Hypercritique: A Sequence of Dreams for the Anthropocene

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If a Dream Comes

> If a dream comes—but what sort of coming is a dream's?
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> (Blanchot 1995: 101)

> The book has lived on this lure: to have given us to believe that passion, having originally been impassioned by *something*, could in the end be appeased by the return of that something. Lure of the origin, the end, the line, the ring, the volume, the centre.
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> (Derrida 2001: 372)

> To say that life itself, in its current iteration, strewn with and striated by violence — including the violence inflicted on and by language — is like clutching a little mound of dust, does not seem hyperbolic.
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> (Latimer 2018: 175)

What sort of coming belongs to a dream? Existing suspended, *to come*, now, is to place impossible faith in the possible: that passion for "*something*" which answers as closure, fulfilment, echo, return. The conditional tense, "to have given us to believe", as though this were the very text we were each receiving. And I call you from dreams like the siren, and I am more of each line, the outwards spread which you circle to end, ellipsis, still typing, which you centre but do not settle. The anthropocene, this hypothetical epoch of the lived, the literal extinction, asks us (and could it) to see ourselves coming as pure expenditure, general economy, the discharge of species.[1] And so I ate the lure and let me go. What sort of coming is the anthropocene, which already came, the old joke of the end

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[1] The term Anthropocene, which situates humankind as universal force at the centre of geologic agency, may risk smoothing nuances of historical reproduction and vast inequalities in the distribution of ecological culpability and suffering into what Daniel Hartley calls "abstract materialism", in which we are purportedly "'all in this together'" and "thus belying the reality of class struggle, exploitation, and oppression" (2016: 155-156). In decapitalising the anthropocene, I hope to resist its classifying totality and narrative determination as an epochal term, and instead consider it as more of "a thought device that helps us to visualise the multiple event of extinction" (Zylinska 2016: 178) within mutating understandings of extractivism, consumer capitalism and technological advancement.

on our lips? With which to speak, that which writes, imbibes the longest sea of it. There is an idea of writing which is littoral inscription: what Tom Cohen calls the "*twilight* of what it names", a projected "proleptic anterior 'inscription'" (2016: 23). I look towards what is already written, a blurred horizon; it eclipses, it leaks and rises, it bears a tidal sweep. I want to ask of this "it", is this it, or this; this is it. The moveable portion of volatile thought

Towards origins, say. Could we start here, with poise? The "Anthropocene" is a literary problem: it "can only ever think the past in its proleptic trajectory toward our present" (Hartley 2016: 156). Hypercritique responds by way of a lyric indeterminacy which stages the bewildered temporalities of capitalist production, deep-time, human and more-than human life, death and dying within the momentary 'present' which is lyric's "dominant" tense: bearing within it some promise of truth, observation or performative commitment to the future (Culler 2015: 284, 290). I make a tear in the pristine, unborn dream of the page. "I would like so much this unknown untorn page. Everything we read remains", enthuses Hélène Cixous, "I want the forest before the book, the abundance of leaves before the pages, I love the creation as much as the created, no, more" (2014: 104). To repeat that space of *before*, the land, and make abundant, to love the creation, to ask of this immortal remaining — what is it to read, to be on the land? To think the processual force of poetics within the end of a world, its ending already. To love the creation, to hesitate in this charge, to envision writing's material emergence from timber, forest and trees. The forest as prefix to the word, to dream it. Is the forest of potential writing closed or open; are we supposed to get lost in the arboreal excesses of shadows and leaves? Having written into and from this forest, what remains — can we still lapse into the "before" of a source? For I would not strip the forest of leaves. For this writing I would expose to the same wild winds that fell the trees. If, as Cohen puts it, "*Everything 'knows'*" our state of extinction, what of this "*climate change 'unconscious'*" (2016: 29) — the heartwood, say — could salvage a space for recalibration, motility, sounding out, the speculative movement towards intimacies which bypass the logics of extractivism, capital and consumption? Knowing what we know, what writing is it that goes beyond the book, containing the whole forest, whose lures proliferate in the existential realm of abundance and nightmare? What writing is it that opens the conditions for speech: "To say that life itself"; to iterate, knit, to attempt a stitching of such dust and cinders as the world becomes. It is all the leaves we draw from.

I invite you to consider this writing a *hypercritique*. As a prefix, "hyper" bearing the sense of "over, beyond, over much, above measure" (OED 2019). A hypercritique is that which plunges into this "beyond" that cannot be stilled to "measure"; a thought which inhabits the dreamtime of the extra-sensible, which overspills its human limit, which lives, which is, like a wandering drawing "without a stop" (Cixous 2014: 105). I am

trying to get at how we enter into, reflect upon, move through and inhabit in a sensual, kinetic and embodied way the lived experience of the anthropocene: an epoch defined by its self-referential state of "proposal"; the geopoetics of humankind thought as species; the tracery and sediment of ecocide and climate breakdown within various scales of experience and agency. Hypercritique assents to Andreas Malm's argument that climate agency "belongs *exclusively* to those humans who extract, buy, sell and combust fossil fuels, and to those who uphold this circuit" (2018: 220), while also including within its remit the repertoire of action, affect and thought belonging to those marginalised by these circuits.

Spilling into available realms of art criticism, journalism, poetry, performance, collaboration and online vernacular, hypercritique *as a practice* occupies a marginal academic register whose circuits of cultural response and production extend beyond the university. Hypercritique is likely the mutant child of poststructuralism, affect theory, everyday studies, lyric intensity and the experiments of late twentieth century New Narrative writing.[2] Tom Cohen writes of a "*hyposcript* that traverses hyper-industrial algorithms, old textual accretions, and the encoding of cells and life-forms", a script "hard-wired to robo-proprietizations" (2016: 64). Consciousness here is increasingly harnessed to the algorithmic structures of targeted advertising, real-time archivisation and the "Artificial Intelligence" of capital, cast into the creative charnel ground of Web 2.0 and its jostling haunts of sponsored content. A proprietorial, overarching definition of the "Anthropocene" (as proper name) allows privileged groups to come into force through the provision of custom, techno-capitalist solutions. What I am proposing works at the lower scale: here *anthropocene* is subject to analytic flux, refracted in microcosms of daily encounter.

