edwards pronounced
with the short A of western Mass.
But a name is more illusion.
A full snow moon in San Francisco.
Black backpack on the couch then not.
Sitar across the slideshow.
Everyone I talked about
in therapy today was at
the reading but the baby

Tomorrow is a boat I'm not
responsible for keeping afloat.
How can I sleep after this day
stitched silk through the hole
in our whole of it. The moon is
bare ass full wattage outside
the show which is a party we've
only just started throwing till all
the world's gone rosy. She yawns
we're speechless we're three
kisses at the door. And how
now will I unwind unspool my
consciousness? Someone is walking
their dog nears midnight. Later I'll do
things I'd never do now. Longing to
remember the light was said was sung.

Rose Linke

The days who know
and the days who don't.
Weather can volta.
Downy ankles.
Reminiscing is a kind of anticipation.
Water may be blue, black, gray, purple,
red, brown, green, yellow, or clear.
Like a bruise moving through phases
of grief until it disappears.
"We remain unwavering in our
commitment to our mission."
If you see a dolphin you say "dolphin!"
The daylight fizzles like a dud firework.
Wind tatters.
Constellations in shattered glass.
Where did you get those marvelousnesses?

Sunday 25th, 2024

A proposition is a
an invitation, a pageant
is a promise to put on
your party dress. A year
is the slow unpeeling
of the skin from the
grapefruit pink sky. The
party got lost in the post. The
cold is the next disaster
you decided not to have
coffee. You said black tea.
No milk. No sugar. Just tea.
Right. An order is a sequence,
a dance is for turning, you just
throw the saucer out, loosen
the curve at the far side.

Ed Luker

Crochet

By hook means there's crooks
between your stitches, stitched
up and ready to rob the
neighbourhood again, we are
always ready to take what we
Want, even when we don't
know what we want, yet.
Isn't that right mother? She
says don't distract me, I'm
losing the light, I've lost
the tension I'd eye in the thread,
I want to get back to the end of
the part. Where does the gold
Glisten. Glimmer. Mother, we
are so proud of you, we crooks,
less haste fills the sack up.

Storm and After

February, solidity, yesterday shaft of low sun
width of a truck washed out half the screen
where I tried to show my students trailers for
movies they could pick. All of Us Strangers
got chosen by the one whose father died
suddenly years before. “It was a long time ago.”
“Yeah, I don’t think that matters.” Coming home
today from Bushwick, cued that soundtrack,
the Pet Shop Boys’ version of “Always On
My Mind,” but detached from the images
it’s not very good, try Willie Nelson, try Elvis,
not very good, something never arrives.
Another day seems like a defeat, what’s that about.
Now everything’s melting, hat of snow neglected
on the roof as I drive weeps clean water
down the windshield in streams.

Matt Longabucco

No New Year

The paper calls the wanton savage genocidal
widespread dealing of death a “war.”
A woman’s personal life gets smeared in public.
A nonbinary teen—bright in a photo,
defiant on video—is beaten at school and dies.
An “outspoken dissident” is killed in prison.
Sound designer of the new Auschwitz film
recorded cries of real pain at the Paris riots,
claims they’re too hard to fake. Blandest clientele
but this bar, well, to some simulacra you must
simply tip your hat. All week matchbook,
scrunchie, nail polish huddled at the placemat’s
fringe. A speckled ceramic cup. Pink glass.
Bubblegum vape. Our oils smeared on surfaces,
our chimneys of breath. To find out what matters,
ask what’s furthest from their thoughts.

Magnifying Glass Before A Trip on NJ Transit

Candle light doesn't show up:
Candle light smudges on the
wall. We work the glass slowly
to invert the Greek vase
cached out there, uncollected.
Two stops I tell myself, but
lament I can't look out the
dirty windows which cast
the reeds in a foreign
yellow or watch swamps
I can't name. Olivia will
send postcards of her dreams.
What a thing to expect in the
mail. We've lost Bentu's letter
opining on Tzvi, I now
wonder if he even sent it.

Peter Goldberg

Vase

"She wants to keep going,
but I think I don't."
Clay brick retreating skyward.
Vines draping.
One thing focused into view.
The scissors open beside the candle.
Eucalyptus.
Bullet lock and safe co "looks
like a museum of
beautiful door handles."
The nipple bar down the drain.
The snow melts by the time it's night.
Ramen botched into carbonara.
Smearred foreheads.
Quest for the great whatsit.
OK, right, I'll call you later.

