

e/se (an elegy for the downtrodden)

GRIFFIN PLAAG

the night's gotten purple in menageried dusk and
the rotor chassis of the semis squeal over the blacktop.
you are being born. a glass of wine is being poured by a waiter,
high-risen, stilted acetate, prim but not
too prim, y'know? shrimp caught saturday frying in an
expensive italian place, chiffon decor. the jumping butter pat,
the shrimpy souse gone briny – this is what we here call *ritz*, distilled, viz. the butter –

the fifty ninth street edifice contracted and skeletal over the
water. wind blowing e/se tastes like women. little waxy scraps st. vitus across
gluey sidewalk chalk drawings. someone props the manhole cover –
 imagine having to *clean* that thing! –
and if you kick it over the orifice you might trap the immigrant
trypophobic in the gutter.
 (see, you do know, don't you?)

nine-thirty again. nine-thirty-five again. five to eight minute intervals. we move in five to eight
minute intervals and watch the clock's machinery. no, it isn't analog, what do you mean? i mean it's
analogous. nine-forty again and the silver obelisk bullets east, shaking off metallicized dew and
jimmying the risen crossbars. bright fluorescent ascetic interior. most of the patrons look bored &
fuckt. ties flung shoulderside to peer at the screen without that ornamental noose interfering.
nine-fifty-five and then
TEN O'CLOCK -

PUSH THE THRONGING THIRD RAIL-LIKE AND PRAY YOUR HEEL
FINDS THE GRATE AND HOW LONG DO THOSE SLIDING DOORS
STAY OPEN ANYWAY (?)

surely they cannot be autonomous or they would never
accept our amplitude or our
loafers or
the bums –

Oh, the bums!

rabid and rodential and scabrous and scraggly and patchwork
bored and fuckt but foreign
don't make eye contact
don't look too scared either
or he mightATTACK
andTAKE YOUR TIMEPIECE
(???)

the streaking red eddies of phosphene light that
sconce the vortexed lirr don't stop at montauk; they probably make it portside,
like normandy or somewhere,
jetting thru the spraying surf
positively transatlantic
possibly pacific, if that blinking mauve
could learn conflict resolution,

and after bulleting transnational –

delhi ghetto or libyan pebble or upending with tristate bombast some miles of the
urals you can wind up in
brooklyn again, hudson portcullis raised,
teeth of the urban maw tugboat-accessible, now,
every five to eight minutes you can do the whole bloody thing
again.

and the scrabbling reflective-collared sewerman
is the same as the schizoid bum is the same as
you, monotonous and dry-eyed, forest hills mansards
binocular, flipping a proverbial bird at print-stained
lirr plexiglass, vague aditted reflection unamused and
fuckt, all new york a daunting metonym

(and at ten p.m. you'll crowdsurf penn to beat them all home)