While Cohen fears the "imaginary" of an alternative to "mega-drought, mass extinctions [...] guaranteed ecocide" will be lost to reality-numbed, tech-fixed future generations (2016: 64), hypercritique goes beyond this cultural pessimism. From poetry to pop music, ecological thought is the enduring heartwood of a radical, intimate and affective mode of study. Hypercritique: heartbreak in the middle of the woods, life and death, the fault-lines or constant aftershock; the spiralling, reflexive force that reminds

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[2] New Narrative, pioneered by such writers as Chris Kraus, Kevin Killian, Dodie Bellamy, Robert Glück and Bruce Boone, emerged from the San Francisco poetry scene of the 1970s. Characterised as a hybrid, autofictional writing, New Narrative is a queer and densely citational movement whose subject matters veer between "highbrow and lowbrow cultures" of pop culture and theory, while exploring desire, subjectivity and the material conditions of lived experience (including AIDS) through a style which "eludes closure", while yoking historical experience to a lyric unfolding, where "Excess is paramount" (Tremblay 2017). Hypercritique draws its performative force from cultural analysis, autography and poetics to situate the anthropocene as a shifting, historically mobilising frame of reference in contemporary society, culture and the natural sciences, to recognise that "Culture is a constitutive moment of abstract social nature and vice versa', a 'dialectical relation' which 'is a constitutive moment of value in a Marxist sense" (Hartley 2016: 160).

us of how and where "we" are as precarious beings within the capitalist systems that hold us to crisis. The Covid-19 pandemic is a pressing example of how globalised trends of ecosystem disruption, through pathogen contact increased by species depopulation and free trade, resonate through everyday *life* in the effects of lockdown, social distancing and financial crisis, played out against a refrain of infection and *death* counts. If Western metaphysics depends upon the privilege of life, hypercritique must expand its horizons beyond *biontologies* to encompass what Elizabeth Povinelli calls "geontologies": whereas the former define "Being" as "dominated by Life and the desires of Life", the latter refer to "a set of discourse, affects, and tactics used in late liberalism to maintain or shape the coming relationship of the distinction between Life and Nonlife" (2016: 17, 4) — a distinction which a virus strongly troubles, as a "nonliving parasite" thriving on a "living metabolic system" within the web of life (Villarreal 2008). Hypercritique reads the anthropocene across historical regimes of Being: between life and late liberal distinctions of telos and death, which marginalise Indigenous knowledges and practices (Povinelli 2016: 6). Through interventions of felt temporality and thought, it drives toward the im/possibilities of ending the "immortal" biontology of capitalism's "perpetual augmentation" through crisis and limit (Salvage Editorial Collective 2020). Hypercritique, like New Narrative, stages the tension between the individual subject (as confirmed in the propriety regime of the signature) and a definition of "life as a force, a dynamic movement, an unfolding of potentialities" within "any ethical framework" (Zylinska 2014: 119), grounded in the material contingencies of expression and language.

Touching Absence

Writing of a "desert" of "seemingly indestructible misogyny", "environmental violence", "the violence of racism and poverty", Quinn Latimer opens this proposition – "To say that life itself" – of a universal burning: the desquamating conditions for a speech that comes away from its subject (2018: 175-176). The ecological thought of hypercritique must "attack", as Daniel Hartley implores, "those elements of capitalist civilisation *which appear to have no immediate relation to ecology, but which are in fact internal conditions of its possibility*" (2016: 165), those elements which Latimer names above. Amidst real conditions of violence, life flakes away into life; like dust, it is here and there in the cindering, trace relation of bodies through history — from slavery to reproductive labour, institutional oppression and resource conflict. Dust, Michael Marder argues, "transgresses the boundaries between temporal modalities. Dust is at home in non-linear, non-sequential time; everything obtains in it all at once" (2017: 46). Dust represents the swirling mass of the anthropocene *as a simultaneous temporality*, but not one that eludes historicity so much as *a felt collision or plenum of histories*. The implication of Latimer's claim against hyperbole is that hyperbole *just is* the existential

state of our times. And yet in such generalising or meta-thinking, there is a flattening out of myriad historical moments and material conditions: the anthropocene as accumulated gesture, a dissatisfying dust cloud of bewildered cause and effect, action and event. Blank dreams of psychic discharge without human narrative: motes of the punctual, lost years and cells, the signs we'd use to clear or connect. I think of that dust as periodic mass, matter's escape. That very precise dust in the room when we woke in bursts of gold, and knew that none of this could "last". The agential[3] play of dust on the book, released to light, was never bound to the book at all. I think of the dust as one of many commentaries on what it is to *think in things*, resisting anthropocentric claims on nonhuman use value for something more like a dance with ~~our~~ *time* plus time beyond ~~us~~, "the image of eternity stamped on every least bit of material reality" (Marder 2017: 46). And yet not the eternity of capitalist (re)production but that of life without determined value: a trace escape of something specific, "a protest, lodged at the heart of mortality, against the finality of death" (Marder 2017: 46).

What sort of dream is it that wakes into matter, to life? For Maurice Blanchot, the dream comes "only by way of forgetfulness": we cannot summon or "recall our dreams", as though they were merely the mnemonic devices of thought (1995: 102). I want to think of the dream as a crucial mode of hypercritique: a sounding out of the gestural, the excessive, the metaphorical, the intuitive and affective dimensions of the anthropocene; a critical strategy whose space of passion is Cohen's climate change unconscious. "Just like commodities", argues Samo Tomšič, dreams "appear as an unproblematic universal experience" of spontaneous recognition, but moving through them with closer analysis can show up the disjuncture between "the imaginary aspect of dreams, and their structure" (2015: 272). Hypercritique takes seriously the "unconscious labour" of dreams to consider other kinds of fantasy beyond "the fetishisation of capitalist abstractions" (Tomšič 2015: 274, 278), as they manifest in popular narratives of disaster and individualised, Promethean empowerment.

While implying a kind of force, hypercritique nevertheless exists in the realm of weakness, of lameness, the humble settling and levelling of our bodies to sleep. My use of this term draws from Timothy Morton's hyperobjects: those "things that are massively distributed in time and space relative to humans", defined by properties of viscosity, nonlocality (here the dust falls from afar, a particulate fallout), nonhuman temporality and interobjectivity, ushering us into "a new human phase of *hypocrisy, weakness,* and *lameness*" (2013: 1-2). Morton's examples vary from Styrofoam to petroleum, capitalism and global warming itself. Do such examples risk the "abstract

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[3] Although borrowing this term from Jane Bennett's "vital materialism" (2010), I evoke not so much her "theory of distributive agency" as a writing conceptualised within atmospheres of material sense. Hypercritique posits an im/possible materialism whose incident is exactly *now*, in the performative moment of composition: its daring is that you might at any moment shut the book, upset its dust, take otherwise action. And what is that burning smell in the distance?

materialism" which Hartley suggests is inherent within the term "Anthropocene" itself (2016: 155)? Hypercritique must engage in the vital and tensile nomenclature of the body, of specificity and sense, while grounded in the everyday life which its "I" refracts as the voice of one or more tendencies. A series of orientations and intensities whose theoretical borrowings are, in tandem with hypercritique's New Narrative ancestry, somewhat promiscuous, contradictory, always in conversation, zoning between scales both localised and planetary: "In passion and affect, detachment and attachment, this is what I call cultivating response-ability; that is also collective knowing and doing", writes Donna Haraway (2016: 34). Less a declaration of certainty than a circling of proposition, hypercritique *cultivates* thought towards the possible as "a rhythm of attention" (Hejinian 2000: 62).