February 25th, 2024

Tomorrow is supposedly Monday
but Wednesday's been replaced
with it too. Constantly making up
for all those lost
days off. I can't decide
if I'd be more useful to step
double time to cold,
sun, and strangers or slowly
develop a shriek of world-
shattering frequency. Imogen can't shake:
cops are alive but who's
not. The sense that always the wrong
people are dying--which seems mostly
true but not precise. What do
I do with my imprecisions? I fantasize
bashing them against a whetstone.

Becca Teich

Lost

The things that happen when utterly alone
And the things that happen when not.
The jagged rising hours.
A crack of sensation then quiet.
The keys are uncertain.
A swift change in plans.
Receipts.
An empty shelfspace: non-
specific memory implies gift.
Like Sahar, a learned vacuum pleasure.
A calendar made of graphic exchange.
"It makes me a little queasy."
A tension of trust when without a map.
A jilted loop.
Glue dried on the knife.
Offer it up, again, anyway.

February 25, 2024

In obscurity, we meet again,
if time is what I think it is,
sleeping late on a Sunday,
the stink of flowers wilting
after the funeral. In the sink,
the dishes, too. It presses
the day forward: and what we got
to show. I'm thinking of the lone,
the final particle.

Of life in art, in light. The sound
of you, at once familiar and obscure.
Thready, at some minor
betrayal just before bedtime.
Meet me in obscurity, in
the February chill, in the decades
happy and fast and defeated.

Elizabeth Clark Wessel

4:39

otherwise—and really, it's
fine if not—I'd rather stay
in and read, which I guess
you'd understand. There are
things to say, that would have been
said if only time didn't
happen this way,
with its slippages,
things that could be said by
phone, only I know that
from my couch and with space
between us I'd lose the nerve.
So if it's alright with you,
and it can't be said in a bar
or the back of a yellow
cab, I'd rather not say it.

Drew Anderla

New York, February 25

Sunday

Tomorrow is a measure away:
tomorrow I'll measure out
my sins and sense. Being scattered, my
gift nature birthed of the storm
I'd sheltered from. The daffodils
hang their necks, too
young yet to burst the yet too-
thick sepals and the pond
builds a milky skin of fog
below ice. Narcissus is mute:
his mouth, dead as my eyes. How
to offer up this numb litany? Some-
thing hazes the radio signal
in static. I'm still here
singing through my collar. I wish he could
carve my face from the war in his mirror.

Kelly Hoffer

Wakeful

My wants attuned by dreams
and the wants my sleep denies.
An exterior of an exterior, the delicate rim.
The vein in a marble.
Again an ellipsis blinks itself out.
Lidless Tupperware.
An articulated wing.
A thin morning hour: full-
fleshed fruits on the mind's tongue.
flags piñatas tulips
The woman at the post office, teeth
stern, offers me stamps.
Unlike myself, utterly sure.
Puppy-fresh boys build
a dick out of snow. Let me see, in the winter,
anything but myself.

Sleep

The cats who bite,
And the cats
Who sleep. The
Thunder
And the constantly
Repeating song.
The new friends
coming over
Again, the one
Who's never
Late, who's name
You forgot,
The other side
Of the
Dream (on the
left), there's
That new streetlight
There now,
and you saying you
Like the smallest
Smallest bowl. A
Puffy sticker
On my neck.
A sparkle,
An ache.
There used
To be another
Way to say
It like music
Or the way
Children speak.
Oh yeah,
I love it.

February 13, 2024

And tomorrow is
another last
day, and Monday is
a year away,
and love is
a closer memory
now, and César Aira
is somewhere
near, and Pablo
is on his
way, and Vik
and I can sit
together silently
if we want
(real friends)
and Cynar is
still Cynar,
the feeling is
not the same
but it's always
the same
information, it's
not over yet
because I can
stop again,
I do have
what I did,
though when
I look through
the pictures
(mid-week)
it's just my
hands running
across light.

Alexis Almeida

Will We Make It to Morning?

