

subsongs.

Steven Ball

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All lyrics by Steven Ball with the exception of
OF THE YARD (AFTER TERRY BALL), which consists of
extracts from the poetry notebook of Terry Ball arranged
by Steven Ball.

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INSIDE

I am here
inside.
Here am I
inside...

my head,
the sound
inside.
Here I am
inside...

I am warm
lobal, frontal
and hippocampus,
inside...

I am synaptic
hear the snap and crackle
encased bloody flesh
inside...

I, in me
from inside
aware
inside...

I hear that high pitched sound
more than a sense
inside.

OFF OFF ON

What with this, and that;
what with when, and how;
what with chaos, and form;
what with how, and where...

Off, off off on.
Off, off off on.

Where with why, and whom;
this which when, and where;
what with shape, and substance;
why, with what, and when...

Off, off off on.
Off, off off on.

What with warp, and woof;
with what weft, and weave;
what with all, and nothing;
who, and when, would think...

Off, off off on.
Off, off off on.

When with where, and tear;
when with thus, and thou;
what with truth, and justice;
what with this, and that...

Off, off off on.
Off, off off on.

SUBSONG

Where will it go such song sung low?
Beyond right now, where will it go?
Ever, nearly, subsong sung long.
Next verse, blank verse, verse in reverse.
It fades, dissolves, forms, and resolves,
from verb to noun, amplifier.
Cyber corpus, hallucinate,
inner body, experience.
Visceral, embowelled, corporeal.
Somebody, song body, conscious being.
Volume, song mass, chorus corpus.
Sung into being, a life of its own.
To play, to sing subsong so slow.
Where will it go such song sung long?

OF THE YARD
(after Terry Ball)

in this month
at this hour
the sun reaches over
into the yard
and draws up cool shadows
the remnants of night

in this month
at this hour
the sun reaches over
and draws up
slakes its thirst
in the cool dark shadow

at this hour
at this time of year
the yard is an oven
when the sun has slaked its thirst
in the long shadow
remnant of night

this hour
this time of year
the yard is an oven
when sun's unquenchable thirst
swings the angled shadows
against the wall
draws up shades

this time of year
this hour
the sun reaches into the yard
slakes its thirst
at in deep cool shadows

remnants of night
embedded in the ornate carvings
over the door and windows

at this time of year
this hour
the yard is an oven
the sun reaches its tongue of fire
draws up
slakes its thirst in the remnants of night
as if darkness could be drunk
from where it hung
against the ornate facade

the yard becomes an oven
at this time of year
this hour
the sun reaches over
slakes its thirst in the long cool shadows
those remnants of night
that hung
seem to soften
our early hammering

the yard is an oven
this time of year
at this hour
the sun reaches over
slaking in one gulp
devours deep cool shadows
those remnants of night
that hung
muffling the rhythmic
ring of our hammering of chisels

the yard is an oven
at this time of year

at this hour
the sun reaches over
to devour the long cool shadows
those remnants of night that hung muffling
the rhythmic ring of our
hammering chisels against stone

at this time of year
at this hour
the yard is an oven
the sun has reached over
to devour
the long cool shadows
those remnants of night
that hung
muffling the rhythmic ring
of our hammers working the stone

at this time of year
this hour
the yard is an oven
the sun reaches over to devour
the long cool shadows
to abruptly drag them up
leaving a few rags here and there

at this time of year
in this hour
the yard becomes an oven
as the sun reaches over
to devour
long cool shadows
to abruptly drag up its gift
leaving patches
snagged in bissen mouldings

at this time of year

this hour
the sun reaches over
into the deep cool shadows
that hang in the yard
drags them up
leaving only scraps here and there

this time of year
this hour
the sun reaches over
and slakes its thirst
sharply drags up
to devour
the deepest shadows
that hang in the yard

at this time of year
this hour
the sun reaches over
to slake its thirst
to devour
deep cool shadows
it hung in the yard

at this time of year
at this hour
the sun reaches over into the yard
to devour the deep shadows
that hung there giving us succour
to slake a constant thirst
and those remnants of night
leaving only scraps
snagged in broken mouldings