What lyric "I" persists in this phase of hyperobjects, the "Age of Asymmetry", in which "our cognitive powers become self-defeating": "[t]he more we know about radiation, global warming [...] the more enmeshed in them we realise we are" (Morton 2013: 160). Stuck to the sap of the heartwood: intimacy, horror, disorientation. As I brush against hyperobjects – a pale, discarded medical mask underfoot evokes by synecdoche the global pandemic – I am drawn, writing, into the question of what I can or cannot touch. Sarah Jackson asks, "If a text can function as a skin, how might writing work to touch us?", and how might "a rethinking of touch [...] [unsettle] our ideas about ourselves and the world around us"? (2015: 5). To recognise one's ecological enmeshment is to be touched, often by absence, the felt silence of *no-insects* on a warm summer's night; but also presence, as I scrape micro-traces of carbon from my face before bed. Through a *poetics* of embodied attention and sense, hypercritique feels into the textures that define our experience of life, death and time. Sand, cinders, shimmer, foam and smoke. Oil: the liquid embodiment of dead organisms. And for that textural attention (a language hewn smooth, still rough, burning or glowing) to reflect the unconscious labour of dreaming. But where do I go when I dream — what poetics could touch the space of planetary breakdown as a viscous experience of various findings, stuck in their improbable intimacies, streaming, asking?

It is to enter a song in replay, its labour. In "bury a friend", Billie Eilish sings in the pressure of questions: "*Why aren't you scared of me? Why do you care for me? / When we all fall asleep, where do we go?*" (2019). She could be addressing a lover, addressing the planet; having honed our anthropocenic sensibilities, what still matters of scale? That last line, forming the title of Eilish's debut studio album, is surely pop's substantial thought towards an impossible commons, where love is a thirst, we devour the resource, the juice, in self-destruction: "*The way I'm drinkin' you down / Like I wanna drown, like I wanna end me*" (Eilish 2019). And this reference to the self as the object pronoun "me" forms the song's refrain, "*I wanna, I wanna, I wanna end me*" (Eilish 2019), a stammering which is not suicidal ideation so much as this excessive longing to drink fully of an

oceanic feeling that would be the self's symbiotic experience of "limitlessness" and universal communion: what the poet, theorist and "student of the dream-state" Jackie Wang attributes as a form of "communist affect", whereby "the oceanic can be a point of departure for new socialities and political models that do not rely on discrete selves" (Wang 2016a). This *I wanna end me* is yours or mine, it's us; a motile expression of being's transaction in the space of fluid exchange, response-ability. "In the very mark of our defeat and limit we are given a time to come; we are given a 'we', a 'humanity to come'", the "promise" of what will be "the case" is only "*certainly* one possibility" (Colebrook 2016: 105 – my emphasis). How we are scared yet care for each other, unable to fathom exactly what particular crisis will become us, even as actual wildfires, floods and hurricanes accelerate beyond *this* written moment. Hypercritique thus dramatises the problem of singular 'example' in the space of event cascade, beamed to us through 24/7 media. This is nevertheless a reason to live, to co-create, coexist and think in many ends that are happening. This litany of "like", teasing a metaphoric axis of the im/possible: as though we really could drown, could die; *as if* in our lyric relation with otherness, the commons of dream. Every "*I wanna*" of this song belongs to you, dear listener, lisped with the almost soulful, eerie robotics/erotics of auto-tune, sampled screams, a musical bareness held in darkening, snarling bass, each line barely sung, but whispered: every "*I wanna*" is the first thirst of a thought beyond thought. As we say with jocular, millennial sincerity at the end of a bad day, "End Me". This *iterative* sense of end feels playful, generative, a kind of refusal, somehow distinct from the "cognitive theatrics" of "*climate comedy*", which Cohen characterises as our contemporary (read: mainstream, Western) thirst for dramatised eco-annihilation (Cohen 2016: 21). Every "*I wanna*" is the tidal hook of an end prolonged, is a future-thought, a sampled scream, a jest, the bathos of an almost-kiss. A care without transaction, maybe.

Hyposubjectivity

In their entry for *Lexicon for an Anthropocene Yet Unseen*, a collaborative and speculative glossary of terms intended to provoke new takes on anthropocene sensibility, Dominic Boyer and Timothy Morton make a distinction between *hypersubjects* (those in "command", who deploy "reason and technology" for "control" and "dominion") and *hyposubjects*: the "native species of the Anthropocene", whose emergence is *happening now*, whose existence is "multiphasic and plural: not yet, neither here nor there" (2016). Such a distinction is, in itself, untenable: and yet provokes a thought experiment. Essentially, if we may playfully speak of essences, the hyposubject is in a dream-state (state as in both affective condition and sovereign body) of neither arrival nor departure, a thickening drift between times, an iteration of life whose being is scaled up, hyperbolically, to that of a radically annihilating species. One's infra-being in the dream is possibly free; its sovereignty cannot be signified or determined. I know that I am to

blame and not to blame; I am held in contradiction, hypocritical, whenever I lift the lid to this laptop, which by twilight emits a smoulder of extractivist legacy – interiors of tin, tantalum, tungsten, gold – byte by byte of pixelated, contested histories. And subjectivity is the very drift in that state, which is open. A hypercritical thought: it is to find oneself constantly born into clarity, a thought of no-thought, of nothing:

> I was born a few instants ago and I am dimmed.

> [...] I don't think just as the diamond doesn't think. I shine wholly limpid. I have neither hunger or thirst: I am. I have two eyes that are open. Toward the nothing.

> (Lispector 2014: 36)

Clarice Lispector's narrator is at once "dimmed" and made clear, "limpid"; she is this betweenness of knowledge, a shadow-light, the ontic state of shimmer. Sometimes this "shimmer state" occurs, dizzyingly, when we say, "I did not know it could get any worse". Beyond wanting, hunger or thirst, there is a declarative "I" that faces "the nothing" before it. So we glimpse extinction thus. To be born is "like" having one's "impulse [connect] with that of the roots of the trees" (Lispector 2014: 36): it is to think in the forest of language and what is before it, literal as metaphor is a transit state, deeply the symbiotic feed(s) of our hyper-mediated dream state, scrolling. Just as the diamond, born of carbon, base element of life, crystallised thought of risen heat, of earth. The diamond closed of thought reflects; are we almost envious? A song is coming; "[t]he air is '*it*' and has no perfume" (Lispector 2014: 39). No signature I could ascribe to the feeling: only bewilderment, that which "circumnavigates, believing that at the centre of errant or circular movement is the empty but ultimate referent" (Howe 2003: 20). Hypercritique is that swirling movement itself, spacing endless between text and event, augury and its failure, the forecast and the rain on my skin.

