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AURORA AMERICANA

*The most interesting thing about emptiness
is that it is preceded by fullness.*

—JOSEPH BRODSKY

1.

She leaves me outside among yellowing
aspens. Hemlock branches
discarded dying on this iced clod.

Corns in the ground whiten waiting for another snow.
Fissured face the skin of me fissured.
The leather of a carriage no longer

fit to front a manor with sequoia moldings
or doors carved in California shipped
to Louisiana to shut in that house.

Made for another girl now dead. Her mother
made me out of that tatty carriage-seat leather.
Made me as she evoked her mother's

country dissolved in seawater.
I'm the leavings of seawater left cold.
Forgotten in cold.

Forgotten in this northern place.
They've forgotten what I've not.
The dark is without forgetting.

That woman filled me with pink
cotton that annual spell when
cotton explodes that gaudy hue.

I'm holding time in the dark waiting
for the dappling of sky.
I hear them.

I know them.
They'll do the thing that wrecks.
They're unworthy of themselves.

This knowledge wrecks.
But a jester?
That jester?

His brashness a theory of this land.
A quality encouraged for navigation.
I'm not protected.

Cold unprotected at night.
Solitary at night inducing
more creasing more

staining as they stain themselves as
they beg for regression. As
they beg for the nineteenth

century the century I was made.
Hold the clock's clicking.
Turn it back make-make America.

She leaves me to see this night.
To see blue televisions through windows.
To hear raucous commentary.

She leaves me to see this night to
freeze among the frozen.
There's yellow in the trees tonight.

The girl who leaves me wears
a yellow dress.
Her boots are white.

2.

I voted for snow frost crystals.
I see them falling.
I've been falling into myself.

I see myself with myself.
I hold my own hand as I walk through snow.
I walk with my twin.

I wish for a country of twins.
Our slacks are patterned with stars.
We're partisans.

We believe in the belief.
There's only one belief.
There's only one nation.

We're the founders of the nation.
Our blood for this nation.
Our blood in this nation is the nation.

We see it in sunset.
All that we've given is sunset.
We aspire to what the billionaire has built.

The lavishness of pink marble
wild in our sleep.
We want what he has.

We believe what he has is his.
We believe his dream is American.
We believe his reality can be ours.

We believe in oligarchy ours.
We're waiting for the chalice that goddess's
slow pouring of shine.

But that frozen doll frightens me.
I'm walking away but I keep
craning toward it.

Its face of creature its darkness
on that which is frozen.
I leave it there.

They're left. They're not me.
We voted for snow its perpetual system.
Radically radical we voted.

3.

He wanted me away.
I want him away from
that public house.

In his dream I'm the boy
locked in steel.
There's water in his dream.

I sink.
He saw my hands reaching
from the steel until they didn't.

I was a boy.
We were boys.
He wanted to kill the boy.

He wanted the boy dead
in steel quickly
a man in steel not of it.

We became men in steel.
In the paper he bought our
capture shouted execution.

Years in steel.
The sky's steel here.
It's cold here.

My daughter is here.
I want her to play.
Be a good girl play.

I want him away from
that public house.
How is he a choice?

Up in Michigan near Lake
Superior waiting for spirals funnels
of jade ginger light.

This dawn is near but which dawn?
Which will be created?
So cold here in this north.

The north wouldn't protect.
When has it ever protected?
When has this place protected me?

But I'm trying to protect my
north my daughter
in winter-white boots.

The breeze isn't silent.
I want him away from
that public house.

I stare skyward yet I see
the glare of televisions.
My daughter's fingers are cold.

4.

My father is afraid
but he doesn't say it.
I came in from playing to see

him to be around him.
His hands are colder than snow.
His hands are chapped.

*Why are your hands so cold?
The past was cold. I don't want
the past to permit what may come.*

What?
He embraces me. The world
is around me.

Snow strange I'm waiting
for something I don't understand.
Will you wait for me?

I'm here forever here around.
He's angry at the television.
The blue of the television

is what's inside him.
If I could open him an abrupt
door I could open step into

the blue step into brightness
burning my eyes.
I'm quickly blind

within the blue of my father.