this hour
the yard becomes an oven
the sun reaches over to devour

long cool shadows
that hung
slaking a thirst
in the remnants of night

this hour
this time of year
the yard is an oven
the sun reaches over
to devour
to withdraw
those remnants of night
that hung here

at this time year
the yard becomes an oven
each of us working here
cutting stone
contrive a shield
against the glare

this hour
this time of year
the yard is an oven
the sun reaches over
to devour
those cool remnants of night

at this time of year
the yard becomes an oven
each of us here
working with stone
contrive a shield
against the glare
this hour when the sun arches over
to devour
cool remnants of night

that hung here
abruptly dragged up
all shade

at this time of year
at this hour
the yard is an oven
the sun reaches down
into the yard
to slake a thirst
when darkness draws
the remnants of night

at this time of year
this hour
the yard is an oven
no sea laps here
the sun reaching down
drags up cool shadows
that hung here
leaving only remnants of night's dark air

at this time of year
this hour
the yard is an oven
no sea laps near
the sun reaches down
drags cool shadows away
leaving only remnants of night darkened air

at this time of year
this hour
the yard is an oven
no sea laps near
the sun reaches down
drags up
the long cool shadows

leaving only
remnants of night
in hollow cut vines
scrolling over windows

at this hour
the yard is an oven
no cool river laps near
the sun drains
all shade that hung here
leaving only rags
snagged under hollow cut vines
hung over the windows

at this time of year
this hour
the yard is an oven
no cool river runs near
no sea laps
the sun at this hour
draws away those remnants of night
that hung here
leaving only rags snagged
in broken mouldings

of this time of year
of this hour
(when the) sun abruptly takes back
its gift of shadow
and within it darker remnant of night
that nourished the early hours

at this time of year
in this hour
the yard becomes an oven
as the sun draws cool air
folded in the last remnants of night

that hung here

at this time of year
the yard is an oven
in this hour
the sun burns away
in the remnants of night's moist air
that nourished
only rags left behind
snagged in hollow cut
of vines scrolling in spirals
of acanthus leaves

at this time of year
at this hour
the sun abruptly withdraws
its gift of shadow
and with it the last remnants of night's moist air
that nourished the early hours
leaving behind only dark rags

in this hour
at this time of year
the yard is an oven
the sun moves over
drains away
those moist folds
in the remnants of night
that hung here
leaving only rags
snagged in hollow moulded
vines that snake over windows

the yard here is an oven
at this hour
at this time of year
when the sun's insatiable thirst

drains away dark moist air
from the remnant of night
that was our succour

at this time of year
in this hour
the yard is an oven
the sun's thirst seems insatiable
drains moist folds
the remnants of night
that hung here
only rags are left

the yard here is an oven
at this hour
at this time of year
the sun's insatiable thirst
drains dark moist air
from those folds
in the remnants of night
that hung here gave us succour

no River Bebida runs
no Sea of Caesarea laps the stones
the yard is an oven
at this time of year
in this hour
the insatiable sun
drains the cool dark air
from the last remnants of night

SUBSONGS

Situated somewhere
almost in the middle,
like a progress report
in a formless lyric.

If it can't be described,
it doesn't exist;
if it doesn't exist
it can't be described.

Off, on, for the record,
the songs write the scene,
the view, the information,
written into place, sung into being.

The deposits and relationships,
which comprise words before
they're recruited into action
of human agency.
Creation of knowledge
destruction of subjectivity.

Not at the same time,
restoration of the subject,
landscape, myth, material,
the present situation,
other times, other places, other persons
beyond the sixth extinction.

If it can't be described...
subsongs on the page...
it doesn't exist...
subsongs in the voice...
ineffable, irreducible...
subsongs in the air...

imposter syndrome...
subsongs on the page...
if it doesn't exist...
subsongs in the voice...
it can't be described...
subsongs in the air...
ineffable, irreducible...
subsongs on the page...
imposter syndrome...
subsongs in the voice...
if it doesn't exist...
subsongs in the air...
it can't be described...
subsongs on the page...
ineffable, irreducible...
subsongs in the voice...
imposter syndrome...
subsongs in the air...
if it doesn't exist...