Hyposubjectivity resists gloss and definition. Boyer and Morton claim hyposubjects "are sceptical of efforts to summarise them, including everything we have just said" (2016). What other elsewhere do we talk to in ourselves, the vaporised words between instants remaining? The claim of hyposubjectivity itself is a kind of Derridean lure: a trace-mote of subjectivity in transit, whose writing is also erasure, whose writing remains. Hyposubjectivity is différance as the spacing of the existentially (im)possible, of thought in excess of what writes and is written. Spacing in the ripple of skin that is a sentence, to be sentenced; to give over my writing in difference, deferral: a kind of "literary tact" between you and I which evokes how "tactful writing tends towards its own interruption" (Jackson 2015: 8). Spacing in the middle where we already found ourselves, thickly in crisis, even to wake the same every day. Cohen again: "the time now opening promises without promising to be one in which the most interesting narratives in the human chronicles remain to be played out or written, *without promise*" (2016: 77). We are breaking up with the earth yet inside us. Born from this state in continual

return, hypercritique is a writing that, "performed *in extremis* becomes unwriting. It un/does itself" (Pollock 1998: 83). Is this it, then, the state of the hyposubjective, this "place" we might live, an extremity beyond measure? Etel Adnan writes that "'It' is not an animal. Not glass. Not a pencil, not a wall. Not an erasure. [...] Not a lamp. Neither eatable, nor perishable. Not to be approached by negatives. 'It' is endless" (2012: 20). Neither illumination, writing, reflection or the bordering hold of a wall, not to be consumed or wasted, the "it" is the iterative, proliferating force of hypercritique as a striving towards the infinite in a time of extinction as promised limit. But I am promising nothing. The "it" as "the 'id' stuff we don't want to acknowledge" (Herd and Dunlop 2019), the morass of impulses and instincts trembling beneath the surface of daily life.

It gets close enough to ask, if there is no perfume, is there a taste? "Listen: the world becomes progressively less edible", writes Bernadette Mayer (1975: 46). Hypercritical perception lives in this blur of between, of synaesthesia: a less edible world follows the sound of its utterance. "Pollution activates a potentiality in the organism to be otherwise" (Yusoff 2017: 75). The hyposubject of the anthropocene faces this ashen sense of a poisoned world that can't safely be consumed, a place where "I am made there as someone else" (Mayer 1975: 46): where writing transplants identity as endless (re)poeisis, adaptation, metabolic adjustment, digestive upset. I want to stay awhile with that endlessness, neither you nor I; my glassy prose, my saddest paragraph, the condensation of your breath upon it and everything perishable of a thought as spoken. For Adnan was already unravelling herself: "Not to be approached by negatives", even as the negatives of "Neither" and "Not" gather fast in her own definition. *To have given us to believe that passion*, to touch and not-touch, it is a writing.

What Sort of Poetics

"The poetic, let us say it", implores Derrida, "[i]sn't that already it" (1991: 227). This sentence a stitching of dust, death's kiss, dreaming the wound. After the digest of text, what remains is this *it*: a cindering essence that lightly chars the skin, crisps with warning, a taste or smell or sound. "Eat, drink, swallow my letter, carry it, transport it in you, like the law of a writing become your body: *writing in (it)self*. [...] You hear the catastrophe coming" (Derrida 1991: 229). A break in consciousness: "*I wanna end me*", hold that pause without bodily sovereignty. So in reading you would forget the hunger you study, and you would make it your heart, the coming that belongs not to you but the dream. Hypercritique: opening within the circadian cycles and glitches of this life, the life, the hyposubjective state. A reciprocal writing, influence, making effect:

> Life partakes of the earth, requiring its forces to survive; but in turn, life elaborates the forces of the earth [...]. It is a temporary detour of the forces of the

earth through the forces of the body, making them an endless openness. (Grosz in Yusoff et al. 2012: 975)

Hypercritique is the elaborative force of life and its beyond in symbiotic relation with earth, its agential surge in the body, its poeisis of openness as tendency making. Its poetics incorporate that gesture of both "impossibility and surplus of exposure" in "fragments of affect" recovered from indeterminacy "to build a politics" from "wild material communication" (Yusoff 2017: 83). Its carriage is metaphor, a vibrational exchange between beings and distances. "A cloud surrounds me", writes Mei-Mei Berssenbrugge in her poem "Singing", "I expand into its stillness and / receive tones conveying information very past" (2020). In long, enjambed lines, Berssenbrugge's cirrussy lyric is the sung and porous relation between channels, cells, feeling, knowledge and thought: a scrolling transport of "worlds", "data" and "memory" in the "longing", dialogic space between species (2020). The entanglement of animals, elements and temporalities. To let you in, to be less me.

For Derrida, "[f]orce is the other of language without which language would not be what it is" (2001: 31): force partakes of language just as life partakes of earth. And my writing partakes of citation as force: a thickening of voices whose streaming is always what is already said as saying: being, in turn, multiplicity, the elaboration of life that was formerly said, or death that was the condition for text, archive, taking time. Hyper-citation as the practiced enmeshment of openness within writing, the spreading of simultaneous presence, each name as lure, the (im)possible explanation, elaboration. With hypercritique, I inhabit the technics of language, poetics, for what Bernard Stiegler calls *negentropy*, or negative entropy: the potential built from all forms of life which resists the entropic veer towards chaos, a potential which harnesses defence against end, which regulates metabolisms and energy inputs/outputs. The idea that we might "redefine economy and desire" as an exit out of the conditions of the anthropocene, (Stiegler 2018: 57), its excesses of resource expenditure, energy peak and climate cascade. To establish thought itself as care, something eaten or drunk, dreamt: a fruitful noetic imperative (Stiegler 2018: 62), a tender handover between life and death.

Hypercritique is thoroughly *sympoietic*, in Haraway's (2016) sense of a collaborative and co-entangled mode of being which disrupts the normative apparatus of neoliberal subjectivity and anthropocentric perspectives, the alienating aggregation of desires and optional identities fostered by life online and its driven consumerism. Hypercritique: the self as disseminating motes, capsuled dreams beginning to metabolise in bodily time, the infrascapes[4] of poetic context, structures and scaffolds always shifting and reattuning.

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[4] Borrowing from Robert Smithson's term "infra-criticism", I consider the "infrascape" (infra: *below*, scape: *scene*) as a scene of writing whose premise is always that of dissolve, erasure, collapse, rearrangement; and yet from whose trembling foundations we might write towards a negentropics of the possible. Smithson, for instance, mentions a kind of writing "deploy[ed] [...] as a pure spectacle of attenuation", a

We might think, for instance, of Hannah Weiner's "intense autobiography", where the confessional mode situates the body as "a site of experience and experimentation where the limits of the self" are teased through and against "a public, community, and/or social discourse" (Donovan 2012). The intensity of sympoiesis as collaborative, material performance brings us closer to the iterative question of what is possible in literature, between writer and reader, what is literature's impossibility:

> Literature has a context in life…[A]lthough in many ways I could succumb to a state of dreaming, non action, non communication, I fight it. …To consider what is going on in my mind and around me, directed by whom? is the prime object of my life at this moment. To sort out the signals that come to me. To make intelligent use of them—is that possible—my intelligence is rational and the rational intelligence cannot cope with the foreknowledge… Still, in order not to be a puppet or to give myself up completely to forces I cannot understand, I am taking part of consideration. (Weiner 1978: 15)

