

MEANS OF ADDRESS

Andrew Seguin

If worry is the word
for what comes next
it's sun minus

how would anyone accept
the claim how do I
hear my hearing adjust

to take in rain turning
the street to shushed
pronouncements of change

in the day, the atmosphere, the
nouns I speak up when
the prime is world

six churches to one block
drizzle rivulets riding receipts
curbside to soft right angles

reminiscent of metaphors
I've read for the brain
what comes next is an umbrella

then a search for a certain
kind of bean
then the water coming off

my personal eaves
and the passing truck's
text corrugated il-

legible so halfly
SO LUTE
so apt a letter to the times

the topic is always if
always how to feel the touch
of the horizon's joint line

how touch it to other foreheads
the rain bathes as beautifully
how I write a letter

with no sun so everything
is I forget paper
as a relevant surface

I forget the million things
a land will do with stone
a man will do with harm

I go blank for sound
native to the sternum
and electron and

round the snout
what makes the mammoth chant
to a sapling

stranger to onion flower
as on all the days since
before we numbered them

how I begin
is I remember I am
who the enemy is chanting to

LEDGE

Andrew Seguin

Ledge, where sparrows come consider me. My progress is reading the curtain further left now the spring's rising, arthritic. Their necks flick their heads like the songbird runs electrical — wind parts a few feathers but can't find the mechanism. Seed and pebble are featured then, with sight, with specialty, each mote in the beak sussed by the tongue for its parameters, as humans kiss and speak. In Italy, my grandfather told me, we spit-roast such birds over coals.

Ledge, where the finches take my leavings, lash and a ticket and the nib of the fig I was eating. The bare bushes stay bare, March, they are barberry. I blink-measure a cold square mile on the flight path to La Guardia, where my species' contrails write exhaust is our custom, yet every jet baritone trembles my mind's bath of origins. It is an age where dream depends on a jerry can as well as a pattern soaked so long in time, its passage has colored the birds. Out granite, egg and autumn flies a finch, one planet's red consequence.

In other words, jut

that airs air by portioning
air below — stone cantilevered out over

the open, the open given edge
to rub against its higher version:

sky, almost brought down

to the body, the body at its subprime level: once upright, sliding horizontal, minding the logic of consuming chicken fat for the joints so they creak less when bending in socks at security. New York City authorities routinely hire a falconer to course raptors along airport runways lest geese crash the planes.

I feed no birds or ignorant I leak my seeds and they come to me, this ledge, ornament of the passive voice, passerine song making ballpeen dents in the weather, whatever weather will be, will be-

come. It is an age. I am 34. When I have money and time and my body does not speak ill to the swab, I am free to travel. To travel with peanuts, to travel with fog, to return to the courtyard where one French window angles sun to me like a signal: nouns will remain when their referents die out, but for now asparagus is horse manure's needle. Grandmother's patch. Who would not eat birds and perched evenings above rhododendrons, for their scent held night off, and off is a blacksmith with calligraphy in his hammer. If you bring him some coins, he'll beat your words out of fire.

PLACE NAMES

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FronD so precise
the feel's industrial,
wheelbarrow of coconuts
heading toward night hot

as day began: high square of light
in the bathroom, dawn
a bouillon cube. And rain,
when it comes, is a dialect

of mercy. The terrain
sprouts bitter
tomato, cotton, corn, and rice.
Is to feel it to compare it,

identity dependent on other
referents? Effort is to stack
sight without comment, sheep
fattening for another species'

feast. And when sense was made
of scraps blowing through
open thatch: butterflies.
Land of acacia

the wind moves in slow clatter.
Land of pool furniture
from what was rebar. A recliner
in blue bottle caps

and its ottoman in green
on Earth, where certain forms
are built from disparate particulars,
sneaker prints

disappear beyond the perimeter
of moringa trees, and if I am
looking at a rock, there is
no window to throw it through.

FRESH TOWELS

Andrew Seguin

Night one, summer was opening the spaces wider. Every gap between the leaves was blown clean. The guest room condensed into a cloud of other life that moved like an extinct animal, for its possibility — which chance or time, maybe I, might have manufactured — had dissipated on a day rain stripped the earth with too much water. Or at a simple other hour, birth. Or gather the greater and lesser spans, embodied in the snapping turtle massed from the pond — the speed of the neck vs. the syrup of the armature — and pick winter, the first of December, the moment the last of the snow touched land. I was not to make furniture. With a widow's peak not to brush a branch of willow. And nothing as female. But once put a finger in seventeen milliliters of sun in a graduated cylinder on someone else's sill.

Night two. These points are not points to be fixed, yet are, days and so on, a week or more, reading before sleep beside a fan amplifying cicadas to my ear. A familiar sound in a stranger house, a remembered hour like a slide projector. Earlier, for the first time, I identified the scent of linden. I imagined if I had once cut an oak to steal a bike, I would hire a ghostwriter. Across the bay, a tumbler cup of copper and pink, and in the foreground I saw how birch take the wind differently, paddling the circulation all along their height with silver-green tambourines, and not for money or sunsets but for shame I would give away my keep. 8:31 on a day joggers jogged past

the planet's rotation.

Night three, window

cranked out thick

vegetation.

Half frame, half

mirror for larkspur

refracted, coleus, delphinium

I can no longer

robe a hillside in Latin

and sleep

best in a room not mine.
Hear me out. Hold me in. Help

me up. I didn't mean to sleep so far from home. I didn't know where the bathroom was. Signs — river's knobby place name, Mother cutting lilies — said the wind extends mind's jurisdiction. Let me make it up: keep the milk, I take my coffee black, and have seen things blacker than a priest's ear. In the islands when those men are buried, the sea gives up clear stones. Be your guest, the bread I eat as is, never interrupting all you've done for butter. If you don't want me on dishes I can fix a lamp, bait a hook. I can mine the jewel that makes the crown. I can describe how the light in Pittsburgh has changed over time, and how the measurement of such change might be defined as a photograph: light over time. My great-grandparents spoke of boiled yolks of sun peppered with coal dust, and now an LED caroms between invisible but emotional waves of technology. I don't live there anymore.

Night four, I admit I will always live afflicted with a common ailment: wiring a minute to become searchlight. As a splinter dropped in milk will spin then right the way through forest ahead, what are not my objects become my subjects. There are the oaks before the set-back houses, from sod to eave and deep a green that might be studied like geology, old sun like turmeric over it all. The temperature cools to contain the elementary particles, the water-clocks, the shale on which civilization stands. A young man of average height, a guest in the town, is standing in the street. Beneath a sky corrugated with high pink clouds, a raccoon sorts trash. Gliding past, a couple, a tall ship built out of we. The wind is a rumor, then an ambition, then comes the sea.