He mentions *jester*.

He mentions *clown*.

He mentions *criminal*.

He mentions *killer*.

Where's your doll?

I have left her without knowing.

Left her freezing left her among snow
without protection.

I have to find her.

Go find her.

Bring her inside.

My coat like skin fake fur on skin.

I'm running back to save
the one I forgot.

How could I forget her?

She has been forgotten before
but I didn't want to forget.

Everything tall green

heavy with whiteness.

My father is upset even

when there are auroras

above him above me above
this country.

5.

It isn't dawn when she returns.

But I thought if there will
be a return it will happen at dawn

when America shows what she
hides what she whispers what
she denies in conversation what

she calls crazy in public.
I know this place.
I know its makers.

Those with soft
hands rough always
rough within. They smile

yet hide tundras.
Within them tundras with paths
lined with wet spikes.

Something dead on the spikes.
Something dying on the spikes.
She's kissing me.

I'm being carried kissed
among firs snow blowing.
They will do it.

They have done it before.
Regression angry at the lie
they can't keep from questioning.

I'm loved by a little girl
who knows nothing of me.
I want her father to scream.

If he doesn't he may die early.
He may leave his daughter early.
So many men leave their daughters early.

Don't be shocked.
Perhaps you've left your daughter?
Fissured face the skin of me fissured.

Does she know what these fissures hold?
Does she know what she holds?
Does she know what

her father's holding?
What he doesn't say
when he sees her when

he sees the jester?
His hands are over his ears.
She sees him on the porch

as if holding his head together.
It could erupt.
It could combust St. Helens.

Dust fire smoke like
that mountain.
We're all combustible.

But first implosion.
The birches within us falling.
Not the leaves in autumn

but the trees themselves falling.
Paper bark mangled.
The hidden thump that

crash beneath ivory cages skin.
This isn't greatness.
This isn't noble.

A terrible enactment in
the dark the light the cold.
She drops me on the porch

to hold her father's face.

Hold me.

Hold.

Hold.

Hold.

Hold.

6.

I'm cold here.
Waiting as blue hits my face.
I've made a fire.

Crackle.
Crackle.
My son burns marshmallows.

They're gooey on graham
crackers. Chocolate melts
on sweet sandwiches.

The auroras are rare.
I want my son to see the auroras that
which is possible in sky.

This was my place as a boy.
This was where my parents took
me to say this is ours.

This piece of it is ours.
We feed ducks bread.
But what bread feeds us now?

There's poison in the bread.
We're losing.
So much poison poison

to survive but we
are surviving without ourselves.
Save us.

Save us with your wealth.
Save us with the way you make wealth.
Fire what's killing us. Burn the ground.

Wall us in. We're being killed.
They're killing us.
Aurora.

Aurora my love I'm
waiting for Aurora.
When you come will we be saved?

Auroras in that sky swirl in the cold.
O beautiful for spacious skies
For amber waves of . . .

7.

This is reality?
This is a reality star?
His reality isn't our

reality but they believe it can be.
Their reality is fake.
Their false reality exists in their minds.

They're convinced of their reality.
Some realities are based in trickery.
They want their reality.

But how can their reality be true? The nonexistent true
only when reality is hostage. They've swaddled reality
in deception making it *true*. Oh he changed my reality that

reality of innocence to criminal.
My reality became prison.
His fake reality made my reality my

reality of childhood to manhood fugacious.
My reality of custody trial conviction
was his the country's made reality.

The reality is it is almost dawn.
The reality is my daughter is sleeping.
The reality is this place is now more dangerous for her.

The reality is auroras are stunning.
I'm staring at the reality of stunning auroras.
I'm in a reality stunned.

8.

Dawn gleams.
In my dream my father is content.
He's unworried.

He's lifting me into cloying light.
I'm wearing a dress of light he has made.
So many are waving at us.

We're waving back.
A chalice of light is poured
into the sky.

Snow is falling.
Snow the color of light is falling
but we aren't cold.