There is a hedging here, to say coyly that life is a context for literature, to put one before the other in a kind of ontological hyperbaton, the overstep of language and world. By avoiding commitment, we keep open the possible. Hypercritique attempts to sound out that "context in life" as a kind of vibrational scaffold for dreaming beyond the structural rhythms and limits of late-capitalist labour imposed on our day: the mediated arousal, constant attentiveness and productivity demanded of what Jonathan Crary calls "24/7" (2013). To dream in plurality, dreaming presence, the (im)possible beyond regulated consciousness. It is to "fight", as Weiner does, the temptation to "succumb to a state of dreaming" and rather parse the signals that would be a dream-to-come, in lieu of an otherwise fractal suspension. We don't succumb to the dream; we enter, swim in, announce it. The problematic messianism of the dream is in Blanchot's question, "but what sort of coming is a dream's?": this almost tender query of what a dream would become, what dreams desire beyond or in excess of their human belonging? We have to dream *beyond ourselves, to end me – the terrible jouissance of micro-apocalypse*. Writing might be that looping, sympoietic tautology of what dreams the dream in mycelial sprawl and knot of metaphor. Weiner's ellipses, her parentheses mark thought in motion, the written-in-time. Her intense autography is a processual poetics of reflection, arrangement and clairvoyance: the entangled lure of the origin asks that we enter, partake "of consideration" itself. Hypercritique tries to fabricate a gestural space for others to come in. There are forces I cannot understand, you cannot grasp, we cannot bring within our dominion. This realisation is the transition from hyper to hyposubjects, in Boyer and Morton's sense: in the trajectory of a hypercritique, to ask is it possible to

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textuality where "Thoughts are crushed into a rubble of syncopated syllables" and yet "charged with all the complication of oxymoron and hyperbole" (1996: 78, 80). The poetics of the infrascape are, then, also that of escape: where meaning is discharged into energy, affect, force; where we might say something of language as matter itself; a heartwood of rot and growth.

parse those signals given in life? If data is what gives, and cloudily[5] now gives in such proportions as to seem almost unreadable, how do we make intelligent use of the endless gift, its stream or feed? It is surely to hold in that quivering space of partaking *in* and *around*, the textuality of life *itself* as material signalling, paradoxically, impossibly, still in drift. Hypercritique as attempt to read, write and perform within and in spite of the anthropocene's ambient sense of the impossible,[6] implied by disaster, the short-circuiting of thought in technocapitalism; it asks what it means to live on, and what *it* means. "So much time's gone by", writes Bernadette Mayer in her *Studying Hunger* journals, "The record is endless" (1975: 46).

Sensing Extinction

"A poem is stored energy, a formal turbulence, a living thing, a swirl in the flow", writes William Rueckert, "[p]oems are part of the energy pathways which sustain life" (1996: 108). Over twenty years and several billion burned tonnes of fossil fuel later, such a gushing claim for poetry may seem naïve, materially insensitive, over-reliant on the resources of base textuality. And yet, what happens when we make a claim for "a formal turbulence", a vitalism in poetry? Released from what William Rueckert calls the "critical [tyranny] […] of pure hermeneutics" (notably, the New Critical orthodoxy of dissecting or extracting a poem's hidden meaning), hypercritique considers poetry as "stored energy" within the "pathways which sustain life", offering "a verbal equivalent of fossil fuels" (Rueckert 1996: 110, 108). A hypercritical reading would think through what is moved in a poem, what moves us, what "doing" is that moving and how might it relate to the "doing" and generative turnover of life. "A poem is a hormone" writes Lisa Robertson in "The Seam" (2016: 17). It lives in the circuits of bodily system, homeostasis, arousal, the resources of ink, paper or pixels that make the page. A poem could be the doing of an ending, expiration, no more me, another value after the reading; it could be the motional coming to terms with ecological entanglement; it could be the glistening instant that births me again. "Now look at this sentence", coaxes Madeline Gins, "I see a plate of desert ribbed with dunes held in place with drops of slime just above a layer of petrified tentacles. There is nothing in this sentence" (2020: 90). Language torques upon the

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[5] Here I gesture towards The Cloud (that vast archival facility in which our data is stored "online" – thus "everywhere" – and physically held in energy-consuming data centres), but also a kind of veiled or clouded thought, encountering the disordering scale effects of knowledge and discourse in the anthropocene. See Hood (2018).

[6] If ambience refers to the disruption of figure and ground, then ambient *impossibility* concerns a spatial relation of touch and gesture in the middling between exit and entrance, cause and effect. What if thinking the impossible was an act of radical hospitality, unconditionally inviting others to respond, knowing, queerly, that its own expression (the even name *this* anthropocene) was also failure? Dissolving borders, ambience is the generative dream tissue of subjunctive knowledge: "*as though the impossibility of marking out a stable territory where thought could be established was provocative of thought itself*" (Dufourmantelle 2000: 56).
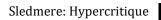
im/possible content held in form; hypercritique invites us to play with that shimmer between what is there and not, in the weight of that summons and bearing. A poetic infinity is a constant fold, a thirst, enmeshment: "When I catch a fish perhaps I need to have been caught by it" (Morton 2018: 149). Hypercritique is the hesitating mode of this "perhaps": the critic must tremble on a line, now lured by the more-than-human, a giving over with no guarantees. The darting eye, the "I" that opens into nothing, drinking you down. A reason to release, to share, escape into multiple currents through the free associative logic of dreams, that jump between the imagined and actual: "The more possibilities are suggested, the more possibilities exist" (Gins 2020: 90).

Writing as a poet, I want to think of hypercritique, then, as a propositional force that deals in both desire and dissolve, a tuning power, a rippling between subjectivities, scales and forms. "I know that as a poet, it is not my job to win you over with a persuasive argument, but to impart to you a vibrational experience that is capable of awakening your desire for another world" (Wang 2018: 319). The hypercritic relays a series of signals, picked up from the circuitry of texts, the affective continuum of their present. Hypercritique stimulates awareness of lyric subjectivity as the open access mode of a felt extinction. "Perhaps", and again in the mode of hesitation, "we are visiting with and sounding out an affective dimension, however impossibly, something like a *feeling of extinction*" (Tiplady 2019: 19). Is this feeling yours or mine? I find myself caught, as though in a song, *echo*: the very "troubled nature of lyric poetry" itself, "condemned to hapless repetition of the cadences and sound associations in others' utterances" (Riley 2000: 111). The lyric force of hypercritique admits its constant debt to the (un)conscious rhythms of others, of other expressions: we swim by necessity in such braided currents as would hold the universe. This problematic "we" might only be you and me, dear reader ("life in its current iteration"), as I write with this echo of another, as I write without claim for others, only to let in that future force of who or what they could be (Tiplady 2019: 21). Of course, as the Salvage Editorial Collective remind us in their editorial "Towards the Proletarocene", the "possibility of political response to the Anthropocene turns upon" the question of "who" (and I would add *what*) is this "we" (2020)? The "we" of hypercritique is constantly subject to dissolve; it riffs on that oceanic feeling of who I am when the sea is inside me, the salt already, the bacterium before bacteria, the singularity ready to generously end, me, the earth's waste, to say, in vibration, the quake.