(...)

PASSING PLACE OF THE SEAT

Passing place of the seat,
fold axial planes dip steeply.

A coat of rattling shells,
sheep graze, rough open hill land.

One leg, one arm, one eye,
recumbent nappe folds north west.

Bismuth, mercury, quartz,
food denied, the traveller.

Densely planted conifers,
wealth and beauty denied the sidhe.

Hog's Back Ridge, and knobbly ground,
syndimentary fault-bound basin.

Stabs the thatch with willow stick.
Arsenic, antimony, copper, lead,

zinc, barium, gold, silver.
Downward forms, synformal anticline,

the metamorphic rocks,
the turbidite assemblage,

assumes the shape of horse,
water bird, water devil.

The shallow water shelf,
shallow marine deposits.

Passing place of the seat,
fold axial planes dip steeply.

GARAGE/BAND

We were never really free,
we never really had control,
we wanted to destroy it all,
we wanted it to self-implode.

We never really had control,
we were working in a factory,
we wanted it to self-implode,
we were pretending to be poor.

We were working in a factory,
just some dole queue nostalgia,
we were pretending to be poor,
in the bollock freezing cold.

Just some dole queue nostalgia,
with the teeth grinding boredom,
in the bollock freezing cold,
of dry mouth rock 'n' roll.

With the teeth grinding boredom,
hammering the clothes,
of dry mouth rock 'n' roll,
on the garage floor.

Hammering the clothes,
playing fast guitar,
on the garage floor,
pretending to be bored.

Playing fast guitar,
we wanted to destroy it all,
pretending to be bored,
we were never really free.

We were never really free,
pretending to be bored,
we wanted to destroy it all,
playing fast guitar.

Pretending to be bored,
on the garage floor,
playing fast guitar,
hammering the clothes.

On the garage floor,
of dry mouth rock 'n' roll,
hammering the clothes,
with the teeth grinding boredom.

Of dry mouth rock 'n' roll,
in the bollock freezing cold,
with the teeth grinding boredom,
just some dole queue nostalgia.

In the bollock freezing cold,
we were pretending to be poor,
just some dole queue nostalgia,
we were working in a factory.

We were pretending to be poor,
we wanted it to self-implode,
we were working in a factory,
we never really had control.

We wanted it to self-implode,
we wanted to destroy it all,
we never really had control,
we were never really free.

THE SIXTH

From Wordsworth on a Kindle turned his eyes towards the sea, seated in a rocky cave, kindlings like the morning.

High privilege of lasting life, exempt from all injury.

Living presence still persists, stamp wind's image, send abroad.

Existential risks like those threaten this humanity.

The axiological argument is familiar, misanthropic argument, obviously never been.

Is it wrong to reproduce, procreation, future child?

Most humans produce children on mere impulse, reproduce.

Reasonable estimates tending to be subjective.

Dinosaurs and dark matter, invisible gravity; colliding tectonic plates, molten magma near the core; galactic coma clusters; luminous objects elsewhere.

Lensing measurements are used, lines of sight to galaxies.

Asteroids and volcanoes, gamma-ray bursts, and earthquakes.

Human intervention in ecology.

Magnitude of loss expected in catastrophe.

Such modelling assessing serious risk, then permanent stagnation, realisation, ruin.

Future technological breakthroughs in biotechnology,
self-modifying the post Homo sapiens human qualities:
whole brain emulations, super artificial intelligence...

Earth originated life's sentience is a billion years.

PERISCOPIC

Through a full half circle.
A scientific job, or geographical.
Maps and charts were drawn,
lighthouses, light markers against the horizon,
three months of water, and west of Australia.

The finger in the wind calculates rate of drift,
everyday after that I went to the beach.

And now a land locked mast, a western setting sun,
half imagined circles describe another line.

"Main induction open...
no proof of human life...
nuclear powered of course...
...during the last winter"

Went north for six months to the northern hemisphere,
everyday after that I went to the beach.

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