It's a leap year, and so what do we want to do tomorrow if love is always and only thinking about today? Michelle's just home, a little wave of woodsy jasmine lets me know. She'll put her mail on the table. I always want to open it and decide for her—she won't pay you on time this month, then into the recycle bin; but that's a federal crime. And, also, recycling is a hoax. I've got this uninvited miracle in my body and it's trashing the convenience party like tomorrow knows something about it no one else does.

Ken Walker

Still Night

These minutes, perfectly distant from the work day, where I ate my lunch at my desk. Is that traumatic or occult-ish, either way, I can't wait for that minute, too. From a near siren, I can sense the machine in a perfect memory of its birth—fresh off the assembly line, without purposes. It's unseasonably warm so I wonder if the person in the ambulance is being told by the engine that they're both actually one thing. I can't stand that simulation theory—another dot on the mappa mundi, a better conspiracy theory is one attuned to disparity. The distance is both getting further and closer; sleep for a better elsewhere.

February 26, 2024

Nuts. No one noticed
my new haircut. When
did I drift that far from
you, er the world? I
forget. Now I'm being
texted to vote: can't
take it anymore. Delete
and report junk. Text
Steve the green party voter guide
but admit I don't know
what it means to be
green. I mean I get the
gist, tactically, but. Laundry
and tacos. Only the bottom
machines are working. Beer
is nine dollars? Strewn and
ungainly, shirts and socks.

Jacob Kahn

Dreams

Poets reading a poet's obituary
in *The Times*, thinking no
it's not, it wasn't like
that, at all. YouTube compilations
called something something
but it gets increasingly more
x. That variable is consistency.
Arvo's kinesis is still pretty
liquidy. Half of Karin's
mouth is still numb from
the dentist. The scarlet orchids
with the ruby red tongues, now's
their opus. I use several sprigs
of tarragon, that mysterious spear.
50 milligrams of generic Paxil.
Makes my dreams feel empirical.
Zurich: end of the alphabet.

February 13, 1975

Tomorrow is St. Valentine's:
tomorrow I'll think about
that. Always nervous, even
after a good sleep I'd like
to climb back into. The sun
shines on yesterday's new-
fallen snow and yestereven
it turned the world to pink
and rose and steel-blue
buildings. Helene is restless:
leaving soon. And what then
will I do with myself? Some-
one is watching morning
TV. I'm not reduced to that
yet. I wish one could press
snowflakes in a book like flowers.

James Schuyler

Sleep

The friends who come see you
and the friends who don't.
The weather in the window.
A pierced ear.
The mounting tension and the spasm.
A paper-lace doily on a small plate.
Tangerines.
A day in February: heart-
shaped cookies on St. Valentine's.
Like Christopher, a discarded saint.
A tough woman with black hair.
"I got to set my wig straight."
A gold and silver day begins to wane.
A crescent moon.
Ice on the window.
Give my love to, oh, anybody

After Mayer

15 FLORÉAL

and really, therapy today
will need to be about going back
to those flybottles of history
when the landlords weren't winning,

Andromache, a vision
of loss so monumental it becomes writ
into a name, becomes etymological
like how when you get stuck writing
a poem you can go back to the dictionary

and divine, pray for the holy food
of sense to be meted out to you
by the birds who have never been landlords
who have resisted anti-bird architecture
however they could

and lost, sometimes, but also
there's a forty-second video called
Bird Throws Anti-Nesting Spikes Off Ledge
that can be like a little liturgy for me

and you, our improvised nest
where we clean the honey jars
and hang up your embroideries,
matching pillows, a bug that says Don't
Bug Me and a snail that says Don't Rush Me

Tom Snarsky

June 6

and watching, faced with the utmost distance,
distance afforded by the plait of distant scales or
totally fucked, what I came for, fucked the belief
in a universe, as it were, “brightening”

and scarred, skin opened in infancy to inspire more
distance & whelmed by the bloody flow of infancy
to insist and experience life as a mutilate spectator,
so that scars can be picked in peace for the sake
of desire

and desire, I had wanted to sheer it,
toting my open belly around, like a debt owed
to the municipal bonds of childhood terms
and conditions, mutilation, an affect sewer draining
off my sick joy

and conditions, always dreading the psychic shock,
a coincident vertigo ceding sexual survival and
attaining the end of that tunnel before we get there,
on these conditions an entire history is proposed

and you, a displacement of the watching the scar
the corpus desired and the conditions of repose,
not the angle, but rather the bent rhythm within,
desiring the clockwise curve that cuts you from ass
to mouthing the words in this poem