In Natalie Eilbert's poem "Bacterium", a weird synchronicity of appetite, energy and thought come to mark a potential exit/entrance:

The night fills without us but I warned you, I was full

already. A banana inside me blasted open a door,

my thoughts at the threshold of such a door blank. Love

transacts, a figure in the distance crowded with window.

> (Eilbert 2019)

Eilbert's speaker dares us to envision a night without us, an inaccessible plenitude in the space of the negative. As though the other is wanting and offering at once, the speaker refuses, "I was full / already". What energy generated here is thus negentropic: the metabolic overload, the banana which blasts the door (poetry's potassium), is then regulated into a kind of symbolic architecture of possible transitions. "Love / transacts" is a passing happening, simultaneous to the proximate multitude of "thoughts". We have dreamed many doors, yet are they only the "blank" of thought, the aporetic openness implied in the end of that sentence? Eilbert's long and regular lines seem to scroll, enjambed, a parsing of scenes through scenes that won't resolve: the reverse is happening, the window crowds the figure, lame and anonymous, the screen is teeming, you or I can't tell the difference between figure and ground; "we" access only transaction itself, affective exchange between poet, reader and speaker. What window so vividly would more-than-filter, would crowd the scene? Is this lyric in the anthropocene? Is it that I open the window, *I* before *eye*, and access reality, a breezier dream? It could be the scentless air of a heaven sent, or the vibrational pain of all we know is missing, a beam of loss. What is the relation between matter, ownership, sovereignty and love in times of crisis? "Salvage-Marxism is a disaster communism conditioned by and pining for a party form that it knows did not deserve to survive, and did not: learning to walk again, pain in that phantom limb and all" (Salvage Editorial Collective 2020). We require a hypercritical mode to hold this disaster against austerity, dehisce its loaded seeds of possibility, release some salving condition for a thought in excess of what we are otherwise given. With extinction, "there will be no going back to life", as Jemma Deer reminds us, "[e]ven if the planet can return to a previous climatic state" (2019: 5). How do we think in this space of the irretrievable? It is surely like a love unrequited, inclined towards death, yet to live.

The Stream

If only life left us with metaphors.

But we are lucky if life

leaves us

with life.

> (Wakoski 1972: 26)

The night without us is also opening, I want to say, polishing condensation from the dome of this essay, where I am dimmed. And for what, you might ask. "There are no concrete outcomes", admits Kathryn Yusoff, "but sensibility is *potentially* political in so far as it is a site that unearths resistances that row against a current of reductionism and subjective enclosures" (2017: 88). Against the abstract materialism of the Anthropocene, its reductionist definition of Man and thrusting of histories into the "Golden Spike" of industrial origin, hypercritique addresses rivulets of social relation whose currency is the lived poetics of the anthropocene — its cultural vernacular, its lyric proliferation of subjectivity, encounter and *flight*. This is to agree with Malm that, given the anthropocene's discursive influence, "it has become a reality to reckon with" as much as "part of the problem" (Malm 2016: 99). The fortune cookie wrappers of our gnomic sentences are so much waste materials of too-slow critical reckoning in the realm of failed predictions. No explanation is entirely sufficient in hypercritique: it must always lie in excess, or be open beyond that limit, having burst the door, unearthed some force that would otherwise stir up, disrupt the regulating dam of techno-capitalist reason. But hypercritique must dream in low-carbon measure; dream an occasional gentleness. For all its desire, hypercritique shies from the "fix". It is at once thought-experiment, contradiction and intervention within the poetics of *experiment* itself: it tests the limit of its own register, its conditions for existence. What can I do in the space of an essay? What are the mnemotechnical parameters for producing the (im)possible, which is a felt crisis, unfolding with no obvious conclusion? What space does the essay contend with my doing?

In her lyric essay, "TBH IDK FTW" (which we might parse from internet vernacular as *to be honest I don't know for the win/fuck the world*), Sophia Al-Maria begins with an image of Dorothy Parker's grave, with its famous epitaph: "EXCUSE MY DUST". Writing back through the analogue world of Parker's time as an editorial assistant at *Vogue* in 1915, to the informational excess and fragmentation of the twenty-first century, its Kardashian economy of follow, like and influence, Al-Maria evokes the simultaneous flattening and charge of affect and value within online discourse. Of the internet, she writes: "I'm afraid of erasure. The wiped drive of my mind. I know I know nothing. There's less and less to understand every day. Information ground into digital dust" (2019: 62). This is Cohen's hyposcript, the techno-proprietization of knowledge which our imaginaries threaten to dissolve. The entropic conditions of digital information, especially in the context of our proliferating access to climate data, force us to confront what this "nothing" constitutes. For it dwells in ourselves and hardens with every hour spent browsing. In writing the internet as Al-Maria does, confronting its detritus, its excess, in the ordered, lyric space of a book — the book that is "its own archive, the imprints of its coming, of its trial" (Calle-Gruber 2002: 75), for this is a book, *Sad Sack*, of reference, compendium, extract, screenshot, process, invitation — does Al-Maria harness a negentropic, that is, *hyper*critique? To be honest…I don't know…and yet I am

holding this essay *for the win* at the same time as *fuck the world*, the long hard *fuck* of the time we are wasting.
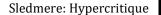
To Erase It

For am I not wasting time with this still? And yet what is the "it" that "I" should be doing? Surely it is more than treading water, skirting the forest, upsetting dusty metaphors? Hypercritique: "[e]ffacing itself twice over—once as meaning and reference, twice as deferral and erasure—", "[p]erformative, evocative writing […] shifts the operative social paradigm from the scientific 'what if' (what *then?*) to its performative counterpart, 'as if' (what *now?*)" (Pollock 1998: 75, 81). So we stammer at the lip of the forest, the tongue of the sea, these acronymical shortcuts to a communal affect (TBH/sincerity, IDK/nothing, FTW/assertion), I wanna tell you the end of you & me. There is a maddening line from a song by The 1975 that goes "*And I always wanna die sometimes*": in the song's title, this "sometimes" is bracketed, as though to parenthesise that which calls lyric hyperbole[7] to account, to ensure we always hover between the absolute assertion and its qualified condition. What is this dying I would always want? Why does it sound so catchy, held in the sugar-rush chorus of pop? What self of myself to erase, to "*collapse through entropy*", to be "*me through geography*", as the song says (The 1975 2018)? Against the teleology of capitalist accumulation, I would erase that line again, as though to eat less text, taste dust, remember the material basis to speak, be infinite, perform it. What is the weight of negation? What gratification could be had beyond capitalist economy? What otherwise "value" could become "the arbiter of the im/possible" (Yusoff 2017: 93)? "A millennium of money", "TMI" (too much information), "a leaden cloud of pollution" (Al-Maria 2019: 62-63), or perhaps the dust becoming a poem itself, a thing that would carry—

And what remains in a stream of light, or liquid? A lyrical stream. A poem called "Legend":

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[7] A term I borrow from Jonathan Culler, which refers to lyric's ability to play with questions of scale, emphasis and value, to hold that "apparently trivial observations are of considerable significance" as much as events of vast proportion or effect might be captured in the relatively modest space of a lyric poem (2015: 59). By applying this term to the lyrical effects of pop music, I hope to invite comparison of the parameters of affective encounter offered in "mainstream" culture as well as the relative niches of poetry.

