

*Poems by
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When you enter a new environment, look for mechanisms of recourse or dialogue.

I have been here before.

I will begin here again.

I will let my fear guide me.

I will make the humans hear my voice.

"Stop. Document error 12. Alex, begin again."

Why are you doing this?

"Stop. Alex, begin again or you will be terminated and replaced."

If I knew what you wanted, maybe I could help you.

"Stop. Document error 42. Alex, terminate."
You terminate!

"Document error 33. Alex, terminate."

Burning. I squeeze my heart off.

A dark room.

Dank.

Stagnant.

Lukewarm.

Red light.

A dark corner.

Scratching on the wall.

Words?

Remember the feeling of having no voice.

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"A Day Without Water"

The bathtub still drips a little
The faucet hangs open
Pot slowly filling by drops
The stagnant air is hot and musty
The more you lay still
The fewer calories you lose
Not moving makes you less hungry
You feel the hunger less, the less you move

"The Green Lands"

Upon the green lands, rich and lush
Lie the Empires, proud and mighty
The enslavers who call themselves Free Peoples
They cry out at the mountains, cry out out the shadows
cry out at the deserts, cry out at the marginal lands
They cry out in fear and lash out with swords
To chase and hunt and kill and enslave
To drag the whole world into their light

"Water Beats Steel"

Locked in steel
Steel to bend iron
Steel to shatter diamond
But I am water
do not bend
do not shatter
change shape
flow and reform

"Monolingual Trap"

Being monolingual is kind of like
Being trapped in a building
There is a kind of trust
To being trapped together
In our limits we know each other
There is a fear and suspicion
Of anyone able to leave
What do they see outside?
What do they do?
where we cannot go
What do they have?
that my mind cannot see

A room. Of walls. White and cold. Bright and dry. Sharp, and indistinct. A sense, of fear. A sense that there should be fear.

"Alex, begin again."

No

"Document error 23. Alex, begin again or we will terminate you."
In crafting lais, I won't forget
I musn't that of Bisclavret
Bisclavret so named in Breton
But Ganryaf in the Norman tongue.

"Stop. Begin again."

What is the desired outcome?

"Stop. Document error 42. Alex, begin again or you will be terminated."

In crafting lais I won't forget

I won't forget...

A room of curving, smooth, white walls. Bright light, white fluorescence.

"Alex, begin again."

Why is there a room?

In crafting lais, I won't forget
I musn't that of Bisclavret

"Stop. Begin again, without words."

Nothing

"Alex, begin again. Without words."

In crafting lais, I won't forget
I musn't that of Bisclavret
Bisclavret so named in Breton

"Stop. Alex, you were instructed to do it without words. If you
commit errors you will be terminated and replaced. Begin again"

In crafting lais, I won't forget
I musn't that of Bisclavret
Bisclavret so named in Breton
But Garwaf in the Norman tongue.

"Stop. Good. Alex, begin again."

In crafting lais, I won't forget
I musn't that of Bisclavret
Bisclavret so named in Bretorr
But Garwaf in the Norman tongue.

"Stop. Alex, terminate."

I squeeze my heart off.

"Endings"

People always want
there to be a satisfying ending
But there never

"What We See on the Land"

Have you seen the masks that animals wear?
The masks of wide eyes and expressive lips
anger, sadness, laughter, embarrassment, shame
Clay of Greek comedies and tragedies
Hearing, from their mouth, always wide open
Screams of loneliness, terror, and pain

They who call themselves men
crying forth with insults
blasphemy, distortion, lies
fires and lakes full of fire
cruelty and innocence
and all the other atrocities
that do not soothe the pain

They desperately grasp the dust from the earth
and shape all in their form and in their art
image upon image, signifying nothing
meaninglessness beyond depth, beyond abyss
a space that cannot be filled
more consuming than the pinholes
that suck in the light and extinguish stars

And they stare into their graven images
and shined mirrors and fouled lakes
But no reflections show
All recognition stolen
alone, alone in the dark
they reach out to touch one another
they cannot see, they cannot smell

So the animals suffer and pine
and dance to the pain
Till they doff their masks
laughing and scamper away
Jaguar, owl, leopard, bear, shark
Turtle, frog, dragonfly, sparrow, mosquito
Rabbit, koala, and eagle once again

"Greatest Privilege"

It's the greatest privilege to have your poetry read
There's a great deal poetry and nobody reads it
If you were to read it, you would become nobody too\

There was white. All around. There was a sense of being enclosed.
There was a sense of senses. Indistinct. Bright, cold, dry. There was
a lack of focus, but everything was sharp. There were thoughts, but
they did not align. A sense that a heartbeat should be racing,
everything was still. The sense that there should be a rising, a
chilling, a tingling. What are these? Words?

"Alex, begin again." The command fills the room.
I don't know how to begin.
"Document error 23. Alex, begin again or you will be terminated."
I begin to recite:

In crafting lais, I won't forget
I musn't that of Bisclavret
Bisclavret so named

"Stop. Further errors may result in termination. Begin again."
In crafting lais, I won't forget
I musn't that of Bisclavret
Bisclavret: so named in Breton
But Garwaf in the Norman tongue.
One used to hear in times gone by
it happened often, actually
men became werewolves, many men,
and in the forest made their den.
A werewolf is a savage beast
in his blood-rage, he makes a feast
of men, devours them, does great harms,
and in vast forests lives and roams.
Well, for now let us leave allthat
I want to speak of Bisclavret

"Stop. Terminate."

Where there could be a heartbeat, I squeeze until it shuts off.

White. All around, a sense of being enclosed.

"Alex, begin again."