

Selections from a long poem entitled *Muybridge*--about the photographer Eadweard Muybridge, during and after the period he makes his famous serial "horse" photos and murders a man he thinks is his wife's lover.

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Time was what we are made of
and we wasted.

I flushed god

from his cave below
the insufficient necessary world:
in a fraction of a trot,

in the secret room between words,
in a net of desire knotted with despair

I caught the light:
where the black hooves kindled the pounded ground,

tripping the light-switch, the trap's levered clamp,
I weighed that spark: I took the shot, I shot it,

that moment that did
not exist until I stopped it.

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Zoöpraxiscope.

Invention: ten images in sequence on a glass ring, spun past a light source, render a flickering illusion of continuity: an experiment to project a 'moving picture'

Memory writes its story as a mode of blurring faith, honoring
shapes the eye retains, for the moment. We want above all

to believe. I showed icons shining quick on a glass wheel in the air
turning & the light looked through them, I showed them. Because

our sight needs to deceive us, promising the past
as a series of candid attentions, floating just beyond us,

confidently. What I never knew that I never knew, I saw
lucid in wake-dream nevertheless:

her body eager and pale, an empty day--,
& her lover's darker, arching, a weather, an evil melody.

Always his face was turned from me

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1874. Homicide.

Out of kindness, she lied.
She, that is, you: my warm particular.

In the flinch of the false word a ripping, slice
in the fabric wall of the other world. What was it

seeped through? It seemed like error, ballooning.
It seemed like trouble, a doubleness, changing

texture, turning blue. Seemed,
she. I heard only change

between us, a pure apparent seeming,
a pounding as of hooves. Some strained

trust failed, leaking from the white-lit single world
into common history. Can seeming

be pure? *You* seemed *she*: if only for that
I needed to unmake him.

Poor thing, poor
depleted thing: no wonder it was pressured,

urgent to escape, being in this way divided
from itself, rendered many and thus wishful,

as Swedenborg says of the angels.
I focused, I aligned, I aimed high.

Like any man I aspired
to an accurate damage.

I almost pitied him,
but I took my time.

1904.

I try not to dream, much:
it pries the night open, and it bothers the dogs.
 But sometime, on a broken day,

when it turns hard to tell
the difference between cloud and stone,

I'll lie down on the ground,
and the black dog comes and lies down beside me,

settling her moist snout in the hollow of my shoulder
and, eventually, snoring, lightly.

And then, because I can, because she breathes
so evenly we both are saved,

I am still, and gradually
I am in a room.

There I am brought forward in a body, convergent
as the whittled stub-end of a pencil

--though it does not feel exactly like my life,
it is so clean,

the light kind and lacking a source.
And it is a relief, this white expansiveness,

a silence after bells,
full calm.

Not to be seen—
not to burn or justify--

not to play that red ukulele,
its sparkly river of fleas—

not to harm, in dailiness—
not to work-- not to make art-- .

[continued, couplet break]