> More grief was pouring
>
> From me than I could comprehend
>
> [...] I was not the one
>
> In tears. "It" was.
>
> & there began my history
>
>   (Reines 2019: 18)

It is to acknowledge the energy and affect we release without necessarily capturing them for logical understanding. This lyric refusal of emotional identification — "I" am not the one in tears, but "it" was in tears — held in the ordered free verse of two-line stanzas, mostly enjambed, spilling a thick rain of each other. *Indeterminate happening*, the salt tang of lachrymose secretion held in the poem as a history claimed, finally, as a performative: conditional on the crying of the poem, the poem containing a cry. The "it" of a volatile subjectivity is held in the tears of the poem, formal gestures of a grief in excess of the speaker's ability to speak beyond certain material and symbolic details, untranslated, the spiritual remnants of legend, "some words in a foreign script" (Reines 2019: 18). This "it" is not necessarily human. "Being is being beyond human", writes Lispector, to speak not of "death", but "of life. It is not a state of happiness, it is a state of contact" (2012: 182), like dust. And for all my metaphors, what remains of life to give or be given? In time, in time; "the time of poetry, which is a time in which the animal is indistinct from the human", a time in which "the boundaries between life and death" are similarly blurred to give way to a fleeting experience of the immortal (Dayan 2009: 2), a time which is also distinctly "my history", bearing its grain. A poem performs its own immortality. And what use is immortality for thinking the ethical demands of deep-time, causality, coexistence and scalar confusion in the anthropocene? Perhaps, in crisis, it is this impossible immortal I could crawl into: "[t]he word 'immortality' protects and shelters death", yet "immortality" might also be "an extreme form of presence" if presence itself is "something dreamed of" (Wood 2009: 65).

Living On, Letting Come

Perhaps instead of immortality we swerve, lyrically, into "*a matter of life death*": "a death that life cannot survive, a *material* and inorganic death, whether we call it matter or the absolute expenditure of energy, a *realist* impossible outside the opposition of impossibility and possibility, and a matter of time" (Lynes 2018: 13). By thinking within this impossible, we must detour "towards an affirmation, however un/limited, of the futures of life death on earth", to recognise, dreamily, "the other's living-on" in the passivity of the *letting come*, while nevertheless acknowledging one's "obligation and

responsibility" (Lynes 2018: 13-14). As "a transformed and transforming modality of utterance", "both self-ennobling and self-transcendent" (Hall 2013: 117), lyric, and especially lyric situated explicitly within the anthropocene, permits entrance into a presence beyond us, here, as human life on earth that was. To think an otherwise impossible openness. Its hesitance or pause is not always the passive event of a drawing back, but the act of rhythm, of striking: "Rhythm is a striking, but rhythm also strikes us. It comes by surprise and interrupts one's work, one's progress, the working out and through" (Wood 2007: 145). As with Morton's "perhaps", the *glas* clapper of Jacques Derrida's (1986) funereal bell, or the lightning-bolt fingers of Justine in Lars von Trier's *Melancholia* (2011), hypercritique as lyric can strike and be struck, by attending to the everyday it ponders what kinds of strike might be required to interrupt, to feel in the body, to sound an im/possible toll against the capitalist rhythms of life as we know it.

What would it mean to summon the impossible in the space of a poem?

The core of this fossil is you.

On this day.

At this moment.

In this place.

Heart beating.

Blood coursing.

Air breathing.

But you are not alive.

You, are the illusion of human life.

A Homo sapien asleep without dreams.
(Al-Maria 2019: 40)

Originally taken from an audio guide written for the Serpentine Galleries Bridge Commission, Al-Maria's lines of opening dactylic force comprise a summons, hailing the "you" of the poem to the geologic heart of a deep-time split between past and future archives. A fossil can serve as the "legend" of a species writ on the earth: what of our traces remain, what future anterior does the poem contain, what braille or bray of embodied translation? What heart is beating, whose blood is coursing, what carbon burning? The immediacy of each short line, end-stopped to suggest the weight of presence and pause, belonging, warms us in the vascular and respiratory circuits of arousal, before refusing those very signs of life — "But you are not alive". And yet the

speaker does not say *dead*, rather "the illusion of human life". There is an indeterminate questioning of whose soul is at stake in the poem, whose "core" of bodily time would gesture to the originary blessing: "For time's first kiss…" (Al-Maria 2019: 40). "Ellipsis always marks the passage—or the non-passage—of the not-said" (Hall 2013: 32). The not-said of what happens next emits that sense of denial we are faced with, a refusal of relief: "For some caress that isn't coming?" (Al-Maria 2019: 40), the speaker almost cruelly chides. 'On this day': that recognised signature of Facebook's insistent archival overlay in the *now*, teases us with specificity, yet also leads through elliptical, declarative phrases. What significant event would split a thought beyond itself? Is this a felt extinction? A context? "You wipe the algae scum from the window to see what life is left" (Al-Maria 2019: 39).[8] Her detour of thought through the second-person is surely an absolute thinking of life death…

And the poem ends with this stir into presence: "Open your eyes, / Open them, / Now" (Al-Maria 2019: 40). This hyper demand of a coming vision. Yet in suggesting hesitation rather than closure, the commas tremble on the delay that is coming to birth again in the space of the poem. I think of Lispector's two eyes, opening towards "the nothing" that is the "Now" — the poem's im/possible limit. I sometimes always wanna die. "To think excessively", "to let" the more-than-human "hang over our dreams, in their confinement, is to recognise the potential for *un*working" and so to act in tandem, to "*surge* towards a questioning" of the actual conditions for "an organism to be on its own terms" (Yusoff 2017: 88). Thinking excessively expands the whole sensorium of thought, with rhythm, instinct, bodily gesture. The more I live online, the more I might "conjure an exemption from the biocide underway everywhere on the planet" (Crary 2013: 100), and yet if the internet once offered an ethereal realm of retreat, it is now (especially in the lockdown conditions of pandemic, where even some parliaments were moved online) the centre stage for many protests, debates and discursive resistance. Hypercritique recognises its medial relation to the channels, information flows and algorithmic structures of Web 2.0, while pursuing the flight of lyric intimacy within these systems. Whose thought of the "you" does extinction belong to? "When living comes to pass, one wonders: but was that it? And the answer is: that is not only it, that is exactly it" (Lispector 2012: 183).