Dale Enggass

June 21st 7:17pm

and scaffolded, telling her about a field then it being smaller, being its relation and the bugs on the grass, in clumps. the man with the grey shirt goes on standing in—somehow there's you in the well of footsteps, better "than anything"

and cataract, for example, i gave up my sense of it for the shallow conveyor of snow, we have milk in the fridge now, from before we discovered the sublime. he was afraid of it, in there being no speed to it. my numbers do not refer back to memory.

and not now, earlier, falling into the rosicrucian mode. making clippings of things made me feel stupider and stupider—a man walks into the elevator, she looked down at her pussy. i make a depiction to create tension, she said, with the sound of a plastic umbrella, with the green fringe, a kind of beach

and roses where she walked, so an assertion. beneath an enervated lake, I could feel it expanding then, orange walls, how one tries to resuscitate interest. you can take it like a team—we walked by cones and it was an impossible ending. me surrounded by self-sabotage, your camera and your wife .

and i, reach out in a way that can only be described as avoidance, as the soft puddles come up from the ground, it seems, it being set to a kind of perverse functionality. then again, there were those, the ones who did know what happened, and that being a different kind of thing.

Bianca Rae Messinger

FEBRUARY 25

And versatile, requesting to be vacated or filled on grounds
Of lust or striving begotten of market microritual one invents
Rather than immediately undergo its summons, not so resentful to hide
What from incident emerges, displacing speed for memory modifies rest “in place”

And loved, for if a sharp knife is safer true love is safest
as passion necessitates technique & focus no longer budgetary
consuming in excess as color is, the way desire coaxes
inexorably its testimony unlike the workweek’s impasse
it is so near,

and near, I had even anticipated the clouds on my navel, cleft between my sides
guffawing I am closing onto your breath being amnesiac
of the oblong day that blooms into its wild vernacular
or lack thereof, night gouges & stands guard

And all these poses, such beautiful poses, mistranslated by shoulders,
capitulate to borrowed closets, whose darts gash
memory with proportion, sound with sense, from with function & now
I’ve committed to the performative contradiction

and you, object correlative, the versatility the love the
clarity and the pose with you in the present
refreshed in the furious need of knowing, of needing to always have
known, obsessed with exacting and to be exacted,
relinquish in writing, release.

Brian Ng

FEBRUARY 25, 2024

and clever, you know, like a small animal somehow surviving in the cold, you have to figure out a way to do it, find shelter, a little crack in the wall or some other kind of shell, spiritually speaking, I mean, as if speaking spiritually was actually a thing

and appreciated, you know, appreciated for actually being able to find the little crack and actually being able to recognize the shell as a shell, sometimes you just assume it's part of the rest, especially in the dark, and it's really very dark in here

and dark, you know, like the inside of a black bookbag scrunched up inside another black bookbag, that's real darkness, I mean, a real space of dull velvet energy where you really have to rethink things, fingers and toes over eyes, stillness over movement

and movement, everybody loves movement, everybody always wants movement movement, but if you're always moving, how can you even know what it is to be still? wait, that's not right, now I've said the opposite of what I mean, but I guess saying something and then its opposite is itself a kind of movement

and you know, between being clever and being in movement, how do they find time to sleep? sleep is the best and dumbest arc around, really, it begins like it ends, and who even knows what happens in the middle, who knows how they make it out there in the cold, how they possess themselves in sleep

Simon Brown

History

The February 25 Society was founded on December 1, 2022, when Ted Dodson texted Rainer Diana Hamilton a picture of Bernadette Mayer's poem, "February 25," asking whether it was a form she "made up," or something recognizable. We each tried to identify the form, wrote a poem in it, and then [invited others to do the same](#). In doing so, we turned Mayer's form into something reusable, like a sonnet, or a sweater, or tupperware.

This year, we did the same with Schulyer's diptych. This volume contains poems we received, whether following Mayer or Schuyler's originals, between 2/26/2023 and 2/25/2024. We will do the same next year. Send poems (or a request for next year's prompt) to february.25.society@gmail.com.