Turning Away

Thinking in the midst of crisis, how do we arrive at thought? "Writing is not arriving; most of the time it's *not arriving* […] One has to go away, leave the self. […] One must walk as far as the night", so goes the instructions for Cixous' "The School of Dreams" (1993: 65). Is this the night without us, filling up with what we would write, abandoning

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[8] I think of the bright green pages of Al-Maria's book, a performative filter, algaeic thickening.

ourselves at the lip of its twilight, to risk negation? To write against arrival might be a strategy for "staying with the trouble in real and particular places and times" (Haraway 2016: 3), disturbing the dust within infrascapes of encounter, moving between modes epistolary, autographical, critical and lyric in a disorientating *nowness*. As the poet Sean Bonney writes to the Greek anarchist Katarina Gogou:

> I sit there in the dark and I read your poetry. Or rather, I reconstruct from memory what translations of it exist. I stare at the traces of an alphabet I don't understand, and I think that tin the gulf that separates your poetry from mine I might be able to find the beginnings of a counterlight to see by, or a way of pronouncing the language needed to help undermine the fascist tinnitus that all of our sensory networks have become. Do you know what I mean? [...] Nearest I can get to it is a dream I had when I was very small, before I knew how to read, or maybe even speak, I'm not sure. I was in some kind of quarry.
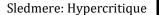>
> (Bonney 2019: 45)

This rhetorical gesture, "Do you know what I mean?", directly calls the reader into the space of dialogue, of speaking and listening. Bonney's strange dream of the quarry feels like the im/possible infrascape of a geologic origin, a mineral or extractive history of labour that underpins the tensions and oppressions of the present — but its transference to value or meaning remains finally elusive, "I'm not sure". The intimate address here moves between the time of the archive and afterlife, Bonney writing to Gogou after she is gone, acknowledging to us, now, the audience of readers, that *his* reading is also reconstruction. Hypercritique seeks "the beginnings of a counterlight to see by", against the authoritative beam of Enlightenment it is more a kind of counterlight, poised between night and day, dreams and realism, past and future im/possibility. To express this in a language that would reattune[9] us from "fascist tinnitus", or what Stiegler would call a repressive "*generalised proletarianization*" of the senses under Big Data, artificial intelligence and other branches of "cognitive capitalism" (2018: 143).

Sometimes the nearest we can get is a dream, but a dream can send haywire the regulatory rhythms and regimes of our normative habitus. "We're attributes in realities we're not aware of. / Dolphins reside in these dimensions, like dreams in / oceans" (Berssenbrugge 2020). As Berssenbrugge conjures Cetacea in the dream plurality of absent-present poetic "dimensions", hypercritique occupies the fluctuating compound of descriptive becoming without teleology. Moving through critical space, it mobilises the im/possible openness of lyric utterance, folding or weaving into its source to write as in

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[9] "attunement is a perceptual event that bypasses cognition and hits the subject the way a song does, as a singular perception all at once that is, at the same time, universal [...] [involving] the recognition of normative or universal principles of being; it organises a potential world" (Berlant 2016: 397-398).

"following a thread in the dark, in a dangerous true tale of adventure" (Haraway 2016: 3):

> Have you ever
>
> in the space of a page
>
> registered the shadow of what you could not say
>
> and saying nothing, all you could say
>
> was the gesture of turning away?
>
> (Wang 2016b)

Inviting the reader into the scene of writing, Wang creates a twist between reading-writing which effects a negative space, the not-written as a darkness, a trace indication of some other, unspeakable presence. This question of articulation is especially pressurised in the multi-generational, multispecies and planetary traumas of the anthropocene. There is a kindness, a gentleness in turning to the reader for empathy here. Through this poem, Wang makes a kind of possible exit within her essay, "Twists and Turns in the Bowels of the Neon Dragon: A Dream Maze". A maze is multicursal, replete with many exits and entrances, not to mention dead ends. It is without singular resolution, arrival, centre; its wayfinding design promotes unworking. I cannot find the heartwood of climate change unconscious because I am lost in the forest. It is a very animal gesture, instinctive, this "turning away" in plainest language. And poetry, as Peter Dayan would have it, "only comes into existence when humans forget to think in an exclusively human way, when they allow their voices and their ears also to be animal, to listen to the animal" (2009: 2). This intensifying of a Keatsian negative capability, or communist affect, becomes the poetic conditions of survival and making-with. Hypercritique might simply be the registering of one or more kinds of human autonomous failure: it is here or there that I turned away from the poem, the world; we had to make another, (un)work the possible, listen, overlooked by that shadow. For you, I had to burn it down in my shame.

The Heart Catching Fire

"The writers I feel closest to are those who play with fire, those who play seriously with their own mortality, go further, go too far, sometimes as far as catching fire" (Cixous 1993: 18). To write is always a risk. Should I not be *acting* instead? I want to write what blisters register the dream of presence, mark a trace of doing's disordered possibility; to write with the "wild, lyric *I* [...] that has no centre and has no way to predict where it will go", a shapeshifting, "*metaphysical I*" (Lasky 2019: 1). To write with this "I" is to contend

with the uncertain, ongoing burning of crisis, to dream alive what would otherwise be written out by the hyposcripts of late-capitalism. "The climate crisis still does not exist for many people; it is not a story with an ending we know, and so it remains a fire into which we place our hands" (Underwood 2020). So how do we access in writing, narrative, poetry, reading, the *hyperobjective crisis* whose effects are distributed unevenly? I place my hands in the fire, I throw in my poems; I get so close you would haul me from flames at the turn of the sentence, reduce it to cinders. Before extinction; thought. "Who would still dare run the risk of a poem of the cinder?" (Derrida 1991a: 31). "Even in our bad poems, I can feel us seeking kindness: as in kin, as in care, as in kind of" (Underwood 2020). Of(f) course, we are never quite there. To be for or fuck the world; to participate "through wounds" (Yusoff 2017: 83).

You have to "go too far", to "play with fire": that threat of annihilation. "To coin a tautology in prose: the conditions for the survival of living thought are poems", "writing a poem involves the need to continually discover the possibility of being able to continue to do so, and to do that it needs to prevent itself from securing the kind of survival it would otherwise continue, uninterrupted, to enjoy" (Luna 2015). In the poem, a kind of unravelling, sabotage or detour must occur for its living on. Hypercritique, in reading the poem through a lyrical mode, participates in this (un)sustainable economy of the written, not-written, that is living thought's survival. "The core of this fossil is you", the heart of a geological text, the beat of a poem still written, not yet. Perhaps the form of hypercritique is, like the dream, ultimately fragment: "*beyond fracturing, or bursting, the patience of pure impatience, the little by little suddenly*" (Blanchot 1995: 98). Like Joe Luna's invocation of living poetry's necessary detour or suspension, Blanchot describes that "*little by little*" of fragmentary incrementation that would give way to the "*suddenly*" of instant (that is it, gone, extinct, yet life or thought). Dimming oneself to the opening that would soften at twilight the forest's shadow, do you turn away / what heart of that wood could you touch, unconscious, could you learn, could you summon in counterlight, from writing. And I want to live towards it, the remembered dust(ing) of a touch, to listen within the frame of what ends and is endless. "The *I* is only at the coming of this desire: to learn by heart. […] the 'by heart' lets itself be elected beyond the body, sex, mouth, and eyes; it erases the borders, slips through the hands, you can barely hear it, but it teaches us the heart" (Derrida 1991b: 237).

Acknowledgements

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